

Land & Water Conservation Committee Minutes

September 18, 2024

1. Call to Order:

The monthly meeting was called to order by Meg Turville-Heitz at 1:30pm. Committee Members Meg Turville-Heitz (Chair), Margaret Burlingham (PACE), Walt Christensen, Elizabeth Hafften (UW) (via Zoom), Cassie Richardson, and Scott Schultz (Ag), were present. Also in attendance were Patricia Cicero, Director, Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Kim Liakopoulos, LWCD; Sam Peterson, LWCD; and Michael Luckey, Assistant to the County Administrator (via Zoom). Matt Foelker (UW) (Vice-Chair) was excused.

- Others in Attendance: Anita Martin, Sue Marx

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 September Agenda:

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

5. Approval of the August 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes:

Christensen made a motion to approve the August 21, 2024 meeting minutes as written, Schultz seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

6. Public Comment:

Sue Marx gave public comment on an item that wasn't on the agenda.

7. Communications:

- Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection September 2024 Report.

8. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report:

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

9. Discussion on Departmental Updates:

Cover crop cost sharing contract signups are ongoing, and reimbursements have begun. The City of Watertown and Dave Hoffman have submitted the first water quality trade paperwork to the Department of Natural Resources for approval. Colton Hutchinson is finishing up the wetland survey around Marsh & Mud Lake and completing data analysis of the Lower Spring Lake aquatic plant survey. Peterson has received his federal computer. Cicero is working to update the department website. Cicero attended the Executive Committee meeting regarding resolutions being sent to Wisconsin Counties Association. The 2025 department budget was approved by the Finance Committee on Tuesday.

10. Discussion and Possible Action on County Farm Lease:

Cicero outlined the reason to extend the County Farm Lease. Christensen made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the extension of the county farm agricultural lease, Burlingham seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Transfer of Unused Cost Share Funds to Other Counties:

Cicero discussed transferring unused cost share funds. Richardson made a motion to transfer any unused cost share funds to other counties, Schultz seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

12. Discussion on Producer-Led Groups: Jefferson County Soil Builders (JCSB) & Rock River Regenerative

Graziers (R3G): Jefferson High School Future Farmers of America (FFA) received cover crop cost sharing with JCSB funds. Peterson outlined all of the ways JCSB is conducting outreach, i.e. brochures, Facebook, field days, flyers, handouts, press releases, workshops, and information from DATCP. September 19th JCSB and R3G are hosting a field day at Double S Ranch in Watertown. JCSB, R3G, and 3 producer-led groups from other counties are hosting a winter workshop on December 10th. JCSB and R3G have applied for 2025 grants with DATCP and the Nature Conservancy.

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

There were no notices.

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

There were no cancellations.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Applications & Baseline Documentation: Dave Hoffman (LWCD) is working on the Rollefson easement.

16. Review of the Monthly Financial Report (July):

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed.

17. Discussion on Items for the Next Agenda:

Possible agenda items include: Wildlife Damage Program, Multi-Discharger Variance 2025 Application, Southern Area Association Tour, PACE Application Fee.

- **Next Scheduled Meeting:** October 16, 2024 at 8:30am in Room C1021

18. Adjournment:

Richardson made a motion to adjourn at 2:20pm, Burlingham seconded. Motion passed 6/0.