

WINNEBAGO COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes of August 2, 2012
LWCD Conference Room, James P. Coughlin Center

Convene: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Farrey at 9:00 a.m.

Present: **LCC Members:** Nancy Barker, Bruce Bohn, James Englebert, Chuck Farrey, Ken Neubauer, Tom Snider, and Dan Stokes

LWCD Staff: Tom Davies

Others Present: Melanie Boone, intern, NRCS and Merrie Schamberger, NRCS

Absent: none

Approve July 9, 2012 LCC Meeting Minutes: A Neubauer/Barker motion to approve the July 9, 2012 LCC meeting minutes, passed 7-0

Announcements:

- Tom introduced Melanie Boone, intern, NRCS and asked her to introduce herself to the LCC and share her experiences thus far as the intern, and her future goals. Melanie visited with the LCC about all she had done so far and about some of the other tasks still ahead for the balance of the summer. Melanie informed the LCC she will be graduating from UWO next Spring with a degree in Environmental Studies. The LCC thanked Melanie for her efforts and wished her continued success going forward.
- Merrie Schamberger, NRCS reviewed a summary of projects currently contracted through the various funding programs. The LCC thanked Merrie for her report.
- Tom announced that Rock and Walworth Counties were now under quarantine due to the presents of Emerald Ash Borer.
- Tom informed the LCC that the 2013 WLWCA dues would be \$1,937.54 and were included in the current version of the 2013 LWCD Budget that is yet to be approved.
- Tom mentioned that Tom Vanden Elzen, Forester, WDNR will be updating the LCC on State forestry programs and answering questions at the September 6, 2012 LCC Meeting.
- Tom distributed the “Thursday Note” newsletter from WLWCA.
- Tom informed the LCC that he had been working to get support for the creation of a WDNR General Permit (GP) to allow for the removal of nuisance items such as Zebra Mussels on the Winnebago System. Tom stated that he is “pushing” to have the permit allow mechanical removal of the nuisance item as long as there is limited impact to the resource.
- Chairman Farrey distributed information regarding multiple “Twilight Meetings” being held on dairy farms in several areas of the State. The events are sponsored by Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA), Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA), and Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW).

Business Items:

Review and Approve Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program Cost Share Agreements (CSA) to provide funding for eligible projects

Tom reviewed the well abandonments listed on the CSA Summary Sheet provided to the LCC. Tom explained that the Smith and Christensen projects were fully eligible well abandonments with no issues.

Tom then stated that the Grulke project/well abandonment had been done according to the required technical standards, however, it had been done prior to the completion of the program's required paperwork to be eligible for cost sharing. Tom went on to explain that the letter sent to Elaine Grulke from the Town of Menasha Water Utility was "void" of the wording explaining the requirement to contact LWCD before any work was done on the well. Tom read the paragraph from the letter to the LCC. Tom stated that he contacted the Menasha Water Utility and they confirmed that the letter was not correct and had been erroneously altered. Tom told the LCC that the Town immediately corrected the letter to include the necessary wording. Tom explained that the Grulkes had not acquired any estimates for the project before completing the well abandonment. However, based on the information provided to them regarding the well abandonment program, the Grulkes acted in good faith, had the project done for a reasonable cost, and should be considered for cost-sharing. Following a brief discussion, it was the LCC's consensus that in this specific incidence, under these unique circumstances, the Grulkes had indeed acted in good faith and should be deemed eligible for normal program cost-sharing. However, the LCC made it very clear that this was a special situation and they were in no way condoning any regular deviation from program requirements. A Barker/Snyder motion to approve \$221.00 for Robert Smith, \$318.00 for Quentin Christensen and \$390.00 for Elaine Grulke for well abandonment projects passed 7-0.

Review drought issues related to the Farmland Preservation Program compliance requirements

Tom reviewed the letter from DATCP regarding the need to allow leniency for farmers dealing with drought issues on their cropland. Tom explained that even though the State had created a request form for farmers to submit to be able to exceed the soil erosion control and nutrient management standards for 2012, the LWCD was not going to require farmers to complete the form, nor was the LWCD going to be looking over the shoulders of farmers needing to deal with drought issues in order to feed their livestock and maintain their livelihood. Tom explained that the current FPP certification process in place for Winnebago County participants requires an annual review of cropping practices and anyone needing to change normal cropping plans to address the drought can report that information at that time. The LCC concurred with the LWCD's current position and commended the department for using common sense in dealing with what is certainly a tough situation for many Winnebago County farmers.

Review and Approve NR151/ATCP50 implementation/compliance notification letters

Chairman Farrey explained that he and Tom had discussed creating a summary sheet to list the landowners and the letters being sent to them so the LCC could very easily review and understand what they were approving. Tom reviewed the summary format and explained each type of letter listed on the summary. Chairman Farrey asked the LCC if they were agreeable to using the summary format as presented. The LCC agreed it was a very good system. Following a brief discussion about the landowners listed on the summary and their current compliance status, an Englebert/Barker motion to approve the required letters for mailing to the landowners listed on the summary passed 7-0. Note: A copy of the summary sheet and the letters will be filed within the LWCD.

An Englebert/Barker motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45a.m. passed 7-0.

Tom Davies, Recorder