

# Land and Water Conservation Committee Minutes

## May 20, 2026

### 1. Call to Order:

The monthly meeting was called to order by Patricia Cicero at 8:30am. Margaret Burlingham (PACE), Walt Christensen, Matt Foelker (UW), Elizabeth Hafften (UW) (@8:35), Scott Schultz (Ag), Gary Skalitzky, and Meg Turville-Heitz were present. Also in attendance were Patricia Cicero, Director, Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Kim Liakopoulos, LWCD; and Zach Thayer, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

- Others in Attendance: Anita Martin; via Teams: James Kuckkan, Watertown Daily Times; Sue Marx; Michael.

### 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 Agenda:

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

### 5. Introductions:

Cicero introduced herself to the Committee, then asked everyone to introduce themselves.

### 6. Election of Officers - Chair and Vice-Chair:

Chairperson: Foelker nominated Turville-Heitz to serve as Chairperson, Turville-Heitz accepted. No other nominations for Chairperson were made. Turville-Heitz was elected Chairperson 5/0.

Vice-Chairperson: Christensen nominated Foelker to serve as Vice-Chairperson, Foelker accepted. No other nominations for Vice-Chairperson were made. Foelker was elected Vice-Chairperson 5/0.

### 7. Approval of the March 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes:

Burlingham made a motion to approve the March 18, 2026 meeting minutes as written, Schultz seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

### 8. Public Comment:

Anita Martin gave public comment on the March 18, 2026 meeting minutes.

### 9. Communications:

- Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Report.
- Land and Water Conservation Committee Training.

### 10. Discussion on Land and Water Conservation Committee (LWCC) and Department Overview:

Cicero gave an LWCC and LWCD overview on: Land and Water Conservation Department and Committee Authority, Duties, and Personnel; Jefferson County Land and Water Resources Management Plan; LWCD Annual Report; LWCC Member Resources; and answered committee questions.

### 11. Discussion on Committee Representation on the Southern Area Association:

Turville-Heitz discussed the Southern Area Association and the importance of representation. Turville-Heitz offered to continue being Jefferson County's LWCC representative and Christensen volunteered to be the alternate.

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

Thayer discussed NRCS programs: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The deadline for new signups, including designs, is 9/15/2026.

### 13. Discussion on Departmental Updates:

LWCD staff completed collecting water samples of wells near the avian influenza composting site in collaboration with the Health Department. Cicero and Joe Strupp met with UW Extension and Economic Development staff to discuss having an information gathering session on the economic development needs of agriculture businesses in Jefferson County. Colton Hutchinson and Dave Hoffman met with a new group working on Whitewater Creek and offered their

expertise. Hutchinson conducted stream monitoring training with the Rock River Coalition. LWCD and Zoning held a Shoreland Contractors Workshop to educate contractors on local, State, and County shoreland laws and best practices in shoreland areas. Hutchinson attended the annual lakes and rivers conference. Cicero and Maureen McBroom gave a presentation on the Watertown Waterways Improvement Program (WWIP). Cicero and McBroom gave a WWIP presentation to Rock River Stormwater Group. Hoffman and DATCP staff conducted Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) monitoring. Hutchinson and Hoffman attended a wetlands and waterways workshop. Sam Peterson attended the Wisconsin Grazing Academy and gained knowledge about grazing systems and practices. Cicero attended Strategic Plan Implementation team meetings: Highly Regarded Quality of Life and Transformative Government. Hutchinson conducted a curly leaf pondweed survey on Rock Lake. Cicero and Strupp conducted a site visit where the landowner experienced erosion from a significant storm to offer expert advice.

14. Discussion on Avian Influenza Updates:

LWCD staff helped the Health Department with well-water sampling at private wells near the compost site.

15. Discussion on 2025-2026 Annual Tree and Shrub Sale:

5,290 trees and shrubs were sold and 1 bundle was donated to the Parks Department.

16. Discussion on Fourth Grade Farm Tour:

The Fourth Grade Farm Tour was hosted by Kutz Dairy. LWCC members Burlingham, Christensen, Schultz, and Turville-Heitz attended along with Dave Hoffman and Colton Hutchison from LWCD. The attendees put on the “Apple as the Earth” demonstration and presented the groundwater flow model. With the help of two Jefferson Future Farmers of America (FFA) students, everything went very well. Christensen asked Cicero to send a letter on behalf of the LWCC to the Jefferson FFA teacher complementing the two students that worked at the LWCD booth. The kids were excellent and we’d love to have them help again next year.

17. Discussion on Producer-Led Groups: Jefferson County Soil Builders (JCSB) and Rock River Regenerative Graziers (R3G):

Cicero informed the committee about the JCSB field day in Milford “Planting Green” May 28, 2026. Schultz informed the committee about a grazing workshop May 29, 2026 with Joel Salatin at Brattset Family Farm, and “Breakfast with the Birds” a guided bird watching and breakfast event hosted at Brattset Family Farm May 30, 2026. Schultz spoke about the possibility of a grazing workshop once a month due to interest in the current workshops.

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

Daniel and Gwynn Novak Trust, Barbara Porter-Quam Trust

Foelker made a motion to accept the notices, Skalitzy seconded. Motion passed 7/0.

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

There were no cancellations.

20. Discussion and Possible Action on Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Applications and Baseline

Documentation: Cicero informed the committee that Rollefson’s lawyer contacted NRCS legal counsel regarding the easement and deed. They have yet to hear back. NRCS canceled the Rollefson easement application.

21. Review of the Monthly Financial Report:

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed.

22. Discussion and Possible Action on Future Meeting Schedule and Items for the Next Agenda:

The Land and Water Conservation Committee meetings will remain on the third Wednesday of the month at 8:30am in room C2063 unless otherwise noticed. Possible agenda items include: grazing workshop update, groundwater flow model demonstration.

- Next Scheduled Meeting: June 17, 2026 at 8:30am in Room C2063

23. Adjournment:

Burlingham made a motion to adjourn at 9:45am, Hafften seconded. Motion passed 7/0.