

Land & Water Conservation Committee

Minutes

May 19, 2010

1. Call to order:

The monthly meeting was called to order by Mark Watkins, Director LWCD at 8:37 a.m. Committee members Walt Christensen, Karen Christian, Greg Torres, and Mike Burow were present. Staff members Mark Watkins, Director, Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Nancy Lannert, LWCD; Patricia Cicero, LWCD; and Dennis Vollmer, NRCS were also in attendance. Phil Roou, interested citizen was present and Greg David, Jefferson County Board member arrived at 9:26 a.m.

Members absent: Carlton Zentner

2. Roll Call (establish a quorum):

A quorum was established.

3. Certification of Compliance with the Open Meetings Law:

It was determined that the committee was in compliance with the Open Meetings Law.

4. Review of the May Agenda:

The May agenda was reviewed by the committee members.

5. Election of LWCC Officers

- A. **Chairperson:** Greg Torres nominated Mike Burow for Chairman, Karen Christian seconded the motion. Nominations were closed and in a vote of 4/0, motion carried.

At this point, the meeting was turned over to the elected Chairman.

- B. **Vice-Chairperson:** Mike Burow moved and Karen Christian seconded to elect Greg Torres as Vice-Chairperson of the Land & Water Conservation Committee. Motion carried, 4/0.

- C. **Secretary:** Karen Christian was nominated but declined the nomination of Secretary as her term on the Farm Service Agency County Committee will be ending December 2010. The nomination was withdrawn. Mike Burow moved and Karen Christian seconded to elect Walt Christensen as Secretary of the Land & Water Conservation Committee. Motion carried, 4/0.

6. Set Time and Date for Regular Committee Meetings

The meeting time and date was set as the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. Walt Christensen asked if meeting times could be delayed on a few occasions so that he can attend the Infrastructure Committee meeting. The Infrastructure Committee meets at the same time as Land and Water. It was agreed that the meeting time could be delayed until 8:45-9:00 a.m. on a case by case basis. Christensen will inform the LWCD Directors in advance when a time change is needed.

7. Citizen Comments:

There were no citizen comments.

8. Review and Approval of the March 17, 2010 Meeting Minutes:

Mike Burow made a motion to approve the March 17, 2010 meeting minutes as written, Greg Torres seconded. Motion carried, 4/0.

9. Review County Board Rules Related to the LWCC:

Mark Watkins passed out the County Board rules and Chapter 92 rules for governing legislation pertaining to the duties of the Land Conservation Committee for the Committee's review.

10. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report:

Dennis Vollmer discussed the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) report. See attached.

11. 2009-2010 Tree Sale Report

A total of 8,400 trees were sold in the 2009-2010 tree sale. Revenues were in the amount of \$8400. Expenditures were \$5658.69, not including staff time. Watkins reported that there was one rental each of the tree planter and sprayer this year. DNR tree sales were down which directly affects the number of rentals made each year.

12. County Farm Cropland Access Update

- A. **Letter From Jefferson County Park Department:** Four areas on the County Farm needed to be cleared to allow the farm renters access to various fields. An email was received from Parks Department declining the request for them to clear trees and brush for cropland access due to their workload. The work was subsequently contracted to the County Highway Department. A power point presentation was given showing the four areas that were cleared. The total cost of the project is expected to be about \$4,500. The Corporation Council will be submitting the bills for this work to the Department of Transportation (DOT). Being that the access to the crop fields was blocked due to the Highway 26 by-pass construction, it was felt that there was a reasonable chance to expect reimbursement.
- B. **Quonset Hut Update:** A power point presentation was shown of the demolition of the Quonset hut. The final bill from the Highway Department is not in yet but is anticipated to be less than \$2,000. Additionally, there was a \$375 charge to remove a small quantity of glass putty that contained asbestos.

13. Working Lands Initiative Discussion

- A. **Discuss Consolidation of Old Fees for New Working Lands Program Participants**

The Department made a request of the Committee to establish a fee schedule for new Working Lands Initiative Farmland Preservation participants. It was requested that the fee for new enrollee in the program be set at \$25. It would be similar to the fee schedule from the old Farmland Preservation Program where the Zoning Department charged \$20 for a new zoning certificate and Land Conservation charged \$5 for annual certification. Walt Christensen made a motion, seconded by Mike Burow that the LWCD charge a Working Lands Initiative Farmland Preservation Compliance Certification fee of \$25 for new enrollees in the program. The motion carried 4/0. This new fee schedule would need to be approved by full County Board and would be applicable to the 2011 budget. Christensen would like to see a write up on how the fee process and other aspects of the new Farmland Preservation Program will be handled.
- B. **LWCC Farmland Preservation Steering Committee Representative**

The Zoning Department is putting together a Farmland Preservation Steering Committee to oversee the rewriting of the Land Use Plan for Working Lands Initiative. They have requested the Land Conservation Committee provide a representative to the committee. Greg Torres made a motion that Walt Christensen be appointed as the Working Lands Initiative Steering Committee Representative with Mike Burow as the alternate. Karen Christian seconded the motion. Motion carried 4/0. The Steering Committee will be made up of 13 members which include county farmers, Town Board representatives, Planning and Zoning Committee members and a representative from Economic Development. They are expected to meet 6 to 8 time over the next year and a half. The first meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2010 at 6 p.m.

At this point Greg David asked to be recognized by the chair. He reported that the infrastructure committee elected to hold their meetings the same time as Land Conservation. He asked if Land Conservation could delay their meeting start time to accommodate Walt Christensen's occasional participation on Infrastructure.

He was informed that Land Conservation would be able to have a later start time is given advance notice of the conflicting meetings.

14. Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association (WLWCA) Dues

The Director of WLWCA was asked to poll county members on an increase in dues. Due to budget shortfalls, WLWCA is requesting an increase in the annual dues paid by counties. Currently, Jefferson County pays \$950 in membership dues. WLWCA is proposing an increase based on high/low property values in various counties. They created three different formulas that would, on the low side, leave WLWCA short on revenue, and on the high side, meet their budget requirements. For Jefferson County, the proposed dues would increase to around \$1,600 to \$2,000, based on which formula was selected.

The committee felt that while an increase might be in order, a \$600 plus increase was not acceptable. It was felt that more explanation was needed as to why they could not stay within their budget. Mark Watkins will contact WLWCA and let them know that the LWCC is not supportive of such a large increase and ask that they provide Jefferson County with more information.

15. Discussion and Possible Support of Outagamie Proposed Legislation and Resolution- Allow Taxpayer to Claim the Dairy Farm Modernization and Expansion Credit for Taxable Years Beginning after December 31, 2003, and Before January 1, 2012, and Support the Increase from \$50,000 in Credit for Dairy and Livestock Farm Modernization to \$75,000.

The Land Conservation Committee read the resolution from Outagamie County. They asked that more information be made available on this issue at the next scheduled meeting.

16. Land & Water Resource Management (LWRM) Plan Update

Patricia Cicero updated the Committee on the progress of the LWRM Plan Update. She indicated that this is the third update. The original plan was written in 1999 and requires updating every 5 years. The Committee will need to hold a public hearing in the near future as required by State Statutes. For more information on the update, please see attached handout.

17. Monthly Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD) Financial Report

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed. See attached.

18. Correspondence:

A. Target Hunger

The Target Hunger Program sent a card thanking the County Board for participating in the 2009/2010 venison donation program. See attached.

19. Set next meeting and possible agenda items:

It was decided by the members that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Land & Water Conservation Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 16, 2010 at 8:30 in Room 202. Possible agenda items include: Monthly financial report, County Farm cropland access update, and LWRM Plan update, and Working Lands Initiative Steering Committee Report, and the Outagamie County Resolution update.

20. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Walt Christensen and seconded by Greg Torres at 10:11 a.m. Motion carried, 4/0.