

# Land & Water Conservation Committee Minutes

## August 16, 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) (via Zoom), Dan Herbst (UW) (via Zoom), Cassie Richardson (via Zoom), Meg Turville-Heitz, Kirsten Jurcek (FSA), and Margaret Burlingham (PACE) (8:30 - 10:35), were present. Also in attendance were Patricia Cicero, Director, Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Kim Liakopoulos, LWCD; Dave Hoffman, LWCD (8:30 - 10:45); Sam Peterson, LWCD (8:30 - 10:45); Joe Strupp, LWCD (8:30 - 10:45); Michael Luckey, Assistant County Administrator; and Merica Xiong, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

- Others in Attendance: Elizabeth Chilsen, Jefferson County Health Department (8:30 - 9:50), Ken Genskow, University of Wisconsin-Madison (8:30 - 9:50), Matt Zangl, Jefferson County Planning & Zoning Department (8:30 - 9:50), Anita Martin, Dean Weichmann, Frankie Fuller (via Zoom), and Joan Callan (via Zoom).

### 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 August Agenda:

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

### 5. Approval of the July 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes:

Burlingham made a motion to approve the July 19, 2023 meeting minutes as written, Herbst seconded. Motion passed 7/0.

### 6. Public Comment:

There were no comments.

### 7. Communications:

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

### 8. Discussion and Possible Action on Spray Irrigation of Manure and Industrial Waste - Elizabeth Chilsen, Jefferson County Health Department, and Ken Gesnkow, University of Wisconsin-Madison:

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/manureirrigation/files/2017/04/Manure-Irrigation-Workgroup-Report-2016.pdf>  
Chilsen and Genskow each gave a presentation on spray irrigation of manure. A question-and-answer period followed each presentation.

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

Merica Xiong is the new District Conservationist. Xiong introduced herself to the committee and gave an overview of her education and experience.

### 10. Discussion on Departmental Updates:

Cicero is working on the Strategic Plan. Cicero and Zach Nagel are attending Rock Lake water level meetings to provide information on resources. Cicero, Hoffman, and Nagel are working on the Healthy Lakes Program. Cicero met with the cities of Watertown and Whitewater, and a consultant for the city of Fort Atkinson, regarding a water quality trading program. Hoffman, Peterson, and Strupp are working on cover crop cost sharing.

**11. Discussion on Watertown Waterways Improvement Program:**

Cicero, Hoffman, the City of Watertown, and Rock River Coalition created a meeting invitation and brochure for the Watertown Waterways Improvement Program (WWIP). The invitation was mailed to over 400 landowners within the watershed. The WWIP meeting will be held August 30, 2023.

**12. Discussion on Producer-Led Groups: Jefferson County Soil Builders (JCSB) & Rock River Regenerative Graziers (R3G):** JCSB and R3G are staging a field day hosted by Practical Farmers of Iowa 09/21/2023.

JCSB will host a post-harvest field day in November, and a winter workshop in December. R3G has finished up their pasture walks for the season.

**13. Discussion and Possible Action on County Farm Lease Process:**

Cicero discussed extending the lease for a year due to a potential change in acreage.

**14. Discussion and Possible Action on Notices of Noncompliance - Farmland Preservation Program (FPP):**

There were no notices.

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

There were no cancellations.

**16. Discussion on American Farmland Trust (AFT) Funding for the Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Program:** Hoffman informed the committee that a \$10,000 grant from AFT was applied for and approved. This grant will be used to cover the costs of easement related items including a title search and appraisal. Cicero discussed the Memorandum of Understanding with AFT.

**17. Discussion and Possible Action on PACE Applications & Baseline Documentation:**

Hoffman is working on the Cummings easement to update the title insurance and set a closing date. The Rollefson title search is complete, the application will be submitted, an appraisal is next. PACE applications are being updated and a title search will now be required before an appraisal.

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

Christensen provided an update on Finance Committee discussions regarding the sale of county-owned property and the PACE program.

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

Cicero will ask AFT to attend an LWCC meeting to discuss funding possibilities. Christensen mentioned the strategic plan update and the opportunity to include PACE funding in the update.

**20. Discussion and Possible Action on Department 2024 Budget:**

Cicero summarized the 2024 budget and outlined the budget process.

**21. Review of the Monthly Financial Report (June):**

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed.

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

Possible agenda items include: Lake grant resolutions, PACE funding, Town of Ixonia ordinance.

- **Next Scheduled Meeting:** September 20, 2023 @ 8:30 in the Highway Committee Room

**23. Adjournment:**

Herbst made a motion to adjourn at 10:55 am, Turville-Heitz seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

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*