

**MINUTES OF THE
LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING
January 21, 2009**

Members Present: Chairman Tom Rudolph, Wilbur Petroskey, Matt Matteson, Jack Martinson, Rod Kuczarski, and Gary Baier

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Nancy Hollands (County Conservationist), Jean Hansen (Conservation Specialist), Jennifer Holman (AIS Coordinator), Barb Payne (Secretary), Ruth Sproul (News of the North), and Ben Brusco (TAG Member), Patti and Jay Pazera (public), Peter Wolk (County Supervisor), Brian Desmond (Corporation Counsel).

Call to Order

Chairman Rudolph called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room #1 on the second floor at the Oneida County Courthouse. He noted that the meeting of the Land and Water Conservation Committee has been properly noticed in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and meets the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Approve Agenda/Approve Minutes

Motion by Matteson, second by Petroskey to approve the current agenda and the minutes from the December 17th meeting with the order of agenda items at the discretion of the Chairman. Motion carried, all ayes.

Set date for next meeting

Chairman Rudolph noted the next meeting dates will be Wednesday, February 18th at 9:00 a.m. and Monday, March 16th at 1:00 p.m.

Public Comments:

Mrs. Patti Pazera stated she lives on a lake. Whenever she hears people arguing about issues against AIS education, she commented that it is much cheaper to prevent something from happening by educating the public, than trying to deal with it after it has become a problem in our lakes. Ms. Pazera commented AIS education is money very well spent. Discussion followed by Committee.

AIS Grant Application/Resolution for 2009

Holman stated a resolution has been generated with the assistance of Corporation Counsel. The Committee had previously provided authorization to proceed with applying for a three-year DNR grant in the amount of \$200,000. Corporation Counsel, Brian Desmond stated he was present to answer any questions concerning this resolution. The Committee noted one change to be made on line 24. The resolution was amended and presented to the Committee for their approval. Committee discussion followed. Motion by Baier, second by Petroskey to approve the resolution as amended and to forward it to the County Board for approval. Rudolph (aye); Petroskey (aye); Matteson (aye); Kuczarski (aye); Baier (aye); Martinson (nay); Motion carried, 5 – ayes and 1 – nay.

AIS grants/Budgets/Activities/Strategic Plan Comments & 07/08 grant report comments

Holman stated Kevin Gauthier, DNR, had reviewed the grant application and gave his approval. Gauthier suggested adding support letters from various lake associations. Holman verbally listed the lake associations that have and will be providing letters of support for this \$200,000 grant. Holman stated she had made some changes to the 2009 – 2011 AIS grant project management task and project budget spreadsheets. Tom Rudolph had provided some suggestions after attending the OCLRA meeting on Saturday. Holman stated she has until January 31st to submit the final application to the DNR. Holman stated Gauthier suggested several changes in the allocations of monies. Holman reviewed other areas where changes were made to the amounts allocated. Holman explained the task management spreadsheet and the grant application form to the Committee and asked if they had any questions. Committee discussion followed.

Poster for Wisconsin Lake Convention

Holman reported she had submitted an abstract regarding the Oneida County Dry Hydrant Tanker Truck Ordinance. In the abstract she explained what we have done while working with the fire departments and what the fire departments are doing to protect our lakes. The abstract was accepted and Holman was asked to put everything on a poster for the Wisconsin Lakes Convention in March. Packets were handed out to the Committee about the upcoming conference. Motion by Matteson, second by Kuczarski to approve the sponsoring of an AIS poster at the Wisconsin Lakes Convention. Motion carried, all ayes.

AIS Signage

Holman reported 235 signs were purchased with 2008 grant money. Each sign is printed with the Oneida County AIS Transportation Ordinance which was adopted by the County in May of 2008. The signs were manufactured by Shirts, Signs & Designs for the cost of \$11.90 each sign, bringing the total cost to \$2,796.00. Holman stated she sent out a global email about three weeks ago to all the town chairmen, lake associations, and the Committee members notifying them they could pick up the signs in our office. They were asked to call and reserve signs. We have distributed approximately 135 signs already. The DNR contacted Holman and asked for thirty signs. They will post the signs at their public boat landings. Holman stated she had recently supplied the DNR with a list of the individuals who have picked up signs.

Holman was excused at 9:40 a.m., and Ben Brusco was excused at 9:45 a.m.

Wildlife Damage Program Services/Deer Processing Program

Hollands reported we have received the final invoices from the two participating deer processors. The Lake Tomahawk Meat Market processed 19 deer at \$50.00 per deer for a total amount of \$950.00. TJ's Butcher Block processed 24 deer at \$50.00 per deer for a total amount of \$1,200.00. Hollands reported the amount of deer processed this year was down from the totals in 2007. Hollands stated she will be receiving the statewide information on the deer processing totals soon. Petroskey requested the next meeting be charged to the wildlife damage program.

Hollands reported that Bill Ludwig, Wildlife Damage Consultant, doesn't want to continue his contractual services with the County for 2009. Hollands stated that some options were discussed at the last meeting. One option is to enter into an agreement using the USDA Wildlife Services to do the technical field work. Hollands stated she has talked to Hansen about it as well. Hollands stated if there is a reduction in cost share funds in March, it could affect Hansen's position. These duties and the field work could be additional hours and revenues for Hansen to fill in the gap if the cost share monies are reduced. Hollands would prefer to wait another month or two to see what happens when the State budget is finalized. Hollands stated that one thing the County should consider as budgets get tighter is to utilize existing personnel within a department, if they are qualified to do the work, rather than contracting out for services or hiring limited term employees. If there are revenue cuts, Hollands stated the County should consider its current employees first before we hire out for services. Committee discussion followed.

County Cost Share Program

Hollands reported all the landowners have been reimbursed for contracts that have been completed in 2008. We have sent the reimbursement forms to DATCP. Hollands she had recently received a letter from DATCP cautioning the Counties about entering into any new cost share contracts. The earliest we could enter into new cost share contracts for 2009 would be April. Hollands stated we will have to wait until we have the actual signed grant contract from DATCP before we make any commitments for 2009.

Hansen reported she has been contacted by several landowners late in 2008 expressing their interest in the 2009 grant cycle. Hansen stated she is uncertain what those amounts would be. Hansen stated she may send a letter to the four or five landowners who are interested in the cost-share program. She would ask if they are still interested and explain the possible reduction in grant monies which may have an impact on these projects in 2009.

Rudolph reported that he had recently participated, as part of the LWCB Executive Committee, in a teleconference call with DATCP staff with regard primarily to the funding allocations for 2009. Rudolph stated it is unclear what reductions will take place and where they will occur. The LWCB has scheduled a Special Meeting for February 20th to address concerns associated with the Governor's Budget proposals. Rudolph said there is concern and most definitely cuts will be made. A reduction in grant monies to the Cost Share Program is a definite possibility. The LWCB is working diligently to maintain the staffing grants at the present levels. Committee discussion followed.

Technical Assistance Provided to County Forestry

Hansen reported she was approached late in 2007 and asked to provide some technical assistance for Town Line Lake County Park. Stacy Dehne, DATCP Engineer, and Hansen did a survey at Town Line County Park and assessed erosion control in four concerned areas. Hansen reported she had finished the design the first part of January on the four areas of erosion control options. Hansen wants to meet with John Bilogan, Forestry Director, to go over some of the designs.

Hansen stated that approximately 51 hours have been spent between Dehne and herself on this project. Hansen reported to Petroskey that she would be willing to present the information on the Town Line County Park project at an upcoming Forestry Committee meeting. Committee discussion followed.

Letter from Department of Administration on State Aid Program Cuts

Hollands handed out emails regarding a letter from the Department of Administration on program cuts that may become necessary for the State. Sorenson sent an email asking Hollands if the Land & Water Conservation Department had budgeted any of this money and the department's plan of action if these state aids are cut. Hollands stated that if the reduction was for a small amount, we may be able deal with it. Hollands further stated that if the major share of our allocation were cut, it could be devastating to the Land & Water Conservation Department. The memorandum to Counties from Richard Castelnova, DATCP, and Gordon Stevenson, DNR, urged us to "use caution in making irreversible commitments based on expectations that we will receive the full amounts of their staff and cost-share allocations for 2009". Hollands stated, at a staff meeting recently, her staff volunteered to take a day or two off without pay to help with the budget crisis. The revenue would help offset costs in the department budget. It would need union approval. Committee discussion followed.

Lake Districts/Agency Reports (FSA, NRCS, LWCD, UWEX, DNR, LWCB, WLWCA, & RC&D)

Bear Lake District – Martinson reported the Bear Lake District is still having meetings in regard to development around the lake.

Mid Lake District – Petroskey had nothing new to report this month from the Mid Lake District.

Thunder Lake District – Baier had nothing new to report from the Thunder Lake District.

Horsehead Lake District – Rudolph reported the next meeting will be held on Monday, April 6th. The lake management study is continuing. The aerator is operating and there seems to be quite a bit of fishing activity on the lake.

FSA – Kuczarski reported it is likely that Oneida County will have a drought designation for last summer. The summer was wet and cool early but it became really dry in July and August. Loan rates for producers are reasonable right now. Kuczarski was reelected in January for a term of three years.

NRCS – No one present.

LWCD – Hollands reported the department has been busy working on year-end balances for our grant programs. We have until February 15th to file all our 2008 DATCP reports for reimbursement. The wildlife damage financial report deadline is coming up March 1st. The department has assisted Holman with the AIS grant application which is due February 1st. Hollands stated this time of year is very busy with reporting on grants and getting our reimbursements from the previous calendar year. Hollands asked the Committee how they would like to have information provided to them in the future. Hollands stated it can be emailed, mailed, or put in their mailboxes in the County Clerk's office. Committee discussion followed. Hansen reported she will continue working with ITS department to develop a website for LWCD.

Hansen was excused at 10:35 a.m.

UWEX – No one present.

DNR – No one present.

LWCB – Rudolph reported the next meeting of the LWCB will be February 3rd. The Board will be reviewing four LWRM plans from the Counties at this meeting. Rudolph stated that a special meeting will be held regarding the allocations after the Governor's budget is released. This special meeting will be held on February 20th in Madison. The KARST Forum is being rescheduled.

WLWCA – Rudolph reported he attended a regional meeting of the NACD in Chicago on January 8 & 9. Rudolph stated they considered the resolutions coming from the eight states in our North Central Region. The three resolutions that are of national significance came from our WLWCA. Rudolph stated that in fact two of them are from the Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Committee. All three Wisconsin resolutions were adopted by the Regional Board of Directors.

They will be presented at the national meeting in New Orleans next month. Rudolph stated he would be attending the NACD meeting in New Orleans the first week in February.

RC&D – Rudolph reported the Lumberjack RC&D held a meeting here in Rhinelander on January 14th. The budget was adopted for 2009. Lumberjack will be sending a representative to the National RC&D legislative session in Washington.

Monthly Budget Review

Motion by Petroskey, second by Martinson, to approve the monthly budget summary for December of 2008 for the Land & Water Conservation Department, Wildlife Damage Program, and AIS Program. Motion carried, all ayes.

Travel Authorization

Motion by Baier, second by Matteson to approve attendance at the following meetings. Motion carried, all ayes.

March 18 – 20, 2009 2009 Wisconsin Lakes Convention Green Bay, Wisconsin

Approval of invoices, purchase orders, and line item transfers

Motion by Baier, second by Martinson to approve the invoices as presented. Motion carried, all ayes. A list of the approved bills is attached to the minutes.

Hollands presented the line item transfer needed for the Wildlife Damage Program budget to cover the deer processing costs for 2008. Motion by Baier, second by Petroskey to approve the line item transfer to cover the deer processing costs for 2008. Motion carried, all ayes.

Items for the next meeting agenda

Agenda items to be determined at a later date.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:05a.m. Motion by Petroskey, second by Baier. Motion carried, all ayes.

Thomas Rudolph
Chairman

Nancy Hollands
County Conservationist