



MINUTES
ROCK COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday September 6th, 2023 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: Rich Bostwick, James Quade, Alan Sweeney and Debi Towns.

Committee Members Present via Zoom: Ron Bomkamp, Janelle Crary, Kim Schneider and Genia Stevens

Others Present: Teresa Zimmer, FSA CED, Josh Kamps, UWEX, Andrew Baker, Director
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Supervisor Sweeney moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Quade. **Motion carried unanimously.**
3. **Approval of Minutes** – August 10, 2023. Supervisor Towns moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Quade. **Motion carried unanimously.**
4. **Citizen Participation, Communications, and Announcements.** Josh Kamps, the new Crops and Soils Educator for UWEX was introduced. Josh will be located at the Janesville office and will serve Rock, Jefferson and Walworth Counties. FSA-CED Teresa Zimmer gave an update of staff and program activities.
5. **Action Items**
 - A. **Review and Possible Action on Request to Waive CREP Buyout Penalty Paid to Rock County – John Weis Property**

Andrew explained that it was deemed by FSA that this property was ineligible for CRP, therefore also ineligible for CREP. CREP is the state incentive program administered by DATCP and LCD. The landowner is required to repay the incentive payments. The program allows a penalty to be charged by LCD for administrative time spent processing the cancellation which is based on a percentage of the contract amount. Staff recommends waiving the penalty because minimal time will be spent. Teresa explained that the ineligibility determination was partially based on inaccurate information provided by the landowner in the past.

Supervisor Sweeney moved to approval of the waiver of the penalty paid to Rock county, seconded by Supervisor Towns. **Motion carried with Supervisor Stevens voting no (7-1).**
 - B. **LWRM Contract LR-021.23 Arndt Land and Cattle, LLC - Critical Area Stabilization**

Andrew explained the project, which is in LaPrairie Township along Reed Rd. The contract amount is \$13,700 and is for stabilization of a drainage way.

Supervisor Sweeney made a motion to approve, seconded by Supervisor Towns. **Motion carried unanimously.**

C. Revised MOU Agreement with Farmers on the Rock - Producer Led Watershed Group

Andrew explained that the existing three year agreement with FOTR is due for renewal. LCD is consider the official collaborator for FOTR, which is a requirement for the group to obtain DATCP grant funds. Essentially, LCD provides staff support and guidance for the group both administratively and for field days, workshops, etc. The purpose of watershed groups are to organize a network of producers that can education and support one another on a peer to peer basis, with the goal being innovation in practices to improve ground and surface water quality. FOTR was organized in Rock County particularly with a focus on ground water nitrates. This MOU is based on three years of experience, but also the limitations LCD has in terms of available staff time. This agreement includes offering an average of five hours per week of staff time to the group. The group is a 501c3 non-profit and handles their one fiscal matters. The LCC made it clear that they expect the producers to lead the efforts of the group and not staff and to make sure the County would not be construed as the fiscal agent nor sign documents on behalf of the group.

Mr. Quade made a motion to approve, seconded by Supervisor Sweeney. **Motion carried unanimously.**

D. Review and acceptance of 2024 Clean Sweep Grant Award

Andrew explained this is a annual grant application and award, which is very similar to 2023 in terms but an increase in the award over what was expected. The grant is one of three funding sources, the others being municipal contributions and user fees. Tax levy dollars only goes toward staff time (not disposal costs).

Supervisor Sweeney made a motion to accept the grant, seconded by Supervisor Towns. **Motion carried unanimously.**

E. Revised County Program to Subsidize Groundwater Nitrate Testing and Mitigation for Residential Wells That Exceed Health Standards

The resolution to revise the nitrate testing and mitigation program is based on experience with the program in the last year. Approximately \$75,000 of the initial \$100,000 allocation remains unspent. Staff is recommending that the eligililty level of 15 ppm nitrate concentration be reduced to 10 ppm, which is the health standard. The higher limit was initially put in place not knowing how the program would be administered, i.e. how fast the money would be utilitized. The goal was to focus on the worse cases. With a number of applications falling between 10 and 15 ppm, it is realized now would be a good time to lower the threshold to get a mitigation system. No additional funds are allocated with this action.

Supervisor Sweeney made a motion to recommend approval of the resolution, seconded by Mr. Quade. **Motion carried unanimously.**

6. **Review Bills Paid – August Payments.** No questions.

7. **Directors Report**

A. Land and Water Resource Management Plan - Five Year Update

Andrew relayed to the LCC that staff will be preparing for a presentation to the Land and Water Board in February, essentially as status update or the Land and Water Plan implementation to date.

Andrew noted that Wisconsin Land and Water will be sending a survey to Supervisors in the near future. Please provide feedback. Staff is working on a revised fee schedule for 2024, particularly fees related to the erosion control and storm water management program which has not been updated since 2004. Fees are based on the size of the project.

8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: Per Wis. Stat. § 19.85(1)(e)** – Deliberate or negotiate the investing of public funds, or conducting of other specified business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session

Supervisor Towns made a motion to go into executive at 8:30 pm, seconded by Supervisor Sweeney. **Chair Bostwick call the roll. LCC enters executive session**

9. **Adjourn:** Supervisor Crary made a motion to end executive session adjourn at 9:52 pm, seconded by Mr. Stevens. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Baker
Director

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

G: office/lcc/lcc2023/M090623