



PORTAGE COUNTY

MEETING MINUTES

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

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

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

5:00 PM

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: 147 267 45, 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.

CALL TO ORDER

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

Members Present: Mildred Neville, Matt Jacowski, Barry Jacowski , Julie Morrow, Gerry Zastrow, Catherine Guth

Attending In-Person: Matt Jacowski, Barry Jacowski, Julie Morrow, Catherine Guth

Attending Online: Mildred Neville, Gerry Zastrow

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: None

Staff Attending: In-person: Steve Bradley, Jen McNelly, Patty Benedict; Shannon Rohde, Project Coordinator, Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership. Remote: Tracy Arnold

Others Attending: In-person: Lindsay Benaszkeski, Tarion O'Carroll. Remote: Roy Diver, USDA-NRCS; Dr. Carla Romano, Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition (CSGCC); Larry Raikowski, District 18 Supervisor; Amberle Schwartz

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 announced comments will not be taken from public attending remotely. He stated public comments are limited to three minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. November 2, 2021 Minutes

A motion was made by Matt Jacowski, seconded by Catherine Guth, to Approve. Motion to Approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

REPORTS

2. COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS
 - a. Lakes Management Districts - Neville
 - b. Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) - Zastrow
 - c. North Central Land & Water Conservation Association (NCLWCA) - Zastrow/B. Jacowski-Alternate
 - d. Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership - B. Jacowski/Morrow-Alternate
 - e. Portage County Drainage District - M. Jacowski/Morrow-Alternate
 - f. Mill Creek Watershed - B. Jacowski/Zastrow-Alternate

- g. Farmer Led Councils - B. Jacowski/Zastrow-Alternate
- h. Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition (CSGCC) - Zastrow/M. Jacowski-Alternate

- a. Lakes Management Districts - Neville - No report.
- b. Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) - Zastrow - Zastrow attended the November 18 meeting. Discussion took place during the Personnel/Finance Subcommittee regarding financial procedures, recent purchases, and communication and marketing strategies. During the Business and Executive meeting, updates were given on groundwater legislation, RC&D's 50th anniversary, and a wild parsnip resolution. Meetings in 2022 will be held on the third Thursday of odd months.
- c. North Central Land & Water Conservation Association (NCLWCA) - Zastrow/B. Jacowski-Alternate - The NCLWCA Area poster and speaking contests will be held on Friday, January 28.
- d. Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership - B. Jacowski/Morrow-Alternate - Rohde reported over 10 miles of windbreaks and living snow fences were installed. Overall, the survival rate is good. The interns worked out well. Maintenance and site evaluations have been completed. He noted there will be separate fee schedules for windbreaks and living snow fences going forward. He noted finding tree and shrub stock has been difficult. He has a number of potential DOT and county highway living snow fence projects for 2022.
- e. Portage County Drainage District - M. Jacowski/Morrow-Alternate - M. Jacowski reported he attended the annual meeting on November 9. There was discussion on habitat projects. The assessment rate remains the same.
- f. Mill Creek Watershed - B. Jacowski/Zastrow-Alternate - A tour will take place on December 8 at 10:30 a.m. at the Eron Event Barn. O'Connell and Arnold are attending. Zastrow may attend.
- g. Farmer Led Councils - B. Jacowski/Zastrow-Alternate - No report.
- h. Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition (CSGCC) - Zastrow/M. Jacowski-Alternate - Zastrow attended the November 29 meeting. Representative Katrina Shankland provided an update on legislative bills. County updates were given. Many counties are using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for water testing and/or reverse osmosis systems. RC&D may expand their groundwater protection lessons for 5th grade students. Dr. Carla Romano was introduced and provided an update on data collection efforts. McNelly noted the project runs through November 2022.

3. Natural Resources Conservation Service Update

Diver reported his office is short staffed. There are 45 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications, of which 17 are being funded for \$353,000 on 1,500 acres of cropland, forestland, and wildlife habitat. Six projects are for replacing old center pivot irrigation systems. Other practices include prairie and tree plantings and cover crops. The 2022 EQIP application deadline was November 19. There were 50 applications. For the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in the Little Plover River Watershed, there were two contracts for center pivot systems and one ditch plug for \$79,765. The project is complete. There was one 2021 renewal contract for \$59,000 on 1,000+ acres for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Four CSP general applications were approved for \$88,000 in funding for 331 acres. Annual payments are being processed for 39 CSP contracts for over \$200,000 in funding. Diver reported a full-time soil conservationist has been hired and another soil conservationist position will be advertised for Portage County. A Farm Bill biologist started on November 15. A soil conservation technician was hired through Golden Sands RC&D. An Area Ag Engineer will start in February.

4. Presentation - Portage County Groundwater Projects & State and Local Recovery Funds (SLRF)

McNelly stated the presentation has also been, or will be given at the Finance, Health and Human Services, and Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee meetings. McNelly, Lindsay Benaszkeski, Health and Human Services Public Health Department, and County Executive Chris Holman have discussed ideas and concepts to potentially use federal funds for groundwater improvement projects. She welcomed feedback to be incorporated into a proposal. Comments were provided as follows: Are all types of wells eligible for replacement? Is funding available to anyone regardless of financial need? How to determine a cutoff if necessary. A tiered system was suggested prioritizing the highest nitrate wells and/or financial need. Implement as soon as possible. Test wells that have not been tested previously. Consider bringing municipal water to areas with high nitrates. Priority for primary residents versus landlords. Regarding cost estimates, suggest preparing for the worst-case scenario. LWCC members will receive the PowerPoint presentation with comments added. Make sure quality reverse osmosis (RO) systems are used. Is the County purchasing RO systems? Make certain systems are DSPS certified. Will there be testing pre and post RO system installation?

CORRESPONDENCE

The December DATCP report was distributed.

VOUCHERS

5. Review Vouchers, Purchases, and Procurement Card Charges

Vouchers, purchases, and procurement card charges were reviewed.

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

6. Discussion/Possible Action Re: Regarding 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 - Zastrow may attend the Farmers of Mill Creek Watershed tour on December 8. Bradley noted the Discovery Farms Conference is December 15 in Wisconsin Dells.

Approval of attendance of special meetings - A motion was made by Julie Morrow, seconded by Matt Jacowski to approve attendance of special meetings as presented. Motion carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

Special meeting attendance reports - Reports were given under Committee Representative Reports.

7. Discussion/Possible Action - Soil and Water Resource Management Cost-Share Extension

Benedict noted the figures for Ziolkowski and Knorr were revised as the practices are capped at 50% cost share, not 70%. A motion was made by Matt Jacowski, seconded by Gerry Zastrow, to Approve the carryover funds as presented. Motion to Approve the carryover funds as presented carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

8. Discussion/Possible Action - Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership/Hancock Agricultural Research Station Facility Agreement

Neville pointed out a word is missing in clause 8(d). Benedict will ask the UW contact to correct the error. A motion was made by Matt Jacowski, seconded by Gerry Zastrow, to Approve the contract with the understanding the missing word will be added. Motion to Approve the contract with the understanding the missing word will be added carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

NELSONVILLE GROUNDWATER SITUATION

9. Staff Update - REI Engineering

McNelly reported she received a rough draft of the work plan from REI Engineering just before this meeting. A meeting to discuss the work plan is tentatively scheduled for Monday, December 13 between staff and REI.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 5:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Catherine Guth, seconded by Julie Morrow, to Adjourn. Motion to Adjourn carried by voice vote, with no negative votes. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Notice: Any person who has special needs and plans on attending this meeting in-person or remotely should contact the 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.