

WINNEBAGO COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE (LCC)
Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2023 LCC Monthly Meeting
Meeting Room A, James P. Coughlin Center
& Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Convene: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Farrey at 9:02 a.m.

Present: **LCC Members:** Bruce Bohn, Chuck Farrey, Julie Gordon (Zoom), Kay Horan, Doug Nelson, Dan Stokes & Doug Zellmer

LWCD Staff: Chad Casper & Sheila Smith

Others present: Lynn Szulczewski, NRCS, Olivia Hoffman, Glacierland RC&D

Absent: None

Confirm Meeting/Agenda has been Properly Public Noticed in Accordance with County Policy:

Chairman Farrey confirmed with Director Casper that the meeting had been properly public noticed.

Approve June 1, 2023, LCC Meeting Minutes:

A Horan/Nelson motion to approve the minutes passed 6-0.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

There were no public comments.

Agency Reports:

- Lynn Szulczewski, NRCS let the LCC know that Ty Larsen was recently hired as the new State Conservationist for Wisconsin. Szulczewski also stated that the pre-approvals are being completed for the EQIP.
- Olivia Hoffman, Glacierland RC&D informed the LCC that invasive phragmites mapping and controlled treatment is currently being done in Brown County and they are planning to apply for a grant to do the same for Winnebago County in 2024. Hoffman stated that the LWCD can notify her of any known phragmite sites in the county.

Announcements:

- Director Casper informed the LCC that the 2024 budget process is underway and is due on August 7th.
- Director Casper let the LCC know that the WDNR Urban Nonpoint Source & Stormwater Management Planning Grant we applied for to help cover costs associated with updating the Winnebago County stormwater quality management model was ranked in the top half in the state and looks promising to be awarded.
- Director Casper let the LCC know that the effort from WLWCA to rectify the situation to maintain the current level of state conservation staff funding failed. Casper said that the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee voted 11-4 along party lines to approve \$10,962,300 for county conservation staffing in 2024, and \$11,214,200 in 2025. Casper stated that the current 2023 funding levels are at \$11,280,000.
- Director Casper let the LCC know that he is currently working on the position description for the Climate Smart Grant Project Soil Health Specialist position. Casper said that he was hoping to advertise for the position at the end of the year and hire in 2024.
- Director Casper explained to the LCC that very few contractors have been responding to RFPs for projects, so the LWCD is working towards getting RFPs out in advance to hopefully get more in the future.
- Director Casper informed the LCC that we would be applying for a DATCP Producer-Led Watershed Grant and would need approval in August from the LCC. Casper said that this would also need approval from the P&F Committee and County Board to apply for the grant.

Committee Chairman's Report:

- No Report

Business Items:

Discussion on the Final Report from the Winnebago County Ad-Hoc Structure Review Task Force Regarding Committee Structure

Chairman Farrey informed the LCC that the proposed committee structure for the LCC would be a merged committee called the Natural Resources Committee including LCC, Parks and UWEX. Farrey stated that he is opposed to the proposal because he feels it would not provide the adequate process for approving policy in the LWCD and the meetings could also potentially be 4-6 hours long. Director Casper also said that he values getting the LCC's input on developing policy for the LWCD and hopes this process would not be lost if committees were combined. Casper also stated that he is unsure if the two LCC citizen members required by Chapter 92, would need to attend the entire meeting or if they would be allowed to attend only the LCC portion. Farrey informed the LCC that the proposal is advancing to the Judiciary & Public Safety Committee on July 10th at 6:00 pm

Review and Approve the Contents of the LWCD Spirit Fund Policy Plan, Soil Health Program

Director Casper and Sheila Smith gave the LCC a brief overview of the proposed LWCD Spirit Fund Policy Plan, Soil Health Program. Smith explained to the LCC that the proposed phosphorus and sediment saving model (SNAPPlus) should be changed to be more general to allow for other pollutant reduction models to be used. The LCC agreed to making this change. After a brief discussion, a Nelson/Horan motion to approve the Soil Health Program as amended passed 6-0.

Review and Approve the Contents of the LWCD Spirit Fund Policy Plan, Conservation Buffer Program

Director Casper gave the LCC a detailed overview of the proposed LWCD Spirit Fund Policy Plan, Conservation Buffer Program. Casper explained the proposed incentive rates for field-road buffers, streamside harvestable buffers, and streamside vegetative out-of-production buffers. Casper reviewed the guidelines for the conservation buffers, and it was suggested by the LCC to allow re-enrollments into the program and for expiring CRP/CREP contracts. Casper stated that this change will be added to the Conservation Buffer Program. Lynn Szulczewski, NRCS explained that for their programs, mowing/harvesting should not occur until after August 1st to allow for nesting birds. The LCC agreed to change the allowed mowing/harvesting date from July 15th to August 1st for the field-road and streamside vegetative out-of-production buffers. After a lengthy discussion, a Horan/Nelson motion to approve the Conservation Buffer Program passed 6-0.

Supervisor Gordon was excused at 10:00 am

Review and Approve Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program Cost-Share Agreement (CSA) - CSA 23-10, Melvin & Lois Mae Selle Grassed Waterway Project for \$8,316.00

Following a review of the CSAs, a Bohn/Horan motion to approve \$8,316.00 for the Melvin & Lois Mae Selle Grassed Waterway project passed 6-0

Review the LWCD Project List

The LCC reviewed and acknowledged the new projects on the list.

A Horan/Nelson motion made to adjourn the meeting at 10:39 a.m. passed 6-0.

Chad Casper, Recorder