

LAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday, January 29, 2018 • 5:15 p.m.

Agriculture & Resource • 227 1st Street West • Room AG203
Altoona, Wisconsin

Members Present: Robin Leary, Gary Gibson, Glory Adams, Dean Solie, Ray Henning, Tami Schraufnagel, John Richie, Ricky Strauch

Members Absent: (none)

Staff Present: Greg Leonard, Amanda Schultz

Others Present: Eleanor Wolf, Jeff Smith, Ryan Peaslee – WI DNR, Christine Bouzek – USDA-NRCS

1. Call to Order

Leary called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

2. Confirmation of Compliance with Open Meetings Law

Leary confirmed compliance with the open meetings law.

3. Public Input Session (15 minute maximum) – Discussion

Eleanor Wolf spoke in support to the Animal Waste Storage Ordinance revision action and the workgroup. It is wise that the committee is looking at preventative measures to protect both surface and ground water resources. She realizes there may be limitations of what can, or cannot, be done with existing state regulations in place. Dunn County and Green County have done studies the workgroup can build upon. Leary asked Wolf if she would be interested in volunteering for the workgroup. Wolf said she would. Leary asked if any other of the public would like to volunteer for the workgroup. No one else volunteered. The commission thanked Wolf for her input.

Leary asked if anyone else present would like to speak. No one else wished to speak.

4. Approve Minutes from December 18, 2017 meeting – Discussion/Action

ACTION: Motion by Henning to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried, 8-0-0.

5. Review Vouchers and Ledger Update – Discussion

Expenditures and revenues for December were reviewed. Tree sales continue until the end of January.

6. Increase Cost-share rate to \$40.00/acre for Nutrient Management – Discussion/Action

Leonard provided an update on the new cost-share rate for Nutrient Management established by DATCP when utilizing the State SEG funds. The new rate for 2018 is \$40.00 per acre (\$10.00 per acre for 4 years). The previous rate established by DATCP was \$28.00 per acre. Schultz added that the increase rate DATCP has established is due to the changes within the nutrient management standards, and the increased complexity of developing plans to meet the new standards. Previously, Eau Claire County offered farmers a reduced rate of \$14.00/acre to allow the limited funds available at that time to go further, but the landowner had to sign a continuing compliance letter. In 2014, Eau Claire County offered the entire \$28.00/acre if the farmland involved had never received cost-share from these SEG funds. If the land had previously received \$14.00/acre, an additional \$14.00/acre could be offered after 4 years to bring the cumulative SEG cost-sharing to \$28.00/acre. Richie asked if land was sold, would the new owner be eligible for the entire rate established by DATCP? No, our office tracks payments from this fund based on agricultural fields, regardless of the owner or operator. The new owner/operator's eligibility for cost-share is based on previous owner/operators receiving funding or not, and how much funding was offered. In instances where the land is rented, either the owner or operator is eligible to receive the funding. The owner must sign the agreement so they are aware of the cost-share funds. The operator is required to develop the nutrient plan, so they are also aware of the cost-share funds. If there is an

agreement between the owner and operator for splitting the cost-share funds in some fashion, that agreement is between them and our office is not involved. Richie asked if these cost-share agreements are recorded. These can be recorded, but each agreement recording fee becomes a cost to the county and each agreement recording fee would be \$30.00, and nearly every nutrient plan includes multiple land owners which require individual agreements. Richie asked if land is under continuing compliance because of previous cost-sharing, why further funding is offered. Further funding is offered to assist farmers to update their nutrient plan to the current standards and as an avenue for our office to develop relationships and address other conservation issues with that farmer. Leonard asked if we will continue to offer SEG nutrient management cost-share funds following the cumulative method as in the past, but use the new state rate as the total.

ACTION: Motion by Strauch/Adams to offer SEG nutrient management cost-share funds at \$40.00 per acre if no SEG funds were utilized previously on the land covered by the cost-share agreement. If the land has previously received SEG funds and is eligible to receive additional funds, cost-sharing can be offered at a lower rate which will be the difference between \$40.00 and the cumulative amount previously cost-shared with SEG funds. Motion carried, 8-0-0.

7. NR-151 Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions – Discussion
Leonard provided an overview of the Wisconsin Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions, and the circumstances where cost-sharing is required to be offered in order to require compliance with the performance standards and prohibitions.
8. Targeted Resource Management (TRM) grant applications – Discussion/Action
Leonard review the 4 different types of projects eligible for funding within the DNR-TRM grant program. The Eau Claire River Watershed plan is not a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) project. Both the Large Scale and Small Scale TRM grants target the state Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions. Small scale projects, which typically run 2-3 years, would be considered for a single landowner with multiple Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified for installation. Large scale projects run 3-4 years and would be considered for multiple landowners within a defined area.
9. LCC member participation in the Animal Waste Storage Ordinance revision workgroup – Discussion/Action
Staff will begin working on the Animal Waste Storage Ordinance revision, which will look at inclusion of the NR-151 Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions. Part of the revision process would include creating a workgroup.
ACTION: Motion by Gibson to approve the creation of an Animal Waste Storage Ordinance revision workgroup. Workgroup will include members of the public and LCC members Solie, Strauch, Schraufnagel, and Adams. Motion carried, 8-0-0.
10. WI Land+Water – West-Central Area meeting – February 12, 2018 at 29 Pines– Discussion/Action
Attendance of the West-Central Area meeting was discussed. Schraufnagel would like to be a speaking contest judge. Adams and Leary also plan on attending.
11. Agency Updates
Ryan Peaslee, WI DNR, provided the LCC with updates on the County Forest Management Program, the upcoming fire season, the availability of stock from the state nursery, and the Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP).

Christine Bouzek, USDA-NRCS, informed the LCC that Jen Roetter, former Eau Claire County NRCS District Conservationist, has accepted a position in Whitehall. With uncertainty in the Federal budget, filling of the position will be on hold. Bouzek updated the LCC on recent EQIP projects, Forestry and Grazing plans, the upcoming Cover Crop signup and the ongoing CSP signup.

12. Set date for next meeting

The date for the next LCC meeting was set for Monday, February 26th, 2018 at 5:15 pm.

13. Adjourn

Leary adjourned the meeting at 6:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Leonard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "G".

Greg Leonard
Clerk, Land Conservation Commission