

SUMMARY NOTES

Yahara CLEAN Compact Executive Committee – Plan-editing Workshop with SmithGroup

Friday, January 14, 2022

8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Verex Plaza (150 E. Gilman St, Madison, Level C conference room)

Attendance

Present: Alison Lebwohl (facilitator), Paul Dearlove (chair), Greg Fries, Mark Riedel, James Tye, Kyle Minks, Matt Diebel, J. Blue (SmithGroup)

Anticipated Outcomes

- Decision on:
 - Revised Plan, dated 01/10/22
 - Executive Summary outline & next steps
- Ideas and shared understanding of Compact next steps

Welcome & Check In

Lebwohl and Dearlove kicked off the workshop by reviewing the agenda, meeting objectives, facilitator ground rules, and the process and status of plan editing. Special thanks were given to those members of the Executive Committee who are continuing to help in the drafting of new or refined content. Also reviewed was the content of the meeting packets, including an updated calendar and a second round of page-turn edits prepared by Clean Lakes Alliance.

Summary notes from the December Steering Team and Executive Committee meetings were approved as presented.

The income-expense report, updated through 12/31/21, was approved as presented. The report reflected the additional partner contributions that are being used to cover Jan-Feb facilitation expenses.

Plan Review

Straw poll

Lebwohl asked for a preliminary ‘gradient of agreement’ vote on the revised plan prior to discussing additional editing and content-development needs.

Vote to approve the Yahara CLEAN 3.0 plan, dated 01/10/22 and titled Renew the Blue: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed. It is our collective opinion that this body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values, and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact. (VOTE RESULT: All yellow – “I like it”)

Brief, high-level comments were invited from each participant as part of an opening round.

Tye: It now comes down to funding. Clean Lakes Alliance is now working on a new Executive Summary that can touch on this topic. Clean Lakes will also be working on gathering partner success stories since CLEAN 2.0.

Riedel: Supports edits to the “Call to Action” section in which an even greater emphasis is placed on the good work of partners, especially agriculture. In the drafting of agricultural action language, he recommends starting off with “Support our producers to increase...” so they don’t come across as mandates. Suggests not overlooking the fact that it’s a solid, well-designed plan given the large watershed and scope of work. He will be working with his DNR colleagues to perform a high-level review for 9 Key Elements Plan eligibility.

Minks: Complimented SmithGroup on successfully getting most of the prior feedback incorporated.

Fries: Felt the revised was well written. Indicated that he will reserve most of his comments for the Executive Summary outline discussion.

Diebel: It will be critical for us to get the tone and message right in the new Executive Summary. He was impressed by the large volume of comments and editing requests that are being addressed by the team.

Dearlove: Feels the plan is almost there. Most of the edits now relate to correcting proofreading errors rather than big missing pieces. Complimented Matt for his work in developing much of the new content around progress tracking and reporting. Agrees that it now comes down to funding and how the work gets executed.

Next, Dearlove summarized the more substantive, content-related editing requests for purposes of discussion. This included a review of the “Content Edits” summary that was shared and agreed to at the December Steering Team meeting. He noted that the shared Google Sheet will be updated with outcomes from today’s workshop by next week so SmithGroup can proceed with final revisions. Key decisions were as follows:

“Content Edits” summary from December

- *Introductory section*: Clean Lakes Alliance to eventually replace the cover picture to capture the larger chain of lakes and not have it focus so much on downtown Madison
- *State of the Science*: SmithGroup to complete bullet #2 request regarding manure-processing content
- *Public Engagement Findings*: SmithGroup to acknowledge difficulties and commonality when it comes to improving partnerships with agriculture
- *Priority Actions*: SmithGroup to complete bullet #2 request regarding green infrastructure tools; For bullet #3, the potential promise of market-based solutions will be incorporated into the Executive Summary; For bullet #7, SmithGroup will follow through on this request; For bullet #9 regarding A-02, SmithGroup will develop new action language on managed grazing in consultation with Riedel and Minks; No action requested on any of the “Decision pending” items

ACTION ITEM: Executive Committee members were asked to provide any final feedback or change requests to Dearlove by Wednesday, January 19th. He asked that particular focus be given to the documented edits highlighted as bold text in the tracking spreadsheet, and to the identified

“Implementation Partners” listed for the high-priority actions. After that deadline, SmithGroup will proceed with making the edits as documented in the updated Google Sheet.

Lebwohl called for a repeat of the same vote (see above) to confirm the group’s position, both on where things stand with the revised draft and the direction of the requested edits. **VOTE RESULT: All yellows (“I like it”) and one green (“I love it”).**

Executive Summary Outline Review

Straw poll

Lebwohl requested a preliminary ‘gradient of agreement’ vote on the Executive Summary outline and proposed next steps before opening it up for discussion. Tye prefaced the vote by asking people to view the Executive Summary as the larger document’s Cliff notes and the one thing decision-makers will really read. He said he also hoped to use it as a stand-alone public-messaging piece, meaning it might need to run somewhat longer than a typical Executive Summary, especially once any visuals are added.

Vote to authorize Clean Lakes Alliance to draft a new Executive Summary, using the outline as presented and incorporating any discussion outcomes, for final approval by this body. (VOTE RESULT: All yellows – “I like it”)

Brief, high-level comments were invited from each participant as part of an opening round. (As the creators of the Executive Summary outline, Dearlove and Tye did not participate.)

Riedel: Suggests leading off the Executive Summary by explaining the 3-5 biggest takeaways.

Minks: In reference to an earlier draft idea of using 100% manure- and/or leaf-removal scenarios to highlight potential P-loading changes, he advised it would be too hard to stay succinct and keep to a reasonable page limit. Concern was also expressed in giving the false impression of what is actually feasible. For the section on funding models, he suggested offering example frameworks as a list of options without specific recommendations.

Fries: The tables summarizing the top 14 direct and supporting action recommendations should pull forward into the rest of the plan.

- A question posed about how “leads” were being identified prompted discussion on the topic. There was general interest in staying consistent with the five stakeholder categories and recent decision-making pertaining to how action leads should be labeled. Blue added that a new “Implementation Partners” bullet had been added to the high-priority action writeups.

Finally, Fries said he was concerned about recommending more leaf collection given that DNR gives Madison only \$300 worth of credits.

- There appeared to be general agreement that this recommendation should remain even though the current state incentives were not sufficient by themselves to prompt change in communities such as Madison.

Diebel: Agreed with Minks about the inherent problems of using manure- and leaf-removal examples. He explained that the science cannot currently say what we will get in terms of a phosphorus-loading response. That said, he indicated that the original CLEAN 2.0 analysis was still valid in terms of the

overall loading target leading to a doubling of algae-free days. Singling out manure and leaves is not productive because people will want to glob onto those false hopes and oversimplify the challenge.

- This prompted discussion on the pros and cons of using these types of hypothetical examples. Discussion ended with agreement to not provide a return-on-investment example. Instead, Clean Lakes Alliance will use Riedel's "watershed as a quilt" metaphor to highlight the importance of partners and possibilities, like the new Suck the Muck effort.

Next Steps

Lebwohl called for a repeat of the same vote (see above) to confirm the group's interest in having Clean Lakes Alliance proceed with drafting the Executive Summary. Tye added that once a draft is produced, the Executive Committee will have another opportunity to weigh in. ***All members present voted in favor of the direction given to Clean Lakes Alliance in drafting a new Executive Summary.***

The calendar was then updated based on a request by Tye to allow for more content-development time. Proposed content additions include: 1) a new Executive Summary; 2) a table outlining progress-tracking metrics; 3) a description in Chapter 5.2 of the annual *State of the Lakes* production process; 4) a listing of major partner successes since CLEAN 2.0 as an appendix; 5) a table showing the WISCALM in-lake water quality targets; and 6) a signing statement for Compact executives to officially accept the plan. Consequently, it was agreed that the Executive Committee would reschedule its next meeting from February 11th to February 25th, meaning a draft Executive Summary (Clean Lakes Alliance) and plan update (SmithGroup) will be shared by February 18th. Dearlove will send out a revised calendar following the meeting.

Workshop concluded at 11:30 a.m.