



PORTAGE COUNTY

MEETING MINUTES

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

PORTAGE COUNTY ANNEX
CONFERENCE ROOMS 1 & 2
1462 STRONGS AVENUE
STEVENS POINT, WI 54481

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

7:00 PM

REMOTE ATTENDANCE & COMMENT

To attend this meeting by telephone : dial 1-872-242-7813 after dialing the number you will then be asked to enter in a meeting number. Use the following meeting number: 260 897 830 454, then press #

To attend this meeting by video: [Join the meeting now](#)

CALL TO ORDER

The Land and Water Conservation Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Amberle Schwartz, Janell Wehr, Justin Isherwood, Nancy Eggleston, Steve Fritz

Attending In-Person: Amberle Schwartz, Janell Wehr, Justin Isherwood, Nancy Eggleston, Steve Fritz

Attending Online: None

Members Excused: James Yetter

Members Absent: None

Staff Attending: Tim Reed, Steve Bradley, Patty Benedict

Others Attending: John Pavelski, County Executive, Maddy Pfaff, USDA-APHIS, Tarion O'Carroll, Lynn Isherwood, Don Jochman, Tor Anderson

Attending Remotely: David Stuczynski

CORRESPONDENCE

1. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Winter Newsletter - Submitted by NACD Staff

Included in meeting packets.

2. Memo Regarding the Reappointment of John Eron as Portage County Weed Commissioner - Submitted by Tim Reed, Planning & Zoning Department Director

Included in meeting packets.

3. Portage County January Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Highlights - Submitted by Andrew Senderhauf, Golden Sands RC&D Regional AIS Species Coordinator

Included in meeting packets.

REPORTS

4. Planning & Zoning Director's Report

- Expressing Appreciation to Steve Bradley and Patty Benedict Who Are Retiring from Portage County

Tim Reed thanked Steve Bradley, 32 years of County service, and Patty Benedict, 35 years of County service. He added the County Conservationist position is advertised. Camryn Brewbaker has been hired for the Administrative Association II position and will start part time February 10 and full time February 24. Taylor Hasz has been hired for the Senior Conservation Technician position and will start on February 24.

5. Supervisor Nancy Eggleston - Report from Attendance at the January 27, 2025 Farmers of Mill Creek Watershed Meeting and Consideration of the Creation of a Citizens Advisory Committee for Future Development of a Potential Operations Ordinance

Supervisor Nancy Eggleston referred to the November LWCC meeting when information was presented about a potential Operations Ordinance. The Farmers of Mill Creek Watershed has had meetings regarding the effects an Operations Ordinance could have should they expand their farms. County Board Chair Ray Reser and Supervisor Nancy Eggleston attended the meetings and provided

background information and existing ordinances from other counties. Any Operations Ordinance would deal with large scale farms, patterned after an existing and tested ordinance, but specific to the needs of Portage County. An Operations Ordinance is meant to provide protection for current farmers and families, townships, the County, fire protection personnel, and the environment. There is not a lot of land available in the County and it is not likely a dairy operation would move in, more likely hogs, chickens, or turkeys. Potential public health concerns mentioned were large quantities of animals dying and the possibility of viral transfer/transmission of bird flu, etc. Emergency Management's role would be related to larger quantities of chemical storage. She proposes forming a citizens advisory committee (CAC), to include representation from the farming community, town officials, and rural residents. The CAC would exist for 12-14 months to develop an ordinance and through to a vote at the County Board level. Corporation Counsel, the County Board Chair and County Executive will discuss the process of making appointments to a potential seven member CAC. She requested an action item on the March meeting agenda regarding creation of a citizens advisory committee for the purpose of looking at a potential operations ordinance.

COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS FROM ATTENDANCE AT COMMITTEE APPOINTED MEETINGS

6. Supervisor Ray Reser for the Lake Helen Protection and Rehabilitation District Meeting

Supervisor Ray Reser reported several fish stick projects were installed using ash trees cut by the Parks Department from Lake Helen Park.

7. Supervisor Jeanne Dodge for the Lake Jacqueline Protection and Rehabilitation District Meeting

Supervisor Nancy Eggleston read a report from Supervisor Jeanne Dodge from the January 16 Lake Jacqueline District meeting. A financial report was given, four aerators are running, Jerry Nault volunteered to lead the weed control commission, a water quality report was given, the lake management plan was updated by Tracy Arnold and forwarded to the DNR, the 2025 Lakes and Rivers Conference will be held March 26-28 in Stevens Point, three residents attended the Town of Sharon Board meeting requesting having language removed from their ordinance regarding use of gas versus electric motors and questioned whether this is a Lake District decision or a Town ordinance. The next Zoom meeting is April 15 at 6:00 pm.

8. Supervisor Suzanne Oehlke for the McDill Inland Lake and Rehabilitation District Meeting

No report.

9. Supervisor Nancy Eggleston and/or Supervisor Amberle Schwartz for the Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. Meeting

A written report is included in meeting packets.

10. Supervisor Janell Wehr and/or Supervisor Amberle Schwartz for the North Central Land & Water Conservation Association (NCLWCA) Meeting

Patty Benedict reported the results of the Area poster and speaking contests, hosted by Portage County on January 28. Brenna Lockman advanced to the State speaking contest in the Senior Division, to be held on March 5 at the WI Land+Water Annual Conference in Green Bay. Supervisor Nancy Eggleston reported on the business meeting. There is a group that holds monthly lunch meetings for new conservation employees as well as a mentorship program through WI Land+Water. The WI Land+Water Annual Conference is in Green Bay, March 5-7. Interest has been expressed for the North Central Area to hold a training for nonmetallic mining. Scholarships are available from some counties for the summer camps, Portage County included. The Area spring meeting will be hosted virtually by Wood County in May. The summer tour will be hosted by Lincoln County in August. DNR and DATCP representatives provided reports. Soil and Water Resource Management (SWRM) and Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) grant applications are due April 15. There are funds available for Notice of Discharge. New Surface Water Data Viewer (SWDV) and LiDAR tools are available. Governor Evers has allocated \$5 million in ARPA fund savings to the well compensation program on a first come basis.

11. Citizen Member Justin Isherwood for the Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership (CWWP) Meeting

Citizen Member Justin Isherwood spoke with CWWP Project Coordinator, Shannon Rohde, about upcoming projects. They discussed wind issues on County Road J, engaging landowners, and potentially seeking grant funding to offset a landowner's loss of field area. Urban plantings were also discussed.

12. Citizen Member Justin Isherwood for the Portage County Drainage District Meeting

A written report was included in packets. Citizen Member Justin Isherwood added a Board training/education event through UW-Extension will be offered. The Board received a report regarding three solar projects within the Drainage District.

13. Supervisor Amberle Schwartz for the Farmer Led Councils Meetings

Supervisor Amberle Schwartz reported on the Farmers of Mill Creek Watershed Council meeting on January 17, which also included members from the Farmers for Tomorrow. A presentation on a potential Operations Ordinance was given. Farmers shared questions and concerns regarding farm succession planning and numbers of animal units. There is interest from farmers to be included on a

citizens advisory committee. A meeting on January 27 included concerns and suggestions from local firefighters to consider when drafting an ordinance.

14. Supervisor Amberle Schwartz and/or Supervisor Janell Wehr for the Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition (CSGCC) Meeting

No report.

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 public comment ordinance and the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Don Jochman requested to have correspondence regarding solar fires included in the March meeting packet. Tarion O'Carroll registered to speak on agenda item #5.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

15. Approval of January 7, 2025 Minutes

A motion was made by Steve Fritz, seconded by Janell Wehr, to approve. Motion to approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

16. Discussion/Possible Action - 2024 Wildlife Damage Claims

A motion was made by Justin Isherwood, seconded by Amberle Schwartz, to approve. Motion to approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

17. Discussion/Possible Action Re: Special Meeting Attendance (Portage County Ordinance 3.1.47 & 3.1.48)

- Request for special meeting attendance
- Approval of attendance of special meetings
- Special meeting attendance reports

Request for special meeting attendance - Supervisor Amberle Schwartz requested to attend the Farmers for Tomorrow meeting on February 11, the Friends of Mill Creek Annual meeting on February 24, and a farmer led coalition event on February 25. A motion was made by Janell Wehr, seconded by Steve Fritz, to approve requests for special meeting attendance. Motion to approve requests for special meeting attendance carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

Approval of attendance of special meetings - Supervisor Jeanne Dodge attended the Lake Jacqueline District meeting on January 16. Supervisor Nancy Eggleston attended the Golden Sands RC&D meeting on January 16, and the North Central Land and Water Conservation Association meeting on January 28. A motion was made by Janell Wehr, seconded by Justin Isherwood, to approve attendance of special meetings. Motion to approve attendance of special meetings carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

Special meeting attendance reports - Reports were given under Committee Member Reports from Attendance at Committee Appointed Meetings.

NEXT MEETING DATE

18. Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 7:00 pm, Conference Rooms 1 and 2, County Annex

ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor Nancy Eggleston adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.