

# Land & Water Conservation Committee Minutes

## July 19, 2023

### 1. Call to Order:

The monthly meeting was called to order by Matt Foelker at 8:30 am. Committee Members Matt Foelker (Chair) (UW), Walt Christensen (Vice-Chair), Dan Herbst (UW), Cassie Richardson (8:30 - 10:00), Meg Turville-Heitz (via Zoom), and Margaret Burlingham (PACE), were present. Also in attendance were Patricia Cicero, Director, Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Kim Liakopoulos, LWCD; Sam Peterson, LWCD; Joe Strupp, LWCD; and Michael Luckey, Assistant County Administrator. Kirsten Jurcek (FSA) was excused.

- Others in Attendance: Mary Bender, Jefferson County Health Department, Joan Callan (via Zoom) (8:30 - 10:10), Anthony Gulig, Anita Martin, Jim Reu, and Matt Zangl (via Zoom) (8:30 - 9:00)

### 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 July Agenda:

The July agenda was reviewed by the committee members. No changes were proposed.

### 5. Approval of the June 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes:

Herbst made a motion to approve the June 21, 2023 meeting minutes as written, Richardson seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

### 6. Public Comment:

Reu gave public comment on item #15.

Gulig gave public comment on item #17.

### 7. Communications:

- Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection July 2023 Report.

### 8. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report:

NRCS did not attend the meeting therefore a report was unavailable.

### 9. Discussion on Departmental Updates:

Cicero updated the committee on the Watertown Water Quality Trading Program. A public meeting with local farmers is being planned for the end of August. Rock River Coalition is working on program marketing and a logo. Zach Nagel is getting acclimated to the water resources job, meeting with lake and stream monitors, performing field work, and meeting with LWCD partners. Dave Hoffman is conducting Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) monitoring, and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) monitoring.

### 10. Discussion on Jefferson County Groundwater Study Update:

Just under 900 landowners are participating in the study. The first batch of test results are expected in July. A letter will be sent with the results. Additional information will be sent to landowners whose wells test above human health standards.

### 11. Discussion on Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Work Group Meetings:

The last meeting was June 27<sup>th</sup>. Zangl informed the committee that a draft ordinance is being crafted with guidance from the work group. An evaluation of that draft will be at the July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### 12. Discussion on How the Federal Supreme Court Wetland Decision Could Impact Jefferson County:

Cicero summarized the press release from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

**13. Discussion on Manure Complaint Report:**

Strupp and Cicero gave an overview of the report and answered committee questions.

**14. Discussion on Producer-Led Groups: Jefferson County Soil Builders (JCSB) & Rock River Regenerative Graziers (R3G):** Peterson participated in the Rain and Runoff Presentation with JCSB at Brew with a View. Approximately 45 people were in attendance. There have been 8 cover crop contracts signed, 4 from new participants. JCSB is staging a field day hosted by Practical Farmers of Iowa September 21<sup>st</sup>. JCSB will host a post-harvest field day in November, and a winter workshop in December.

**15. Discussion and Possible Action on Notices of Noncompliance - Farmland Preservation Program (FPP):** Weenonah Brattset Trust, Alex Kolodzne Trust, Donald & Shirley Schneider Trust, David Zabel. Burlingham made a motion to accept the notices, Christensen seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

James Reu and Reu Farms Partnership. Strupp outlined the notices. Reu has agreed to update and follow his conservation plan with LWCD. The farms will be checked for compliance in spring of 2024. Christensen made a motion not to accept the James Reu and Reu Farm Partnership notices, Richardson seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

**16. Discussion and Possible Action on Cancellation of Notices of Noncompliance - FPP:**

There were no cancellations.

**17. Discussion and Possible Action on Input to Policy Guidance Regarding Sale of County-Owned Property:**

Gulig voiced his concerns about the outdated guidance in regard the sale of county-owned farmland and asked the committee to consider updating the policy. The committee had a discussion regarding land sales, how it affects county departments and citizens. Committees, in addition to the Finance Committee, should be involved when the land in question is under their purview. Christensen mentioned the strategic plan and the opportunity to update the policy to align with the strategic plan update.

**18. Discussion and Possible Action on Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Applications & Baseline Documentation:** The Cummings resolution has been approved by the County Board. Depending on the appraisal there may not be enough funding available to pay 25% of the Rollefson easement.

**19. Discussion and Possible Action on Future PACE Funding:**

The committee discussed other funding sources for PACE, i.e., Dane County has funding from a referendum, the Town of Dunn has funding from individual assessments, Rock County has funding from utilities. Burlingham proposed getting funding from the solar farms since the farms are on agricultural land. Christensen suggested contacting Enbridge.

**20. Review of the Monthly Financial Report (May):**

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed.

**21. Discussion on Items for the Next Agenda:**

Possible agenda items include: Spray Irrigation of Manure and Other Industrial Waste, Policy Guidance Regarding Sale of County-Owned Property, Future PACE Funding

- **Next Scheduled Meeting:** August 16, 2023 @ 8:30 in the Highway Committee Room

**22. Adjournment:**

Herbst made a motion to adjourn at 10:15 am, Burlingham seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

Committee member Kirsten Jurcek has been appointed to serve on this committee due to her status as the designated Farm Service Agency committee member. All her opinions and votes are as a member of the public and as a producer/farmer, not as a representative of the Farm Service Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, or Federal Government.

*Kim Liakopoulos  
Administrative Specialist I ~ LWCD*