



MINUTES

ROCK COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday October 27, 2021, 5:30 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 5:40 pm.

Committee Members Present: Stephanie Aegerter, Rich Bostwick, Janelle Crary (via Zoom), Wes Davis (Via Zoom), Mike Mulligan, James Quade, Genia Stevens (via Zoom) and Alan Sweeney.

Committee Members Excused: None

Others Present: Andrew Baker, Director

2. **Approval of Agenda:** Andrew noted that approval of agenda and minutes were inadvertently combined into one item. Chair Bostwick suggested approval of minutes be revised to item 2A. Supervisor Mulligan moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Supervisor Crary. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- 2a. **Approval of Minutes – October 6, 2021 LCC meeting.** Supervisor Davis moved the approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Supervisor Mulligan. **Motion carried unanimously.**
3. **Citizen Participation, Communications, and Announcements.** Andrew informed the Committee that NRCS District Conservation Dave Gundlach has been promoted to a position with NRCS at the state office. His last day in the office will be November 5th. Dave has over ten years of experience in the County, so this will be a big loss both in terms of landowner relationships and expertise in the federal programs.
4. **Review Bills Paid:** None.
5. **Information Item.** Review 2022 Recommended Budget

Andrew provided a brief summary of the budget as recommended by the County Administrator. This recommendation includes no changes from what was requested by the Department, with the exception of transferring the County Farm operations and oversight from UWEX and Ag Ext Committee to LCD and LCC. This recommendation is being made based on changes in the UWEX organizational structure. The intention is to still have UWEX be involved with the research at the farm, just not the administration, including the Community Garden program. Considering the proposed budget was discussed in detail in August, Andrew did not do so again but rather asked if there were any questions. Supervisor Sweeney asked about the budget for the Ground Water Nitrate Workgroup. Andrew noted that it was similar as last year, with funding for cost share of cover crops at County farm, as part of the ground water testing in that location, along with funds for another trial location on private land if that work proceeds. Andrew also noted that this time that the County was approved for the EQIP-NWQI funding that Chris Newberry has been working on for the last two years. These funds are specified for two watersheds east of Janesville and Beloit, with the focus being both surface and ground water quality. More details will be provided at a later date, but the total amount of funding is around \$425,000. There were not other questions about the budget.

6. **Action Item: Resolution.** *FINALIZING PURCHASE OF THE BARLASS, VANTHROUTNOUT AND WATSON AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS*

Andrew explained that this Resolution is the final action necessary by Committee and County Board to close on the four easements. Andrew summarized the various funding sources and the amounts for each easement.

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

7. **Action Item: Resolution.** *APPROVAL TO BEGIN ACQUISITION PROCESS FOR SELECTED 2021 PACE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS (FEDERAL FUNDING APPLICATIONS)*

Andrew explained that this Resolution constitutes the first form steps by the Committee and County Board to authorize LCD to take the necessary steps to prepare documentation to submit the three locally chosen applications to the USDA-NRCS for partial funding for the easement acquisitions. This includes executing an option to purchase with the landowners based on an estimated purchase price, the landowner establishing an escrow account with earnest money and ordering the initial title report.

Supervisor Davis made a motion to approve the Resolution, seconded by Mr. Quade.
Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Action Item.** Land and Water Resource Management Program: Approval of 2021 Cost Share Agreement
A. Hahn Family Revocable Trust – Grassed Waterway, LR-022.21

Andrew explained that this contract is for two grassed waterways, totaling approximately \$4,900. Supervisor Mulligan asked, in general, how these practices and contracts come to fruition. Andrew stated that generally a landowner contacts the LCD inquiring about assistance to resolve a resource concern on the farm. LCD or NRCS staff investigate and determine not only the best solution, but also the best cost-share program that could be used (either County or Federal programs). For County agreements, once a design is done, a contract is brought to the Committee for formal approval. After the installation is completed, the landowner is paid the contracted amount and the County requests reimbursement from DATCP.

Supervisor Sweeney made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Supervisor Mulligan. **Motion carried unanimously.**

9. **Action Item.** Approval of Farmland Preservation Notice of Noncompliance Documents

Andrew explained that, in general, though these documents are titled “notice of noncompliance” the situations are not adverse or a violation of program requirements. The document is simply required even when a landowner voluntarily chooses not to participate in the program. It is a formality for documentation purposes.

A. Dave and Christine Burkett (Voluntary, sold most of land)

Andrew explained that the owners sold the tillable farm land and no longer meeting the income eligibility requirements to participate in FPP.

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

- B. Bettenhausen Farms Inc (Voluntary, no long wants to participate in the program, no compliance issues)

Andrew explained that the owners no longer choose to participate in FPP.

Supervisor Sweeney made a motion to approve the Document, seconded by Supervisor Davis. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- C. Kurt O Schadewaldt Jr (Voluntary, no long wants to participate in the program, no compliance issues)

Andrew explained that the owners no longer choose to participate in FPP.

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

- 10. **Adjourn:** Mr. Quade made a motion to adjourn at 6:30 pm, seconded by Supervisor Sweeney. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Baker
Director

Minutes are not official until adopted by the Land Conservation Committee.
G: office/lcc/lcc2020/M10272021