



PORTAGE COUNTY

LAND & WATER CONSERVATION MINUTES

ANNEX CONFERENCE ROOM 5
1462 STRONGS AVENUE
STEVENS POINT, WI 54481

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021
5:30 PM

1. REMOTE ATTENDANCE & COMMENT

To attend this meeting by telephone : dial 1-608-338-1399, after dialing the number you will then be asked to enter in a meeting number. Use the following meeting number: 149 138 510, then press #

To attend this meeting by video: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Due to COVID-19 and the potential risk to members of the public who attend meetings in-person, any person who plans to attend the meeting remotely, but wishes to comment on an agenda item can send their comments via email to benedicp@co.portage.wi.us. The deadline for sending comments by email is 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting. Emailed comments will be delivered to committee members at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Remote comment by the public during the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chair.

Face coverings are required for in-person attendance unless an exemption applies.

2. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: B. JACOWSKI, G. ZASTROW, J. MORROW, M. JACOWSKI AND M. NEVILLE

B. Jacowski introduced Cathy Guth, Farm Service Agency Representative, replacing John Ruzicka, noting Guth has previously served on the LWCC. LWCC members introduced themselves.

In person attendees – Staff - Steve Bradley and Patty Benedict; Pete Arntsen, George Kraft, Kyle Gordon

Remote attendees – Staff - Jen McNelly, Dan O’Connell, and Tracy Arnold; Tor Anderson, Al Haga, Chris Holman, Barry Benson, Allison Werner, Gale Gordon, Terry O’Carroll, Jim McKnight, Gary Anderson, Bob Conachen, Kim Bremmer, Jim Walker, unidentified phone callers.

Based on WI Counties Association guidance, B. Jacowski announced observation and listening will be allowed, but no direct participation from the public via video conferencing platform.

3. [20-2695](#) CONSERVATION AWARENESS POSTER AND SPEAKING CONTESTS

Benedict announced the first, second, and third place winners in each of the five Poster Contest divisions. Video recorded speeches were played. (There were audio issues for remote users.) In the Elementary Division, Grades 5-6, Ciara Waltenberg’s speech is titled “It’s A Mystery”. In the Senior Division, Grades 9-12, Annika Waltenberg’s speech is titled “Invasive, Evil, Delicious”. Judging will take place within the next week and feedback will be provided to the speakers. Both speakers advance to the Area Speaking Contest to be held on January 27, hosted by Forest County. B. Jacowski thanked Arnold and Benedict for their work on the contests and youth education programs.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES



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5. **20-2693**

DECEMBER 1, 2020 MINUTES

Documents: [12-01-20 LWCC DRAFT MINUTES.PDF](#)

Motion by M. Jacowski, second by Morrow to approve minutes as presented. On page 6, first paragraph, the last sentence is amended to, "It has since been changed on meeting agendas." M. Jacowski and Morrow withdrew the original motion and second to approve. Motion by M. Jacowski, second by Morrow to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried by voice vote.

6. **20-2704**

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION - RESOLUTION - CONDUCTING A COUNTYWIDE ADVISORY REFERENDUM ON CLEAN WATER NOW FOR WISCONSIN

Documents: [LAWCON CLEAN WATER REFERENDUM RESOLUTION 12.23.20.PDF](#)

With no objections from the committee, agenda item 20 was moved up on the agenda. Motion by B. Jacowski, second by M. Jacowski to approve the resolution for a referendum. M. Jacowski made a motion, seconded by B. Jacowski to make the following amendments: In the first whereas, replace "industries" with "businesses". He also suggested amending the question to read, "Shall the State of Wisconsin establish a right to clean water to protect human health, the environment, and the diverse economy, cultural and natural heritage of Wisconsin". Zastrow said Allison Werner took part in drafting the resolution and asked whether the amendments would change the intent. Executive Holman stated he has spoken with Werner on the resolution and does not believe the proposed amendments would change the nature of the question or resolution. Vote on the amendments passed by voice vote, no nays. Vote on the resolution as amended passed by voice vote, no nays.

7. **REPORTS**

8. **20-2694**

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

a. Lakes Management District - Neville - No report.

b. Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) - Zastrow - The next meeting is January 19.



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- c. North Central Land & Water Conservation Association (NCLWCA) - Zastrow/B. Jacowski-Alternate - The next meeting is January 27 and includes the Poster and Speaking Contests
- d. Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership - B. Jacowski/Morrow-Alternate - No report.
- e. Portage County Drainage District - M. Jacowski/Morrow-Alternate - No report.
- f. Mill Creek Watershed - B. Jacowski/Zastrow-Alternate - No report.
- g. Little Plover River Workgroup (LPR) - M. Jacowski, Morrow, Zastrow - No report.
- h. Farmer Led Councils - B. Jacowski/Zastrow-Alternate - No report.
- i. Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition (CSGCC) - Zastrow/M. Jacowski-Alternate - The next virtual meeting is scheduled for January 25.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

10. **20-2705** MEMO FROM EXECUTIVE HOLMAN
Documents: [LAWCON CORRESPONDENCE CO EXEC 12.29.20.PDF](#)

Executive Holman said there are existing county policies that may complement some of the work the LWCC has been addressing. The Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) focuses on a variety of issues that are countywide and may also help with questions that have come up regarding the Village of Nelsonville. He wants to make sure everyone is on the same page and the Committee is abreast of what is going on regarding the issues being discussed.

11. **20-2703** UPPER FOX-WOLF DEMONSTRATION FARMS LETTER
Documents: [HINTZ UF-W DEMO FARMS 2020 LETTER.DOC](#)

Bradley explained that Matt and Sara Hintz are Portage County representatives participating in the Upper Fox-Wolf Demonstration Farm Network, funded by a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant. Farms in participating counties are trying new cropping management techniques and combinations to improve water quality and soil health. The grant funds a crop consultant to work with the farmers and provides a \$2,000



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stipend to participating farms to offset costs for field days, etc. The Hintz's are also leaders in the Farmers For Tomorrow Farmer Led Council. Bradley said information learned from the Upper Fox-Wolf benefits the Farmers For Tomorrow group.

12. **20-2713**

CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE PRESS RELEASE

Documents: [CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE PRESS RELEASE.PDF](#)

Benedict explained this was sent through the WI Land+Water listserv and is for informational purposes.

13. **20-2696**

WI LAND+WATER CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION/SCHEDULE

Documents: [WI L-W CONFERENCE SCHEDULE.PDF](#)

Benedict said the platform used for the virtual conference is Socio and is very interactive. Supervisors interested in attending can register. The cost is \$155 for the entire conference if registered by February 12. B. Jacowski said he and Zastrow have attended conferences in the past and encouraged members to attend if possible.

14. **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their request at this time, with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order. B. Jacowski allowed in person audience members to speak on agenda items.

15. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING SPECIAL MEETINGS (PORTAGE COUNTY ORDINANCE 3.1.47 & 3.1.48)**

- **REQUEST FOR SPECIAL MEETING ATTENDANCE** - B. Jacowski said to contact him if any meetings come up.
- **APPROVAL OF ATTENDANCE OF SPECIAL MEETINGS** - None.
- **SPECIAL MEETING ATTENDANCE REPORTS** - None.

16. **20-2698**

REVIEW VOUCHERS, PURCHASES, AND PROCUREMENT CARD CHARGES

Documents: [01-05-21 VOUCHERS.PDF](#)

Vouchers, purchases, and procurement card charges were reviewed.

17. **NELSONVILLE GROUNDWATER SITUATION**



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18. **20-2714** **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION - NELSONVILLE GROUNDWATER MONITORING WELLS**

Zastrow questioned how many wells will be needed. M. Jacowski said it will take multiple wells. The number can be left to McNelly and colleagues to determine. McNelly said knowing the purpose of the monitoring wells will help in determining number and placement of wells, i.e., establish water quality, quantity, groundwater flow, depth. M. Jacowski said flow rate should be one focus.

A motion was made by Member M. Jacowski, seconded by Member J. Morrow, to approve to have staff have a cost estimate done to have monitoring wells installed both above and below Nelsonville and report back to the LWCC by the March meeting. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

19. **20-2702** **CORRESPONDENCE SUBMITTED**

Documents: [ANDERSON EMAIL.PDF](#), [ANDERSON-HAAS EMAIL.PDF](#),
[NELSONVILLE NITRATE TRENDS.PDF](#), [MORROW EMAIL.PDF](#)

20. **20-2699** **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION - WILDLIFE DAMAGE CLAIMS**

Documents: [ZICK HARVEST EXEMPTION FORM.PDF](#), [ZICK WILDLIFE DAMAGE CLAIM FORM.PDF](#), [BUSHMAN REVISED DAMAGE CLAIM FORM.PDF](#)

Wildlife Damage Claims –Benson stated Zick was two short of the harvest quota; however, he reviewed the hunting log and determined a significant effort was made. He recommended approving a harvest exemption and the damage claim.

Benson explained J&J Potatoes has claims in both Portage and Marathon Counties. An adjustment was made, splitting the deductible between the two counties. The updated claim amount is \$1,816.08.

A motion was made by Member M. Jacowski, seconded by Vice Chair G. Zastrow, to approve to approve the Zick harvest exemption and damage claim. The motion carried by unanimous vote. A motion was made by Member M. Jacowski, seconded by Vice Chair G. Zastrow, to approve to approve the adjusted claim amount for J&J Potatoes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

21. **20-2701** **DISCUSSION - REVISED ACTIVITIES TO REDUCE NITRATES**

Documents: [REVISED-ACTIVITIES TO REDUCE NITRATES 12-23-20.PDF](#)

Bradley stated he updated his portion of the activities list to include references as requested. McNelly said Bradley's portion contains activities that Portage County is currently doing. The portion she contributed is a list of potential actions that could be taken and/or discussed that may reduce nitrates. Kraft said the list is missing perspective, such as how much and



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where the nitrates are coming from. He said the list of activities does little in terms of reducing nitrates and believes a more scientific process needs to be taken.

Neville referred to one of the considerations from the original activities list presented in December - Develop nitrogen rate recommendations for water quality protection instead of maximum profitability. She asked about the status of those recommendations. McNelly explained Portage County passed a resolution, which also passed at the WI Land+Water Conservation Association's annual meeting in March 2019 and was forwarded to the State. The resolutions led to discussions among UW-Madison and DATCP representatives and a task force was convened to study the recommendations. McNelly said the task force has been meeting, but she is unsure whether revisions have been made. She will inquire.

22. GROUNDWATER ISSUES DISCUSSION

Zastrow stated he believes the Portage County GMP is a good resource and recommended LWCC members read it. Appendix A has goals, objectives, and actions and lists potential partners and expected data results. He believes the GMP can be utilized at future meetings, invite some of the partners suggested, and see what progress has been made since adopted three and half years ago. B. Jacowski said this will be on the agenda next month.

Reser asked what happened to the proposal for the mass balance calculation. B. Jacowski said this will be on the agenda next month. Gordon said it is expected to be implemented within a year for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO), but not all farms. They are including in their management plan and preparing to reduce even more. Gordon added the nitrate issue is not only happening in Wisconsin, it is worse in Minnesota in terms of nitrate levels and public pressure. There is a lot of progress coming. Patience is the word to use right now.

23. 20-2700

CHLORIDE TESTING UPDATE

Documents:

[CHLORIDEDATASHEET20-21.PDF](#)

McNelly said Arnold reported at the December meeting on a testing program through the Izaak Walton League called Salt Watch, using salt/chloride testing strips. Data has historically shown low chloride concentrations in both groundwater and surface water throughout the county. The sites chosen are easily accessible for staff and on major roadways where salt may be having an impact later in the season. Site tests will be done at least three times throughout the season. The first test establishes baseline quality prior to



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significant salting taking place on roadways. A second test will take place when there is active salting, and another during runoff to see if there are any noticeable impacts. She referred to the summary report. All sites are below 30 ppm. She explained the strips test range is between 30 and 600 ppm. Things such as road salt, fertilizers, manure, septic systems, can cause elevated results. The aesthetic drinking water quality standard for chloride is 250 ppm. High 100 and over 200 may be cause for concern. Updates will follow as more data is gathered. McNelly stated a baseline has been established through citizen monitoring in the Almond/Bancroft area along I39 and those sites are not repeated.

24. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

25. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Zastrow, second by M. Jacowski to adjourn. Motion passed by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

26. NOTICES

Notice: Any person who has special needs planning on attending this meeting in-person or remotely should contact Facilities Office at 715-346-1598 as soon as possible to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made.

Notice: A quorum of the Portage County Board of Supervisors, or any committee thereof, may be present at this meeting.