



MINUTES

ROCK COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday May 4, 2022, 7:15 P.M.

USDA Service Center, 440 N Hwy 14 and Virtual via Zoom

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Bostwick called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

Committee Members Present: Ron Bomkamp (zoom), Rich Bostwick, Janelle Crary, Debi Towns, James Quade, Genia Stevens and Alan Sweeney.

Committee Members Excused: Kim Schneider

Others Present: Staff members Anne Miller, Chris Murphy, Chris Newberry, Norm Tadt and Andrew Baker, Director
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Andrew asked that the Committee approve flexibility in the agenda since the applicants for Item 7 will be attending via Zoom and uncertain as to when she will be available. Supervisor Stevens moved to approve the agenda with that note, seconded by Supervisor Crary. **Motion carried unanimously.**
3. **Committee Business.**
 - A. Election of Vice Chair. Supervisor Stevens nominated Supervisor Sweeney for the position of Vice Chair. Seconded by Mr. Quade. Supervisor Sweeney accepted. There were no other nominations. Nomination approved unanimously.
 - B. Setting Committee Meeting Date, Time, Location and Format. Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to maintain the current meeting date and time, first Wednesday of the month at 7:15 pm. A zoom option will also be maintained. **Motion carried unanimously.**
4. **Approval of Minutes – April 6, 2022 LCC meeting.** Supervisor Crary moved the approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Supervisor Sweeney. **Motion carried unanimously.**
5. **Citizen Participation, Communications, and Announcements.** Chair Bostwick introduced the Supervisors and welcomed new members. Staff members presented introduced themselves and noted the main programs they administer in the office. Andrew also recognized the staff members that were not present at the meeting (Ashley Roscoe, Duane Collins and Mary Kubiak). Members and staff also discussed that a conservation tour would be a great idea. This will likely be scheduled in the fall.
6. **Action Item: Resolution Authorizing Submittal of Grant Application For the 2023 Clean Sweep Program.** Anne explained to the Committee that a grant from DATCP provides a portion of the funding for Clean Sweep events. Other funding comes from

user fees and municipal contributions. The grant application is an annual occurrence, is not guaranteed and is typically around \$6,000. Events this year are planned of June 25th in Beloit and August 13th in Janesville. Andrew noted that if the Committee approves, the Resolution will be on the agenda for County Board on May 12th.

Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to approve the resolution as presented. Supervisor Crary seconded. **Motion carried unanimously**

7. **Action Item: Request for Erosion Control Permit Double Fee Redcuton**

A. Fulton Farms 2020 LLC – After-the-Fact Permit for Residential Driveway – Fulton Township

Andrew noted that this request for fee reduction is for a field access driveway in Fulton Township. The normal fee would have been \$264 based on the area of the driveway, so the double fee is \$528. The applicant explained that they obtained an access permit from the DOT (Hwy 51) and installed the driveway after checking with the Town about other necessary permits. The applicant stated she or her contractor was not made aware of the need for this permit. Another County staff person noticed the work, contacted Chris Murphy from LCD and Chris contacted the contractor and landowner. The landowner has applied for an after-the-fact permit and paid the necessary fees.

There was much discussion about responsibility in terms of obtaining all necessary permits before starting construction. The County Erosion Control Ordinance has been in place since 2004, so there are not too many contractors that haven't been involved with a permit in the past. It was also noted that the DOT permit is only to work within the Right of Way and to make a connection to the state highway. It does not address any work off right of way. That is a local land use decision.

Andrew and Chris also explained that there are eleven or twelve new Town Clerks in the County in the last year, including Fulton. It is understandable if a new Clerk did not send an landowner to the LCD if they asked. Staff will work on outreach to all Towns.

Considering their timely response once they realized they needed a permit, the fact the disturbance was fairly limited and not in a critical area, staff is comfortable recommending approval requiring the normal fees for the permit. The landowner made a brief statement on why she thought she should have to pay no fees because she felt offended she wasn't given all the necessary information from the other entities she asked, etc. Andrew reminded her that this permit would have been necessary in any case (regardless of being told in advance) and fees are required for all permits. Approving a waiver of the double fee simply negates the penalty for an after-the-fact permit.

At this point Supervisor Sweeny called the question, making a motion to end debate. Seconded by Supervisor Crary. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Quade made the motion to approve the request for standard fees for the permit, not doubled for an after-the-fact permit. Supervisor Crary seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

8. **Action Item. Land and Water Resource Management Program - Approval of Cost Share Agreements. None**

9. **Action Item: Farmland Preservation Program Compliance**

A. Voluntary Notice of Noncompliance – Chris Bettenhausen Farm Inc.

Andrew explained that this approval by the Committee is necessary for the landowner to no longer participate in the Farmland Preservation Program. Even though the program is voluntary, the certification recognizes the fact they have chosen to no longer be in the program and are therefore no longer eligible to accept the associated tax credit. This landowner no longer farms the land and the renter convinced them to not participate. There are no conservation compliance issues.

Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to approve. Supervisor Sweeney seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. **Information Items**

A. PACE Program Update

Andrew gave a brief program update. Most notably, there have been conversations recently with a landowner that is considering a significant donation application.

B. Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup Update

Chris Newberry informed the Committee met with Discover Farms staff last week regarding the partnership for nitrate leaching research through the use of pan lysimeters in the County. They visited the proposed potential sites and met with landowners. The Steering Committee will make a decision on which farm to work with this summer and the installation will occur in the fall.

C. Plan for Committee Training

Andrew advised the Committee that Staff plans to do periodic training/information sharing with the Committee both in person at meetings, via email and through hard copy resources. A Conservation Tour is planned for the Fall. There will also be a tour of the County Farm with the Weed Science Staff from UW at some point during the growing season.

11. **Review Bills Paid.** Andrew explained the bills. Supervisor Towns asked how the Wildlife Damage claim program is administered. Andrew explained that we are essential the organization in the middle. USDA-APHIS administers the program with landowners, bills the County for the time and the County submits reimbursement from the DNR. The program is funding by hunting license fees.

12. **Adjourn:** Supervisor Stevens made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 pm, seconded by Supervisor Crary. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Baker
Director

Minutes are not official until adopted by the Land Conservation Committee.

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