



## MINUTES

**ROCK COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday February 2, 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:** Stephanie Aegerter (zoom), Rich Bostwick, Janelle Cray (zoom), Wes Davis, Mike Mulligan, James Quade and Alan Sweeney.

**Committee Members Excused:** Genia Stevens

**Others Present:** David Terrall, USDA Wildlife Services, Andrew Baker, Director

2. **Approval of Agenda:** Supervisor Mulligan moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Cray. **Motion carried unanimously.**
3. **Approval of Minutes – January 5, 2022 LCC meeting.** Supervisor Sweeney moved the approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Supervisor Mulligan. **Motion carried unanimously.**
4. **Citizen Participation, Communications, and Announcements.** Supervisor Davis noted that he was asked by League of Women Voters members, on behalf of the Land Conservation Committee/Department, to take part in their virtual Water Quality event on Earth Day, April 20<sup>th</sup>. Both ground and surface water topics will be addressed. Currently, Ken Bradbury, State Geologist, and Rick Wietersen from Public Health have committed to participate. Supervisor Davis will find out more detail on the type of information that are looking for. Andrew informed the Committee that Staff have been asked to participate in a Sustainability even for the City of Beloit, which will be held virtually on Monday Feb 28<sup>th</sup>. Planning Department will also be having a Land Use and Zoning Workshop for the Towns on the same evening at the Beckman Mill Room at 1717 Center Ave. Chair Bostwick let the group know his Canoe/Kayak Club will be having their annual pancake breakfast fund raiser on April 9<sup>th</sup> in Fort Atkinson.
5. **Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program**
  - A. Action Item: Approval of 2021 Wildlife Damage Claims  
Dave Terrall from USDA Wildlife Services was in attendance to discuss the two damage claims submitted for the program in 2021. James Hanlon claimed a loss on soybeans due to geese. Marjorie Hanlon claimed a loss on corn due to geese. Each participant are eligible for a loss payment due to implementing abatement practices. There are five total participants in the program. Payments for losses are based on the budget set in the fall. Payments are 100% reimbursed by the DNR.

Mr. Terrall also explained the summary of claims and losses since 2001 as presented. Supervisor Davis asked why 2019 was quite a bit higher than other years. That was a specialty flower operation near Beloit.

Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to approve the two claims as presented. Supervisor Davis seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

6. Action Item: Approval of Updated Fee Schedule to Include Community Garden Plots

A. LCD Fee Schedule

Andrew reviewed the fee schedule proposed for 2022. The only change is to officially add the fees for the community gardens at the County Farm due to the transfer of management of the Farm from UWEX to LCD in 2022. The fees for the garden plots will not change from 2021.

Supervisor Sweeney asked if there was a need to change any of the other fees. Andrew noted that for the most part the fees for each program is covering the cost of administration.

Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to approve the fee schedule as presented. Supervisor Davis seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

7. Action Item. Land and Water Resource Management Program - Approval of Cost Share Agreements

Andrew explained that each of the agreements are for Nutrient Management. Contracts are valid for four years and payment of \$40 per acre is paid when the initial plan is completed. Due to the length of the contract, the farm operator and owner must be included. Therefore, multiple contracts may be necessary for a single operator. This is the case for items B-F below.

A. LR-001.22 Mitchell G Melms

Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to approve item 7A as presented. Supervisor Davis seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

B. LR-002.22 Risseeuw Farms Inc / Greg Risseeuw

C. LR-003.22 Risseeuw Farms Inc / Greg and Donna Risseeuw

D. LR-004.22 Risseeuw Farms Inc / Greg and Donna Risseeuw and Cynthia Strange

E. LR-005.22 Risseeuw Farms Inc / Greg Risseeuw and Cythia Strange

F. LR-006.22 Risseeuw Farms Inc / Greg and Donna Risseeuw and Kevin and Catlin Risseeuw

The Committee and Chair conferred on agreed the next items could be acted on with one motion. Supervisor Davis made the motion to approve item 7B-7F as presented. Supervisor Mulligan seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

8. Consideration of Resolutions and Possible Action

A. Approval of Certain Soil and Water Resource Management Grant Cost Share Payments

Andrew noted that this Resolution is tied to the prior cost share agreements. Due to the amount of the contracts, a Resolution is necessary for a payment over \$10,000. All costs are reimbursed 100% via the DATCP cost-share grant for 2022. Next steps for the Resolution are Finance Committee and County Board on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Supervisor Mulligan made the motion to approve item 8A as presented. Supervisor Aegerter seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

B. Establishing a County Program to Subsidize Groundwater Nitrate Testing and Mitigation for Residential Wells that Exceed Health Standards and Amending the 2022 Health Department Budget

Andrew briefly explained the process that went into developing this resolution. The resolution gives staff the authority to work out the details of how the program will be implemented. Supervisor Bostwick noted that the resolution was passed at Board of Health earlier in the evening.

Supervisor Sweeney made the motion to approve item 8B as presented. Supervisor Davis seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

9. Information Items

A. Yahara River Watershed Adaptive Management Annual Report 2021

Andrew reviewed the annual report that was included in the agenda packet. It was noted by the Committee that they appreciate the value of this program and the staff involved are doing a great job with it.

B. PACE Program Update

Andrew gave a status update on existing acquisitions, include the fact that we closed on one of the Barlass Easements on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

The rest of the discussion was in regard to the Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) group that was selected for funding by NRCS starting this year. The LCC approved the application in the fall, but to summarize a group of conservation organizations (primarily in southern Wisconsin) leveraged their individual financial resources to show the support for the RCP project. This is a five year window to work in. The result will be easements that are the same as currently applied for individual through the NRCE ACEP-ALE program, but for this program the funding has already been allocated to the group. In other words, there is no competition with other entities for the limited resources. Rock County's share in the project includes our planned budgeted purchases, staff time and land owner donation value (both the partial donation associated with a purchase and 100% donations) over the next five years. That total is around \$1,300,000. If fully implemented, those funds will result in the same amount of dollars coming into the county through easement purchases. Andrew clarified that Rock County match will not be used anywhere else. Also, we can continue to apply to the ACEP-ALE if funds are available. That is a separate funding source at NRCS. One other difference is the RCP funds can be applied for at any time. There is no set application period like ACEP-ALE. Therefore, we may want to consider revising our normal application process via the PACE Council and LCC.

The next step is to meet with NRCS to go over the details. American Farmland Trust (AFT) is the leader and organizer of the group. The LCC asked how AFT is being compensated for their staff time. Andrew will ask about that.

10. **Review Bills Paid.** Andrew explained the January bills. There were no questions.
11. **Adjourn:** Mr. Quade made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 pm, seconded by Supervisor Davis. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Baker  
Director

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

G: office/lcc/lcc2022/M020222