

**RESOLUTION
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Land Conservation Comm.
INITIATED BY



Thomas Sweeney
DRAFTED BY

Land Conservation Comm.
SUBMITTED BY

August 19, 2019
DATE DRAFTED

**ACCEPTING THE USDA-NRCS STAFFING GRANT AND
AMENDING THE 2019 LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET
TO ADD A NEW 1.0 FTE SENIOR CONSERVATION SPECIALIST POSITION**

1 **WHEREAS**, the Land Conservation Department (LCD) made an staffing grant application to the USDA-
2 Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in early 2019; and,

3
4 **WHEREAS**, the grant application identified three priorities that are currently out of reach with the
5 current LCD staff and associated workload, those being: Improve surface and groundwater quality in
6 targeted watersheds through the development of Nine Key Element (9KE) Plans, implement BMP's in
7 select watershed to reduce runoff/infiltration impacts to surface and groundwater resources, provide
8 assistance to UWEX for the formation and fostering of Producer-Led Watershed Groups, and provide
9 technical assistance to NRCS to reduce the current backlog in the Environmental Quality Incentive
10 Program (EQIP); and,

11
12 **WHEREAS**, the NRCS has confirmed that the LCD has been awarded the staffing grant in the sum of
13 \$380,000 over a span of four years, with a fifth year funding option, to commence on September 30, 2019
14 and with a completion date of September, 30 2024; and,

15
16 **WHEREAS**, the LCD will commence with the development of 9KE Plans, for selected hydrologic unit
17 code (HUC10) watersheds in Rock County. The plans require comprehensive land use inventories,
18 running complex hydrologic models, identifying specific water quality areas needing treatment, the
19 development of a schedule of technical and financial needs, and establishment of a monitoring component
20 for the watershed being studied; and,

21
22 **WHEREAS**, the LCD shall complete the 9KE plans in a timely manner. The completed/approved plans
23 are a requirement for water quality program implementation grant from the WDNR and NRCS, which the
24 LCD intends to make application for in the future; and,

25
26 **WHEREAS**, the LCD will provide assistance to UWEX for the development of Producer-Led
27 Watershed Groups in selected watersheds. The groups are part of the solution to improve soil and water
28 resource quality by encouraging conservation decision making and developing solutions at the users'
29 level. This activity leads to additional funding opportunities for the implementation of BMPs in select
30 watersheds; and,

31
32 **WHEREAS**, the NRCS is experiencing a large workload backlog (70) in the following three programs:
33 CRP, CSP, and EQIP and as part of the grant LCD will provide technical assistance to the NRCS to
34 reduce the aforesaid backlog.

35
36 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled
37 this 26th day of September, 2019, accepts the USDA-NRCS staffing grant, creates a new 1.0
38 FTE Senior Conservation Specialist position in the Land Conservation Department and amends the Land
39 Conservation Department's budget as follows:

19-9B-323

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<u>A/C DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>BUDGET AT 08/01/2019</u>	<u>INCREASE (DECREASE)</u>	<u>AMENDED BUDGET</u>
Source of Funds:			
62-6200-0000-42100 Federal Aid	\$0	\$ 7,213	\$ 7,213
Use of Funds:			
62-6200-0000-61100 Regular Wages	\$350,429	\$ 5,014	\$355,443
62-6200-0000-61400 FICA	\$ 26,856	\$ 383	\$ 27,239
62-6200-0000-61610 Health Insurance	\$ 85,541	\$ 1,417	\$ 86,928
62-6200-0000-61510 Retirement-Employers	\$ 23,155	\$ 338	\$ 23,493
62-6200-0000-61620 Dental Insurance	\$ 866	\$ 54	\$ 920
62-6200-0000-61630 Life Insurance	\$ 196	\$ 7	\$ 203

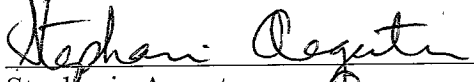
Respectfully submitted,

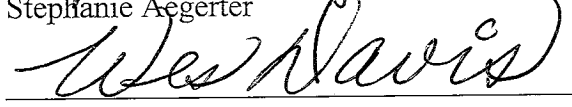
LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE


Richard Bostwick, Chair

- Absent -

Alan Sweeney, Vice Chair


Stephanie Aegerter

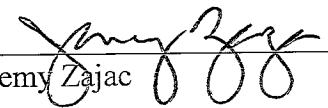

Wes Davis


Brenton Driscoll

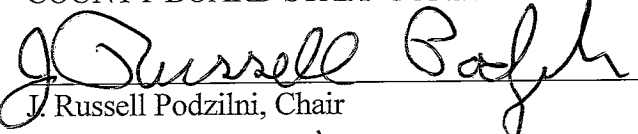
- Absent -

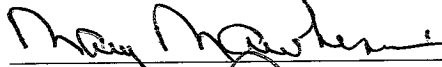
Robert Potter


James Quade, USDA-FSA


Jeremy Zajac

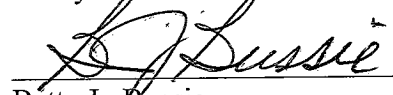
COUNTY BOARD STAFF COMMITTEE

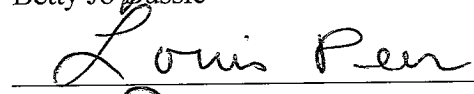

J. Russell Podzilni, Chair

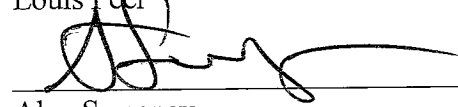

Mary Mawhinney, Vice Chair

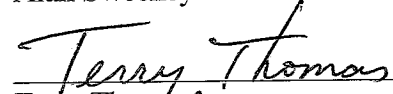

Richard Bostwick

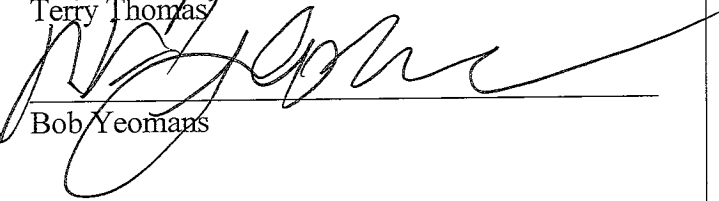

Henry Brill


Betty Jo Bussie


Louis Peer

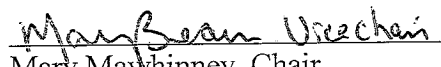

Alan Sweeney


Terry Thomas


Bob Yeomans

FINANCE COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT

Reviewed and approved on a vote of 4-0


Mary Mawhinney, Chair

9/19/19
Date

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FISCAL NOTE:

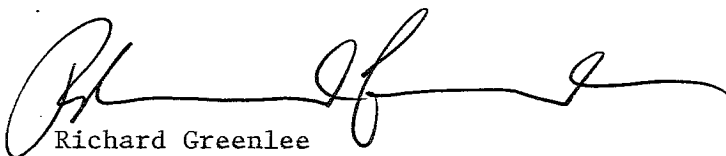
This resolution authorizes acceptance of a 4 year USDA-NRCS staffing grant, creates 1.0 FTE Senior Conservationist Specialist position to be funded by the grant and amends the Land Conservation Department's budget for the FY 2019 portion of the grant. A 40% match is required. The match requirement will be met using office space, staff support, phone, etc.



Sherry Oja
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

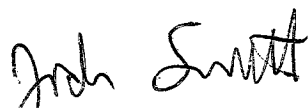
The County Board is authorized to accept grant funds pursuant to sec. 59.52(19), Wis. Stats. As an amendment to the adopted 2019 County Budget, this Resolution requires a 2/3 vote of the entire membership of the County Board pursuant to sec. 65.90(5)(a), Wis. Stats.



Richard Greenlee
Corporation Counsel

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended.



Josh Smith
County Administrator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Land Conservation Department made a staffing grant application to the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in the spring of 2019 to begin efforts that address the high nitrates being found in the County's groundwater and develop a more concentrated effort that addresses the surface water quality issues. The NRCS notified the LCD in late June 2019 that Rock County's application will receive the grant. NRCS staff stated that four years of funding is currently available and an option to fund the fifth year is included in the grant. If funding is made available in the future, the LCD and NRCS will amend the award to include the fifth year option.

As part of the grant application, the LCD identified three priorities: Improve surface and groundwater quality in targeted watersheds through the development of Nine Key Element (9KE) Plans, implement Best Management Practices (BMP) in targeted watersheds to reduce runoff/nitrate infiltration impacts to surface and groundwater resources, provide assistance to UWEX for the formation and fostering of Producer-Led Watershed Groups, and provide technical assistance to NRCS to reduce the current backlog (70) of best management practices in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

The LCD highlighted the need to develop and gain WDNR approval for 9KE Plans for targeted watersheds, as identified by the Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup. The current workload in the LCD prohibits the development of these plans. If approved, the new staff member's primary responsibility will be the development of the aforesaid plans and seek WDNR's approval. Once the plans are approved by the DNR, they will become an integral part of water quality management implementation grant applications, which in turn leads to funding for BMP implementation. Currently, water quality management granting agencies (WDNR and NRCS) require 9KE plans to be considered for implementation funding.

The 9KE plans include comprehensive land use/farming practice inventories, results from running hydrologic models that identify specific water quality areas needing additional treatment for the water resource under consideration, the development of a schedule of technical and financial needs, and establishment of a monitoring component for the targeted watersheds.

The LCD will also assist UWEX with the development of Producer-Led Watershed Groups in the selected/targeted watersheds. These groups are now considered an integral part of the solution to improve soil and water resource quality by encouraging conservation decision making and developing solutions at the users' level. This activity leads to additional funding opportunities for the implementation of BMPs in selected watersheds.

And finally the last priority addresses the current backlog in the NRCS funded aforesaid programs. These programs provide producers incentives (cost sharing) to implement and maintain BMPs that reduce or eliminate impacts to water quality. Currently the NRCS has a back log of 70 specific funded BMPs.