

MINUTES OF THE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, August 19, 2009

Oneida County Courthouse – 9:00 a.m. – Committee Room 1

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

Members Absent: Rod Kuczarski (excused absence).

Others Present: Nancy Hollands (County Conservationist); Jean Hansen (Conservation Specialist); Barb Payne (Secretary); Chuck Wickman (County Supervisor); Dan Kuzlik (UWEX); John Potters (County Coordinator); Bob Willging (USDA/APHIS).

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 Martinson, second by Petroskey, to approve the current agenda with the order of agenda items at the discretion of the Chairman. Motion carried; all ayes.

Motion by Matteson, second by Petroskey, to approve the minutes from the July 17th meeting. Motion carried; all ayes.

Set date for next meetings

Chairman Rudolph noted the next meeting dates will be Thursday, September 10th at 9:00 a.m. and Wednesday, October 28th at 1:00 p.m.

Public Comments

No one present to comment.

Wildlife Damage Program Services-Bob Willging, USDA/APHIS

Bob Willging, District Supervisor/Wildlife Biologist, from USDA/APHIS, attended this month's meeting to give an overview on what services they provide to the county when USDA Wildlife Services administers the county Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. Willging provided information on their background, employee training, and services that are available through USDA Wildlife Services. The types of wildlife included in these services are bear, deer, turkey, and geese damage to commercial crops. They make assessments on crop damage, and decide what type of control will be used. Some of USDA/APHIS revenues come from monies generated from the sale of hunting licenses. Hollands clarified there still will be charges to the County, which will continue to be reimbursed by the DNR. Motion by Martinson, second by Petroskey to authorize the Land & Water Conservation Committee/Department to enter into an agreement with the USDA/APHIS Agency to administer the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program services for Oneida County in 2010. Motion carried; all ayes. Committee discussion followed.

Deer Donation Program Participation/Budget Amendment

Hollands stated she has received notification from the DNR they will be administering a deer donation program again this year. Hollands commented the DNR will be paying \$50 to the meat processor for each deer processed and donated as part of the "Deer Donation Program". Hollands suggested budgeting \$6,500 for this year's program. Motion by Petroskey, second by Baier to approve submitting a budget amendment in the amount of \$6,500 to DNR for the 2009 Deer Donation Program. Motion carried; all ayes.

County Cost Share Program

Hansen reported she will be meeting with the last landowner who is a carryover from the 2008 Cost Share Program. Hansen stated she is still behind on her project designs because of her increased AIS duties. Hansen reported she has received numerous inquiries from people who may be interested in the County Cost Share Program for 2009 and 2010. We notified the area lake associations last spring about the Cost Share Program, which has generated a significant amount of interest in the program. Hansen said she would be willing to put together a power point presentation for the Committee on the shoreline restoration projects that have been completed. Rudolph commented Hansen may also want to give a similar presentation to the County Board in the future as it would be a good education tool.

Vacancy Review – AIS Coordinator

Hollands stated the Committee went on record last month to approve filling the AIS Coordinator vacancy. Hollands reminded the Committee the six month deadline will be on September 2nd. Hollands stated it should be placed on the LRES meeting agenda as soon as possible. Potters stated he felt the proper procedures have been followed and it would be appropriate to bring it back to LRES at this time. Kuzlik expressed his support in having the AIS Coordinator vacancy filled. Committee discussion followed.

Vacancy Review-Typist II

Hollands asked the Committee to consider what action they want to take regarding the Typist II position vacancy. The mandatory six month vacancy deadline will be coming up in October. Hollands commented there will still be time to act on this request at next month's meeting. Potters commented the Committee might want to consider using an LTE until LRES makes a decision in regard to the vacancy position. Committee discussion followed.

Staffing Request for Calendar Year 2010

Hollands requested approval for hiring two LTEs classified as AIS Project Assistants for 2010. Each LTE would work for 600 hours each. The hourly pay rate for that classification would be \$12 per hour. Hansen said she recently had a meeting with Kevin Gauthier, DNR, and discussed the possibility of hiring two AIS LTEs. Gauthier volunteered to help with the job description if needed. Gauthier also said he would also help with the LTE scheduling. Motion by Matteson, second by Petroskey to approve the staffing request for hiring two LTE's as AIS Project Assistants. This request will be contingent upon receiving the DNR - AIS grant applied for in August. Motion carried; all ayes.

Hollands also requested the Conservation Specialist position be increased to 100% in the Land & Water Conservation Department for 2010. Hollands stated that for 2009 Hansen worked 28% in the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Department and the remaining 72% was worked in Land & Water Conservation Department. Potters commented that right now the P&Z budget is down and the additional hours may not be available for next year. Hollands felt with the added responsibilities of working with Terrestrial Invasive Species, it would justify this request. Rudolph questioned if it would be necessary to change the Conservation Specialist job description to include terrestrials. Rudolph stated he felt the Conservation Specialist job position needs to be changed to get away from basing the percentage of hours worked on the fluctuation of landowner cost-share grant funding each year. Motion by Matteson, second by Petroskey to approve the staffing request to make the Conservation Specialist a 100% full-time position in the Land & Water Conservation Department for 2010. Motion carried; all ayes.

Update on Resolution to Merge UWEX & Land & Water Conservation Departments

Rudolph reported the County Board decided to send the resolution to merge the Land & Water Conservation Department and UW-Extension back to the Committee. They requested that it be resubmitted to the County Board in September as an ordinance amendment. There was discussion at County Board as to whether the intent was to also merge the two Committees together. Rudolph stated the resolution was not intended to combine the two committees at this time. Rudolph stated according to the State Statutes it is mandatory every County has a Land & Water Conservation Committee. Potters clarified he was directed to create an Ordinance Amendment, instead of the resolution, as it will be changing part of the County Code. Potters stated that was his interpretation from Brian Desmond, Corporation Counsel. Potters commented he felt that it may require additional time to make the changes needed, but it would be well worth it to do everything properly. Committee discussion followed.

Potters was excused at 10:30 a.m.

Update on Resolution for AIS Grant Application

Rudolph reported the County Board approved the AIS Grant Application Resolution for the August DNR grant cycle. Hollands stated a certified resolution will be forwarded to DNR showing the County's support. Hollands commented she won't have the final decision by the September budget meeting. The final 2010 allocations from DATCP won't be available at the September budget meeting either. Hollands commented she may use the 2009 financial information (or best estimate) for the 2010 budget until she receives word from DATCP. We should know by October if DNR approves our August 2009 grant application.

Update/Status of AIS Grants/Budgets/Activities

Hollands reported that we applied for an Aquatic Invasive Species DNR grant by the August 1st deadline. We submitted two outstanding grant reports for 2007 and 2008 for reimbursement by the June 30 deadline. We received reimbursement for the 2007 grant from the DNR in the amount of \$18,750.00. We are still waiting for the 2008 grant reimbursement which will be approximately the same amount. Hansen commented she will be meeting tomorrow with Kevin Gauthier, DNR, to go over the August AIS grant application and to make any changes where needed.

Report on Terrestrial Invasive Species Meeting held on July 22 in Eagle River

Hansen reported she attended the WHIP meeting in Eagle River at the Lincoln Town Hall. Discussion was held on the logo the WHIP group will be using. The Forestry Agency put out a best management practice draft for invasive species, and they will be taking public responses to this draft. The DNR in Eagle River is providing a GPS unit for public use. This GPS unit is located at the Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department. A GPS unit can be very useful in mapping the locations with invasive species on land or water. Hansen commented it would be nice to inquire if the DNR in Rhinelander has any GPS units for public use. An Invasive Species report was given at this meeting. A field trip was conducted to identify invasive species. Hansen noted Japanese Knotweed has been an issue recently. There is an infestation at the old Woodruff Town Hall site on Snake Lake. It is quite an extensive infestation including approximately 300 feet. It is about ten feet tall, and it is so thick you cannot see the lake. The stalks are hollow and they resemble bamboo. Ted Ritter has spoken to a town board member about the infestation, and the town wants to handle it on their own. Hansen stated the Whip Group will be doing some research for the Town of Woodruff.

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

Bear Lake District – Martinson reported the Bear Lake District is still in litigation and they are being represented by their attorney, Larry Heath.

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

Thunder Lake District – Baier had nothing to report on the Thunder Lake District.

Horsehead Lake District – Rudolph reported the Horsehead Lake District held their annual meeting Saturday, August 16th. A report was given on water monitoring being done on the lake. There was also a preliminary overview given on the lake study. A final draft will be available sometime in October. Weed harvesting was done for the natural weeds and a contractor was hired for 66 hours this year. The proposed budget for 2009-2010 was presented. The levy for 2010 was set.

FSA – No one was present to report this month.

NRCS – No one present to report this month.

LWCD – Hollands reported she met with Cassandra Hoger, the 2008 Speaking Contest winner in the junior division, on submitting an application for a youth congressional award. Hollands said she has been responding to email questions on forming a lake district from John Bowman, who is an advisor for the Lake Nokomis Concerned Citizens. Hollands stated she has been working with several different departments that are involved in this process. Baier reported the Lake Nokomis residents will be moving forward shortly with obtaining signatures. Hollands stated she has been contacted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) with some questions pertaining to the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan that the County hired NCWRPC to complete.

UWEX – Kuzlik reported he has been working with Hollands and Hansen on departmental issues. Kuzlik reported their summer Horticultural Agent, Ashley Wentz, finished her summer hours at UWEX. Ashley completed CBCW training and attended several other trainings on AIS. Ashley worked with two student LTE'S who monitored several area boat landings for AIS. Ashley did the UWEX side of the bulletin board display on the first floor at the Courthouse. Ashley was also responsible for an AIS display for three days at the Oneida County Fair. Kuzlik announced the Governor will be in Rhinelander today at 3:30 at the downtown Fire Station. The Governor will be announcing today the City of Rhinelander will be receiving stimulus money in the amount \$16,000,000 in the form of a grant to help the City move forward on their new water treatment facility. The grant will probably pay for half the cost of such a facility.

DNR – No one present to report.

LWCB – Rudolph reported the LWCB is currently working on their annual report which is due in January. This report is the plan of the future direction of the LWCB. Rudolph reported he had just attended a board meeting in Madison on August 17th.

WLWCA – Rudolph commented he had nothing new to report this month. The WLWCA Executive Director is still on furlough until sometime in October.

RC&D – Rudolph reminded the Committee about the Annual Conference that is being hosted by the Lumberjack RC&D here in Rhinelander. Rudolph encouraged the Committee to show their support by attending this year’s conference as it is being held locally. Rudolph encouraged Kuzlik to promote the conference. Rudolph commented the opportunity to host the WI Association of RC&D’s Conference locally happens approximately once every seven years. Rudolph commented that some very good programs and tours are being offered this year. The FIA and CFI contracts the forestry crews work under will expire at the end of September. Initially they had a five-year contract. The DNR originally promised these contracts would most likely be renewed automatically for another five years. Things have changed and the DNR wants a new budget submitted for their review before they will commit to renewing them. Rudolph remarked the forestry crews do an outstanding job and he hopes that the contracts will be renewed again for another five years.

Monthly Budget Review

Motion by Petroskey, second by Martinson, to approve the July budget for the Land & Water Conservation Department, Wildlife Damage Program, and AIS Program. Motion carried; all ayes.

Out-of County Meeting Attendance/Policy

The Committee had nothing to discuss.

Travel Authorization

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

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| • August 26, 2009 | WHIP Meeting | Woodruff, Wisconsin (Hansen) |
| • September 10, 2009 | NADECA-WI Field Seminar | Rice Lake, Wisconsin (Hansen) |
| • September 30, 2009 | Working Lands Training Session | Wausau, Wisconsin |
| • October 22, 2009 | Oneida County Speaking/Poster Contest | Rhinelander, Wisconsin |
| • October 23, 2009 | Lumberjack RC&D Meeting | Florence, Wisconsin |
| • October 29, 2009 | North Central Assoc. Fall Conference | Wausau, Wisconsin |

Approval of invoices, purchase orders, and line item transfers

Motion by Matteson, second by Martinson to approve the invoices as presented. Motion carried; all ayes.

A list of the approved bills is attached to the minutes.

Items for the next meeting agenda

Items will be determined as suggested during current meeting.

Public Comments

No public present.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m. Motion by Martinson, second by Matteson. Motion carried; all ayes.

Thomas Rudolph
Chairman

Nancy Hollands
County Conservationist