



ROCK COUNTY PACE COUNCIL
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2015 – 8:30 A.M.
LAND CONSERVATION OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
440 N US HWY 14
JANESVILLE WI

MINUTES

- 1) **Call to Order:** Chair Sweeney called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

Present: Don Jones, Alan Sweeney, Duane Cherek, Dave Rebout, Fred Hookham and John Lader

Excused: Ramona Flanigan

Others: Alvin Francis and Karen Lee

Staff: Andrew Baker and Tom Sweeney

- 2) **Adoption of Agenda:** Chair Sweeney noted he would like to move agenda item 6f to below 6c. Lader moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Rebout. **Motion Carried.**
- 3) **Approval of Minutes from August 25, 2014.** Lader moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Sweeney. **Motion Carried.**
- 4) **Citizen Participation, Communication, and Announcements:** None
- 5) **Summary and Overview of Rock County PACE Program Activities:**
- a. **Status of program funding:** Baker provided an update on the federal funding and Tom Sweeney provided an update on county funding.
 - b. **Status of past applicants:** Baker provided an update on past applicants. Baker noted that due to the large number of applicants the NRCS received for funding, only one applicant from Rock County was chosen for funding, that being the Morton property.
 - c. **Changes to USDA-NRCS funding application process relating to appraisals:** Baker noted program changes, mainly that we will no longer need to purchase an appraisal prior to submitting an application. The appraisal will still be required after the application has been selected for funding.
- 6) **Review and discuss 2014 PACE Applications:** Baker reviewed each application in the order presented below. Very limited discussion occurred during the review.
- a. Kraus: LaPrairie Township, 117 Acres, Primary Target
 - b. Oberdeck: Fulton Township, 124 Acres, Primary Target
 - c. Francis: Union Township, 112.5 Acres, Primary Target
 - f. Lee: Fulton Township, 35 acres, Primary Target (moved up per motion)
 - d. Sayre: Center Township, 201.5 Acres, Secondary Target
 - e. Demrow: Porter Township, 73 Acres, Eligible Area
 - g. Carroll: Porter Township, 77 acres, Eligible Area
 - h. Marjorie Hanlon: Milton Township, 68 acres, Eligible Area
 - i. Michael Hanlon: Milton Township, 84.5 acres, Eligible Area
 - j. Michael Plankey: Turtle Township, 36 Acres, 100% Donation

Sweeney asked that the council first consider the 6a through 6f, or the first four applications, because they are in the priority areas. Prior to the application review process, Cherek noted that the NRCS rating system numbers provided on the spread sheet do not correspond to the LESA scoring rating system developed for our process. Cherek asked for an explanation from Baker. Baker highlighted the differences noting that NRCS developed their rating system on regional characteristics which include population, land use, and conversion factors for the county as a whole, where as our system (LESA) is based on soil types and other factors related directly to the property. Baker used the Morton application to highlight the differences.

Sweeney asked that the council consider the first four applications listed as the applications to recommend to the LCC for approval. A short discussion ensued regarding Oberdeck application vs the Lee application ratings. Lader asked if there are any changes to the applications that were approved last year. Baker stated Oberdeck reduced the acreage on the application to remove a woodlot due to proximity to a salvage yard and to increase the percentage of "Working Lands". Baker continued reviewing the other applications, noting that the Lee application was new this year and gave an in-depth review to this application. Jones moved to recommend the following applications in specific order based on LESA Scores; Francis, Kraus, Oberdeck, and Lee to the Land Conservation Committee for consideration and approval, seconded by Hookham. **Motion Carried.**

At this time Sweeney noted he would like to review the Sayre application. Baker summarized the application noting the Natural Heritage Trust applied to the Wisconsin Stewardship fund and has been notified that the funding has been approved to purchase a conservation easement on this property for agricultural land use and hunting access. Staff noted that this application is quite substantial (approximately 400 acres) and will have an impact on the NRCS funding for our application pool. This easement, if approved for funding by NRCS, should be treated as a donated easement by the county which will help develop a partnership with the Natural Heritage Land Trust for future funding opportunities. Hookham moved that the Sayre application be forwarded to the LCC for consideration and approval using the established donation method with flexibility to consider the other two contiguous parcels owned by Sayre for the donation process, seconded by Cherek. **Motion Carried. Jones voted Naye.**

Sweeney stated he would like to consider the Plankey Donation Application at this time. Baker reviewed the application and proposed easement area. Sweeney stated he was in favor of the donation if the proposed easement included the property south of the proposed easement line to the road excluding the farmstead. Lader stated he was in favor of a donation, but felt this application wasn't in the spirit of the program which is to protect the most valuable farmland. A short discussion ensued regarding the merits of the application. Jones moved to forward the application to the LCC for consideration and approval if the proposed donation includes the proposed easement area and all tillable land south of the proposed southernmost boundary of the proposed easement area, as defined on the map, Sweeney seconded motion. **Motion Carried.**

Baker reviewed the final applications which all fall into the eligible area. Baker stated that the final applications are not recommended for approval. Sweeney stated the Council wishes to thank each applicant in the eligible area and ask them to reapply in the future. No action was taken to recommend these applications to the LCC.

- 7) Make recommendation of approval or non-approval to the Rock County Land Conservation Committee for each 2015 PACE Application. Chair Sweeney noted this was completed via the motions as they reviewed the applications.

Page 3
PACE Council Meeting Minutes
10/5/2015

- 8) Consider updating purchase price policy related to the appraised fair market value and priority areas. Possibly make recommendation to Land Conservation Committee. Baker reviewed the policy and noted that we haven't hit the ceiling of the policy with the appraisals. Cherek moved that no changes were needed at this time, seconded by Rebout. Motion Carried.
- 9) **Future meeting date** – No date was set.
- 10) **Adjournment:** Rebout moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:37 a.m., seconded by Lader. **Motion Carried.**

Respectfully Submitted

Thomas Sweeney
County Conservationist.

Minutes are not official until approved by the Pace Council
g:\OFFICE\PACE\PACE COUNCIL\mi 10/5/15