

## Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership Coordinating Committee Meeting Notes

**Date:** Tuesday, March 19, 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

Alyssa Mucken – Oregon Water Resources Department

Billie Jo Smith – Lincoln County Water Systems Alliance

Henry Pitts – Oregon State University student

#### *Coordinating Committee Members Absent:*

Alan Fujishin – Gibson Farms

David Rupp – Oregon State University

Mike Broili (MidCoast Watersheds Council)

#### *Facilitators:*

Suzanne de Szoeko – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Leah Cogan – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

### **Meeting Agenda**

- Convener search update
- Work Group recommendation about prioritization
- April 9 Work Group meeting agenda
- Partnership meeting planning
- Outreach materials about the value of participating in the Partnership
- Financial report and fiscal planning
- Partnership capacity funding
- Charter updates

### **Summary of Major Points of Discussion**

- Adam provided convener search updates
  - Adam has a meeting scheduled with County Commissioner Casey Miller next Tuesday to discuss the convener search and encourage more County involvement in the Partnership
  - Commissioner Miller is interested and involved in local natural resource issues
- The Prioritization Work Group recommended that the Coordinating Committee bring the prioritization (final scoring and A/B/C priority groups) to the next Partnership meeting to have the charter signatories make a consensus decision about whether to approve or modify it

- The committee agreed that this is appropriate for the next full Partnership meeting, and it will be on the May 29 Partnership meeting agenda
- The committee discussed the April 9 Prioritization Work Group agenda
  - Suzanne will provide an update on the Smartsheet project tracking tool, information that has been collected so far, and get feedback about other metrics that the group wants to track
  - GSI will provide an update on outreach to potential leads and partners about work they are already doing to advance actions in the Water Action Plan, and gaps identified so far
  - David Waltz (DEQ) has agreed to give a presentation on TMDL development in the MidCoast region, and Rob Hibbs (ODA) may also be able to present on ODA's role in TMDL development
    - Alyssa suggested making the presentation title more specific so participants will understand which TMDL will be discussed
    - Leah stated that Work Group participants had expressed interest in encouraging development of temperature and turbidity TMDLs for the Siletz River, and that David might also speak to the process that took place for the Yaquina
    - Billie Jo suggested sending the information about the presentation to the full Partnership because people not on the Work Group might also be interested, and Suzanne agreed to send out a Partnership email about it
- The committee discussed the agenda for the full Partnership meeting and tour
  - Adam has been in touch with John Unger (Business Oregon) about giving a 20-minute presentation on funding opportunities and technical assistance in accessing funding
  - Billie Jo suggested separating the funding presentation from the Partner sharing about funding sources they have used for projects, and Suzanne will update the agenda to reflect this
  - Billie Jo asked whether the proposed charter updates would be sent out to the Partnership ahead of the meeting, and Suzanne said it would be sent out two weeks in advance
  - The committee discussed whether to aim for a consensus decision on adopting the proposed charter changes at the Partnership meeting, but determined that it would be better to get input at the meeting but not make a decision until the next meeting
  - The committee discussed the meeting location; concerns had been raised about lower attendance if it was farther from major highways, but the currently proposed location (Siletz Tribal Health Center) is close to the tour location and about a 20–25-minute drive from Newport
  - Leah will visit the proposed meeting site on Thursday to see how big the room is and test the Zoom connectivity
  - There are fewer catering options locally, so food may be brought in from Newport

- The committee discussed outreach materials to encourage engagement with the Partnership
  - Alyssa suggested turning the bullet points presented into a flyer or 1-pager to be used in communications to encourage attendance and participation
  - Billie Jo noted that direct personal outreach is the most effective way to get people involved; now that the Partnership is ready to implement projects, this is a great time to get previous participants motivated to reengage
  - Adam requested that at least a preliminary draft be available in time for his meeting with Commissioner Miller next week
  - Alyssa suggested adding more language about water (e.g., having a voice in your water future), adding verbs to make the bullet points more actionable, and grouping the talking points
  - Steve suggested starting with the mission and/or vision of the Partnership, moving the language about greater regional collaboration to leverage resources towards the top of the list, grouping the bullet points, and emphasizing that the Partnership can help get the attention and direct engagement with funders (not just funding ideas)
  - Suzanne will send out the flyer developed for the Partnership in 2018 and updated in summer 2023 for committee members to provide further comments and ideas for a new flyer/handout
- GSI shared a financial report and the committee discussed fiscal planning for the remainder of the year
  - Suzanne presented monthly spending estimates for two scenarios, one in which partner organizations request the full amount of the participation set-aside, and one in which less of that set-aside is used
  - So far, only one organization has submitted a request for reimbursement, and a question about plans to use the set-aside will be raised at the Partnership meeting in May to assist with planning
  - The proposed fiscal plan includes higher spending during full Partnership meeting months (May and October), reduced activity in the summer, and additional effort at the end of the year to wrap up documents and complete grant reporting
  - Steve asked how much could get done on the work plans with this monthly budgeting plan, and Suzanne noted that the Work Group wanted to hold off on developing work plans until information about current projects is collected
  - Billie Jo asked to clarify that there are two tracks: individual project plans that would be created by the organizations implementing the projects, and overarching Partnership work plans to advance actions that do not yet have associated projects
  - Steve and Alyssa expressed strong support for developing Partnership work plans or documenting why this was not done, given that this is part of the scope of the ARPA grant
  - Alyssa recommended that the work plans include guidance for keeping implementation alive after the ARPA funding is finished, such as recommending

formation of committees or work groups, role of the Partnership Coordinator, and how continued collaboration will be facilitated

- Leah suggested ideas for continuing to make progress on a limited budget, including more virtual meetings instead of in-person, adding some form of collaborative workspace to the Partnership website, and getting members more involved in an active role in developing work plans, funding applications, and other activities
- Billie Jo advocated for the Partnership work plan to show how the Partnership will move forward as an organization and continue functioning in a meaningful way, including having a full-time Coordinator, and suggested looking at the Puget Sound Partnership model (see <http://www.psp.wa.gov> for more information)
- Adam agreed that the Partnership will need to continue evolving as a locally-led group and build on the successes of the past 8 years in raising awareness about the value of water and engaging the community in how water is managed with future generations in mind; the Partnership will need to become more organized and get more engaged in seeking funding and doing its own outreach and management
- Suzanne shared a document showing potential funding sources for supporting a Partnership Coordinator position
  - Steve noted that it is unfortunate that there is so much uncertainty around the OWRD funding source and suggested raising this question at the next quarterly Place-Based Planning meeting
  - Alyssa agreed that it would be valuable to ask OWRD about this at the quarterly meeting; \$2 million will be available but waiting to complete rulemaking could create a lengthy delay, and ARPA funds will run out at the end of 2024
  - Steve suggested contacting the Meyer Foundation again; they provided some funding during the planning phase and may be interested in supporting implementation
  - Suzanne described her experience with the Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) grant funding to create a collaborative Council of Water Leaders in the North Santiam watershed
  - The committee agreed that the OWEB capacity grant and the CWMP grant would be good opportunities to pursue
  - ARPA funding can't be used to pay for writing funding applications for these state and federal grants, so the committee discussed options for getting the applications written and will reach out to the Work Group and their own contacts about capacity to help with this
  - An eligible applicant will have to be identified to be the fiscal agent for the grants; Adam stated that Seal Rock Water District will continue to be engaged in the Partnership but that it would be good to get more organizations involved
  - Suzanne added time to the April 9 Work Group agenda to see if members are interested in collaborating on the grant application
- The committee discussed scheduling of future meetings

- The next Coordinating Committee meeting will be on April 15 from 9:00-10:30 am and will focus on finishing proposed revisions to the charter
- The Work Group will not meet in May before the full Partnership meeting; the group will reconvene in June

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