

Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership Coordinating Committee Meeting Notes

Date: Monday, April 15, 2024, 9:00-10:30 AM

Location: Zoom

Coordinating Committee Meeting Attendees

Coordinating Committee Members Present:

Adam Denlinger – Seal Rock Water District

Steve Parrett – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Billie Jo Smith – Lincoln County Water Systems Alliance

Alan Fujishin – Gibson Farms

David Rupp – Oregon State University

Coordinating Committee Members Absent:

Alyssa Mucken – Oregon Water Resources Department

Mike Broili (MidCoast Watersheds Council)

Henry Pitts – Oregon State University student

Facilitators:

Suzanne de Szoeko – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Leah Cogan – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Meeting Agenda

- Convener search update
- Partnership meeting planning
- Financial report
- Partnership capacity funding
- Charter updates

Summary of Major Points of Discussion

- Adam provided convener search updates
 - Adam met with County Commissioner Casey Miller and encouraged more County involvement in the Partnership, including potentially being a convener
 - Commissioner Miller is interested and plans to attend the upcoming Partnership meeting and tour to learn more
- The committee discussed the agenda for the full Partnership meeting and tour
 - Adam will provide some opening remarks/welcome and closing as the convener
 - A representative of the Siletz Tribe has also been invited to give opening remarks/welcome at the beginning of the meeting
 - Alan will facilitate discussion of the charter updates
 - The proposed charter updates will be informational and designed to gather input; it will be made clear that a consensus decision is not expected at this meeting

- Suzanne will reach out to Alyssa to see if she would be interested in giving the overview of the consensus decision making process
- Suzanne will be sending out the full agenda and tour sign-ups likely next week
- Billie Jo suggested providing handouts with the charter changes at the meeting, and Suzanne responded that the changes would be sent out at least two weeks in advance and there would be hard copies provided at the meeting
- Steve noted that 1-3 minutes per person for the funding opportunities agenda item is not much time, and that the speakers should be identified prior to the meeting; Suzanne will be including the invitation to present one slide on funding in the email that goes out to the Partnership next week
- Adam provided an update that Business Oregon will be sending two representatives and will have handouts about funding opportunities
- The committee discussed options for dealing with proposed amendments to the prioritization at the full Partnership meeting
 - Information about the consensus process will be sent out ahead of the meeting and a refresher will be presented at the meeting
 - Steve recommended providing information on how the criteria were selected, how the prioritization process worked, and what the results will be used for; he expressed hope that a decision would be made during the meeting so that the group can move on to the work plans and next steps based on the approved prioritization
 - Alan noted that flip charts had been used at previous meetings to record ideas for later discussion; he suggested acknowledging the amount of thought and effort that the Work Group already put into the prioritization
 - Billie Jo pointed out that Partnership members already had opportunities to provide input on the prioritization at the previous Partnership meeting and through other meetings and emails, so hopefully there will not be many changes
 - GSI will put together handouts for review and will ask participants to send questions in advance
- GSI shared a financial report for the ARPA grant
 - Activities in March included meetings and communication with potential project leads for prioritized actions to identify implementation gaps
 - GSI anticipates reduced activities over the summer and expects to have sufficient budget to last through the end of the grant period in December
 - Budgeting also depends on the amount of the set-aside that Partners end up requesting to support participation
- The committee discussed funding updates presented at the Place-based Planning meeting last week
 - OWRD anticipates holding a planning grant solicitation in 2025 for existing and new place-based planning groups
 - OWRD will have \$2 million per biennium for place-based planning, and it can roll over if not expended
 - ARPA funding can be extended if it is not all used by the end of the year
 - OWRD will provide more ideas about sustaining funding

- The committee agreed on the need to continue seeking additional funding to bridge the gap between the ARPA funding and the new OWRD grant
- Billie Jo noted that the Partnership is not ready to apply for the OWEB funding for capacity that has a May 6 deadline because a more detailed implementation plan is needed first
- Steve observed that the OWEB funding would be a good fit in the future, and the Upper Grand Ronde place-based planning group has used it; he is disappointed that there will be a longer gap in funding because of OWRD's plan to do rulemaking before the grants can be awarded and doesn't want the Partnership to lose momentum; there are other funding sources that can help advance specific prioritized actions such as source water protection
- Steve suggested forming a funding committee to look at ways to sustain the Partnership, and he and Adam agreed that they would like to be on it
- Adam noted that it would be good to identify an additional convener that could serve as the applicant for grants; he is meeting with USDA Rural Development soon to learn about other funding opportunities
- **Decision:** form a Funding Committee to seek funding to sustain the Partnership
- The committee completed the draft charter revisions
 - The committee discussed the process for resolving issues if consensus is not reached
 - **Action Item:** GSI will prepare "clean" and "tracked changes" versions of the proposed charter revisions and send them to the Partnership at least 2 weeks prior to the full Partnership meeting
- Suzanne shared an email that was sent to David Waltz (DEQ) by an attendee after the last Work Group meeting where he had given a presentation on TMDLs in the MidCoast region
 - The participant requested that he include her comments in the official meeting records, but this was not a DEQ meeting
 - **Decision:** the email will be attached to the meeting notes from the Work Group meeting
- Billie Jo described the OWEB proposal requirements and what the Partnership would need to do to apply, such as preparing a detailed implementation plan, defining the role of the coordinator, and further elaborating on the implementation structure
 - The language about the overarching structure will be helpful for the Partnership to consider in its own vision and activities, as well as for grant proposals
 - Billie Jo recommended looking at the Puget Sound Partnership model and implementation plan, and suggested that a sub-group could work together to create the detailed plan based on existing materials
 - Suzanne stated that this activity would fit in with the Early Implementation Steps task under the ARPA grant, and also noted that developing a narrative describing the process and outcomes of the prioritization is a deliverable for the ARPA grant and will be done once the prioritization is approved at the next meeting