

AIS Advisory Committee
Tuesday January 8th 1:00pm
Wright county Courthouse
10 2nd St NW Buffalo, MN 55313 Rm 111

MINUTES

In attendance: Luke Johnson, Alicia O'Hare: Wright SWCD; Greg Kryzer: County Attorney's Office; Chris Hector, Jim Gray: WRIP Lake Association Governance Council; Sean Deringer: Wright County Sheriff's Department; Heidi Wolf, Adam Doll, Christine Hokkala-Kuhns (phone): MN DNR; Christine Husom: County Commissioner; Darek Vetsch: County Commissioner; Jeff Herr: City of Annandale Police Department; Chris Wall: Transient Boater; Jefferson Bishop: Anchor Dock and Lift; LT Mike Martin: MN DNR

Missing: Mike Zieska

Johnson called the meeting to order and asked each party to introduce themselves.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved and will be posted on the WRIP website.

Timeline Discussions:

O'Hare: Plan will go to the SWCD Board for approval February 11, and then will go to the DNR for review Feb 12.

Wolf: DNR does not require the updated County Ordinance in place. All candidate lakes must be listed. The actual list of lakes can be fewer – but none can be added once approved. DNR would require the final list before operations.

Vetsch: What happens if expansion is not approved? Hector – personal opinion is the program would not run without expansion.

Deadline for Lake Associations – mid-day February 11;

Next County Committee of the Whole Meeting will be February 12;

Wright County Commissioners Meeting and start of 30-day public comment (for Ordinance Update) would be February 19;

Wright County Commissioners Meeting to vote on ordinance update – March 19;

DNR Approval must come before the start of operations, but is not required to train staff.

Start of operations: Bishop, O'Hare recommended specific date to simplify notification for public. Vetsch, Hector – has to be right after ice out. Wall – don't use fishing opener as it would give the appearance of targeting fishermen. Resolved – 7 days after earliest ice out on any program lake, but not before April 1.

Vetsch: What is the DNR criteria for regional inspection, O'Hare: maximum 15 miles from all ramps on a lake to the regional site. O'Hare to provide a complete list of candidate lakes.

Wolf: Plan can be for multiple years as long as no changes are made, annual approval is not a DNR requirement.

Hector: Plan should allow regional site without Decon. Doll: Statute allows this if boats requiring decontamination are directed to where they can receive it.

Training: Bishop asked for training schedule and if training could be scheduled prior to approval. Doll – request would have to come from SWCD representative, but approval is not required prior to scheduling.

Vetsch: DNR must be an active supporting partner of this program. Deputy Commissioner Bob Meier's previous statement that Wright County was in this alone has to change. DNR must provide enforcement. Martin: DNR cannot enforce a County ordinance, but will enforce any AIS statutory violations. His presence in the meeting reflects a commitment of DNR to work with Annandale and Wright County Law Enforcement. Vetsch: reporting, data gathering requirements must not be arbitrary or used as a way to hamper the program.

Vetsch: What about enforcement? Hector: Statutory changes are proposed to reduce the enforcement burden. Enforcement should be like a parking ticket. That will not take effect before August of 2019 so we need to do what we can under the current law until then.

Husom: We must do our part to reduce the spread of AIS.

Kryzer: will meet offline with Law Enforcement. Deringer: Enforcement in 2018 took too much officer time. Willing to sit down and work out a more sustainable model. Hector: proposed 2019 model provides dollars for enforcement, eliminates duplication of effort and reduces law enforcement time. Vetsch: there is a discrepancy between proposed budget (64K) and Sheriff's requested budget (94K). That will be discussed offline and resolved before Feb 12.

Wall: Is survey to be removed? If more lakes are added the survey is still needed. Johnson: SWCD feels it is valuable to keep a survey for program evaluation and public input. Hector: Questions should be updated to reflect what we want to know. Technique needs to be improved to get a higher participation rate – such as on-site collection of survey. Wall: On site is too intimidating. Kryzer: Could use pre-paid mail in cards.

Next Meeting

January 28, 1:00.