

# Land & Water Conservation Committee Minutes

## February 19, 2025

### 1. Call to Order:

The monthly meeting was called to order by Meg Turville-Heitz at 8:30am. Committee Members Meg Turville-Heitz (Chair), Matt Foelker (UW) (Vice-Chair), Margaret Burlingham (PACE), Walt Christensen, Cassie Richardson (via Zoom), and Scott Schultz (Ag), were present. Also in attendance were Patricia Cicero, Director, Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Kim Liakopoulos, LWCD; Dave Hoffman, LWCD; Sam Peterson, LWCD; Joe Strupp, LWCD; Michael Luckey, Interim County Administrator (via Zoom); Danielle Thompson, County Corporation Counsel; Merica Xiong and Zachary Thayer, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) (via Zoom). Elizabeth Hafften (UW) was absent.

- Others in Attendance: Dean Weichmann, Jefferson County Soil Builders, Mary Dougherty, Bayfield County Board (via Phone), 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 February Agenda:

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

### 5. Approval of the December 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes:

Burlingham requested a correction of the minutes (Item #7 Communications) to read American Farmland Trust, not American Family Trust. Foelker made a motion to approve the December 18, 2024 meeting minutes as corrected, Christensen seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

### 6. Public Comment:

There were no comments.

### 7. Communications:

- Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection January & February 2025 Reports
- Governor Evers Agriculture Budget Proposal

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

Xiong and Thayer discussed the large reduction in the NRCS workforce and funding due to the new administration. Xiong spoke to the committee about the impact this will have on Jefferson County residents and NRCS programs.

### 9. Discussion on Departmental Updates:

Turville-Heitz and Cicero attended the Southern Area Association meeting. Cicero attended a planning meeting for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Korth Park, a Town of Oakland meeting on the Enbridge oil spill, strategic plan meetings, and gave a presentation to North Central WI Stormwater Coalition with the City of Watertown on the water quality trade program. Colton Hutchinson viewed permanent piers constructed on Rock Lake in 2024 with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and assisted Lake Ripley Management District on an erosion study of the inlet stream. Dave Hoffman and Hutchinson put together a presentation on the study of the wetlands adjacent to Rock, Marsh and Mud Lakes and presented it to Lake Mills City Council February 18<sup>th</sup>. Another wetland presentation for the public will be February 24<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm at the Lake Mills Community Center/City Hall. Strupp and Peterson conducted Nutrient Management Plan classes for farmers writing their own plans.

**10. Discussion and Possible Action on Five Year Review of Land and Water Resources Management Plan:**

Cicero outlined the review of the Land and Water Resource Management Plan and answered committee questions. The plan review will be presented to the State Land and Water Conservation Board April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**11. Discussion on Spill from a Manure Storage in the Town of Cold Spring:**

A manure spill was reported and is being investigated. Strupp and Peterson are working with the DNR and the landowner. LWCD sent the landowner a letter requesting information on a repair that was implemented. The landowner is cooperative.

**12. Discussion on Groundwater Education Plans:**

Cicero and Hutchinson are working with the Health Department on groundwater outreach. Cicero will prepare a press release for Groundwater Awareness Week, March 9<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>. Cicero will submit an article to Rock River Coalition print newsletter regarding the groundwater study and online dashboard. April 7<sup>th</sup> (time TBD) at UW-Extension Jefferson County, a UW Steven's Point researcher will give a presentation on the groundwater study results. The event will also include: handouts, nitrate screening, well water testing kits, and information on free arsenic sampling for those who reside in the Towns of Ixonia and Watertown. April 7<sup>th</sup> the Health Department will be promoting nitrate screening during National Public Health Week. April 26<sup>th</sup> at the Jefferson High School Sustain Jefferson Earth Day event, LWCD will offer groundwater education and nitrate screening. May 17<sup>th</sup> at the Humane Society of Jefferson County's Furry 5k, county staff will offer groundwater education and nitrate screening. In June (date TBD) the Health Department open house will include groundwater education and nitrate screening. July 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> at the Jefferson County Fair, county staff will provide groundwater education and nitrate screening.

**13. Discussion and Possible Action on Holding Future Meetings in the County Board Room:**

Due to the limited space available in C1021, Turville-Heitz would like to see if the County Board room will work better for the monthly meetings. The March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting will take place in the County Board room.

**14. Discussion on Producer-Led Groups: Jefferson County Soil Builders (JCSB) & Rock River Regenerative Graziers (R3G):** JCSB and R3G had meetings in January to discuss event planning and 2025 cost share. JCSB has submitted their Annual Report to DATCP. Peterson and Weichmann will attend a soil builders event in Plover February 25<sup>th</sup>.

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

There were no notices.

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

There were no cancellations.

**17. Discussion and Possible Action on Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Applications & Baseline Documentation:** Dave Hoffman is pursuing a title commitment for the Rollefson easement.

**18. Discussion on Ideas for Southern Area Association Tour:**

After receiving input from staff and the committee, LWCD staff will narrow down the list of possible tour locations and reach out to see if the locations would be available for the tour.

**19. Review of the Monthly Financial Report:**

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed.

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

Possible agenda items include: Southern Area Tour, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Farm Tour

- **Next Scheduled Meeting:** March 19, 2025 at 8:30am in Room C2063

**21. Adjournment:**

Foelker made a motion to adjourn at 9:30am, Burlingham seconded. Motion passed 6/0.