



Common ground. Common good.

Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2009

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Water Policy Study Committee

Wilder Foundation

451 Lexington Parkway N, St. Paul

Members: Jonathan Abram, Larry Baker (left before voting; Annie added his votes where possible), Janna Caywood, Janne Flisrand, Sherri Knuth, Dianne Krizan (Co-Chair), Joe Mansky, Gene Merriam (Co-Chair), Wallace Neal, Randy Neprash, Jack Ray, Kaitlin Steiger-Meister and Danielle Waldschmidt.

Staff: Bob DeBoer, Jim Horan, Sean Kershaw and Annie Levenson-Falk

Guests: Perry Forester and Ellen Gibson

Facilitator: Dianne Krizan

Objectives:

- Reach agreement on the central ideas for our recommendations
1. Review and approve the agenda
 - Purpose of tonight's meeting is to reach agreement of the central ideas for recommendations.
 - We've lumped all of the comments over the past few meetings into three categories with an additional miscellaneous category with a few comments that need their own category or need to be placed in one. We'll take some time to review the three categories: Information, Public Involvement/Social dimensions and Government. Then we'll go through and vote for the item under each of the categories that we like the best and want to expand on.
 - Keep in mind that voting may make it that things don't hang together as well as we'd like but at the end we'll have some direction and things to work on before the next meeting.
 - Again, we're looking to vote on each category in hopes of coming to agreement on one core recommendation for each.
 - Ask yourselves what is the core of the category that speaks to the conclusions you found as a committee?
 - I wonder if we can come up with a simple recommendation if one of our conclusions is that the system is fragmented.

- The recommendations are in front of us and we need to work on concrete issues moving forward.
 - Can we add the state wide vision piece to the miscellaneous section? Yes
 - Context for Study Reports: See the example of the medical facilities report. A report should set a direction first. Older CL reports came in a time when there wasn't a existing structure in place. For example with the Met Council, it started with a void, "we need sewers". The value of reports is in setting direction. What conclusions can we go back to? A lot of development can come after the committee is done as long as you have strong conclusions that you can go back to.
2. Suggest specific changes to proposed central ideas and vote on each

Information:

- First Round Voting:
 - 1 & 2 (combined) – 7 votes
 - 3 – 2 votes
 - 4 – 4 votes
 - 5 – 0 votes
- The difference between 1&2 and 4 is that 1&2 defines a principle while 4 defines an independent agency.
- Do we endorse the idea of an independent agency in our recommendations? Or better is it a common theme that will cut across the document? I think 4 is good but, the specificity can go else where within the report.
- Friendly amendment to add "independent" into 1&2.
- Independence is great but, I want more on credibility and comprehensibility.
- I think this can be moved into governance.
- More on specifically "water information" more than just data, roles of government and public.
- I fear adding another agency simply adds to the bureaucracy.
- Voting: combination of 1&2 gets majority vote.

Public Involvement:

- First Round Voting:
 - 1 – 6 votes
 - 2 – 4 votes
 - 3 – 2 votes
 - 4 – 0 votes
 - 5 – 1 vote
- Review 1 & 2:

- Friendly amendment to 1. Take 1st sentence of 3 and add it in. Need to deepen role of engagement on NPSP – a new system; not just more of the same – committee agreement (no vote)
- Get rid of “state agencies need”, just that we should transition; committee agreement (no vote)
- Change both 1 & 2 to both water resources and prevention instead of NPSP.
- Role of citizens must be new and elevated to equal partnership role.
- Articulate distinction between 1 and 2 – 1 seems better at defining what we want to say.
- We have two separate issues to address: 1) Do we have public engagement/involvement and 2) NPSP requires us to change behavior. Right now we’ve mused these two together in a way that isn’t effective. They’re two intellectually different options.
- I disagree, it’s citizen engagement/involvement that will create behavior change over education alone.
- I agree that we need to call out the two issues. I also want to make sure we’re including all private activity, including agriculture.
- Private activity doesn’t do enough to connote agriculture. We need to be straight forward and call out Ag.
- Vote to combine 1&2 flesh them out and move on.
- Process question – do we need to vote after each friendly amendment?
- No, at some point we need to move on and rest the power in the pen.

Government:

- First Round Voting:
 - 1 – 1 vote
 - 2 – 1 vote
 - 3 – 4 votes
 - 4 – 3 votes
 - 5 – 2 votes
 - 6 – 1 vote
 - 7 – 0 votes
- It seems that some are addressing function while some are addressing a specific agency or structure.
- Don’t think we have to specifically deal with structure at this point.
- Limit discussion to 3, 4 and 5.
- It seems the difference is whether we recommend a overseeing agency or an advisory agency.
- Some of these aren’t creating an agency.
- 4 seems to be exactly what we already agreed on for citizen engagement.
- I agree, 4 was an attempt to bring state level engagement and government together.
- Decide whether we want new agency or whether we should create an advisory/coordinating board.

- Recommendation about a new entity is premature without full understanding the system. We haven't specifically agreed that structural fragmentation is a problem.
- Whether its advisory or controlling it should be a new agency.
- 4 doesn't create a new entity nor does 5, 3 is information based and created a coordinating partnership between water entities
- I want to reiterate a point that was made earlier, we haven't accepted that fragmentation is a problem nor should we quickly accept that a new agency wouldn't simply add to the bureaucracy
- Are there existing agencies we're ignoring that we can simply bolster?
- What is the problem we are trying to address with this recommendation?
 - o Complexity and fragmentation to the point that governance system is failing on every evaluative principle we currently have.
 - o I don't think fragmentation is problem. Perhaps we don't need a new agency but a better defined public role.
 - o Government structure doesn't have tools within it to promote, encourage and build citizen participation.
 - o The problem is we don't have clear responsibility and accountability
 - o No one is able to say the \$150 million we spend there does any more than the \$50k spent over there. The money seems stuck in process.
- I'm not convinced we have a basis on which to say things are broken. For example the CWC seems to be doing a great job, what's broken there?
- It's troubling to set forwards tasks with no framework on how to complete the tasks.
- I see #6 as a reinvention of the CWC group but with more stakeholder involvement.
- Some functions listed in #4 should be moved into the citizen engagement category.
- We need recommendations here that don't blend into other existing categories.
- I see #3 as "we know enough" and need to strengthen or create existing entities and #5 as "we don't know enough" and we need to clarify the role of government and ensure accountability for real results.
- Committee is able to define responsibilities we want and ensure that they can be defined at the capitol.
- I don't like either option – I think we need to establish an agency like the Legislative Water Commission.
- Let's look at #3 as creating a new entity and #5 as clarifying responsibilities and holding groups accountable.
- I'd like to amend 3 by striking coordination, inserting assume and adding "abolish BWSR".
- There is real strength is saying "do this" and be specific. In other cases it's good to say shareholders, go and fix the problem. I see #3 as "do this" and #5 here are some goal posts now go and do your jobs.
- I think somewhere we need to say, we support comprehensive governance reform.
- I think 5 says that. I suggest there's an inherent conflict between bringing in shareholders and defining roles. The system is messy because there are a lot of shareholders who simply don't know their roles.

- The options: we could recommend creating a new entity with X purpose, or we could make the outcomes clear and leave the question of the best form to achieve those outcomes to stakeholders
- Call to question: Majority for #5 – work it out – outcomes clear, problem clear, figure it out. Plan to wordsmith 5 to incorporate comments from discussion.

Miscellaneous

- Define the visioning statement as setting priorities through the citizen process that will set outcomes that directs the work of agencies and water organizations.
- Who would do this? Ex. America Speaks – creates dialog.
- I think we decided on the need for vision in the governance category I think we need to set goal and priorities.
- What do we want from government in MN? Then we create goals around that.
- Voting – Up and down on each of the 5 miscellaneous topics.
- 1 – 8 votes
- 2 – Withdrawn
- 3 – 3 votes
- 4 – 4 votes
- 5 – 7 votes
- I see 5 as a long range planning option that's broader than some of our specific recommendations.
- Impossible as a state to agree on broader long term goals.
- I think this ties into the LWC idea. I thought we'd agreed on the importance of that.
- LWC existed in the early 90s as a group of legislators with interest in water that met regularly to discuss long term goals for water in the state.
- The question is whether we want vision from the state level down or from the local/citizen level up.
- What would the cost of this vision program be in relation to the actual return?
- Legislators are talking about reconstituting the LWC. Overall they need in the next two years to decide on a process on how to spend the legacy money. Do we want our report to speak to that? I see that process as different than an state-wide vision.
- I need some idea of where the committee thinks we should go, toward the LWC or the citizen state vision plan?
- MEI is suggesting a state wide vision but it would occur largely at the state level.
- Setting priorities as goals posts and engaging citizens is within the citizen engagement category. We need to make sure we're setting priorities for water not just for water governance.
- Should the vision statement stand along or should be work it in to the governance category as a subset?
- Voting: Majority choose to put it in as subset to governance category.
- Back to comment 1 in Miscellaneous, does it stand alone or is it part of something?
- Try putting a don't in front of the statement, if it's ridiculous now, you haven't articulated it well enough.

- Our system is reactionary. We wait to clean up after disaster strikes. This may be beyond this report but we need a huge system switch. It needs to be ecosystem based opposed to site specific.
 - Is that a principle?
 - Or do we include it in our expectation of the governance systems?
 - I say a new category. Most of what happens at the state capital is driven by TMDL – reactionary.
 - Should it be a goal post that we need to determine what we want our governance system to be?
 - Does this address behavior change and overlap with public engagement?
 - I think it's separate, I'm talking about a policy change.
 - Voting: Majority votes to make it a subset of governance.
3. Next steps and evaluation
- Avg: 4.5
 - Comments:
- Great meeting
 - Got a lot done
 - Confused about how #5 is going to look as our governance point
 - There's still a lot more work to be done
 - Set a clear direction