

CITIZENS (WOOD COUNTY) GROUNDWATER GROUP MEETING

DATE: Monday, November 16, 2020
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Teleconference via WebEx

Present: Caleb Armstrong, Ray Bossert, Rhonda Carrell, Bill Clendenning, Bruce Dimick, Nancy Eggleston, Gordon Gottbeheit, Kim Keech, Bill Leichtnam, Katrina Shankland, Allison Werner, Rachael Whitehair, Ken Winters, Shane Wucherpennig and Don Ystad.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chairman Bill Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **Speaker: Don Ystad, 14-Mile Watershed & Tri Lakes, “Our Clean Water Efforts in the 14-Mile Watershed”**
Highlights of the presentation:
 - Man-made lakes created 1969-1973.
 - Tri Lakes – Lake Arrowhead, Lake Camelot and Lake Sherwood.
 - Population mainly weekenders.
 - 1979 Watershed Study warned of potential pollution issues with increased agriculture & lake homes.
 - 2002 Watershed Study confirmed 1979 warnings.
 - 2016 – Blue Green Algae present. Pets died.
 - Annual meeting held every Labor Day weekend.
 - Tri Lakes Committee formed with two members per lake (Arrowhead, Camelot, Sherwood & Petenwell), Town of Rome, DNR and Adams County Conservation.
 - Focus on impact on water quality, water tests, soil tests, and fertilizer ordinance and citizen education program.
 - Build relationships with neighbors.
 - 9 Key Element Plan – Study of the lakes with a long-term improvement plan.
 - 2020 Year of Recognition – DNR Secretary/Director Award and EPA approval of 9 Key Element Plan
 - Co-funding grant for Adams County 9 Key execution resource.
 - Biggest issues – Switch “tail of the dog” to strong stakeholder advocate member of 4 county 9 Key Element Plan. Build relationships and take direction from groups beyond just our Tri Lakes/Rome Community (less than 25% of watershed).
 - Be a stronger voice in our own community.
 - Find a way to work cooperatively with our neighbors upstream (primarily agriculture). Find a way to work together.
4. **Correspondence/Updates/Handouts/Reports:**
Bill Leichtnam shared the following at the meeting:
 - A. Katrina Shankland will let the group know if there is any movement on the Wisconsin 13 “Water Bills”.
 - B. Allison Werner of River Alliance will share information on a referendum.
 - C. Test wells are being dug in the Town of Armenia as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Armenia Growers Coalition. More data forthcoming after the fall harvest.
 - D. Wood County Resolution 20-60-1 “The Wood County Board of Supervisors requests the State Senate to convene in “extraordinary session” to address the 13 “Water Bills” passed in the Assembly earlier this year”. This resolution has been extended to other counties: Waushara, Eau Claire, Pepin, Brown, Adams, Juneau, Walworth, Green, Langlade, Kewaunee, Bayfield and Ashland.
 - E. “State Health Officials Propose Groundwater Standards for 22 Substances” handout – Agency recommends standards for 16 PFAS chemicals and 6 pesticides. Gov. Tony Evers' administration is proposing new groundwater quality standards for 22 substances that pose a risk to public health.
 - F. Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council is meeting by teleconference on Thursday, November 19th to discuss groundwater and other issues.

5. **Action Items:**

- A. Next Steps
Where do we go from here? What are the next steps?
- B. Protecting our ground & surface water with or without legislative support
Allison Werner of River Alliance shared that there will be a Clean Water Referendum placed on the April 2021 ballot. For more information: <https://voteforcleanwater.com/>

6. **Roundtable**

- A. Bill Clendenning – Has been associated with River Alliance for many years. Glad to see River Alliance part of the Citizen’s Groundwater Group. Looking forward to Allison Werner of River Alliance presentation in December.
- B. Ray Bossert – Would like information on Clean Lake grants and how to apply for grants for the Village of Port Edwards.
- C. Shane Wucherpfennig – This has been a phenomenal year for the growing season for the agriculture producers. Have seen water quality improvements. Producers have been coming on board for no till drill and cover crops which means a positives for the lakes downstream to reduce phosphorus and nitrates. The Mill Creek 9 Key Element Plan requires baseline water quality testing on an annual basis throughout the implantation phase of the watershed. This is the 2nd year of implementation Too early to tell but has seen some progress with water quality improvements. Too early to tell to make any conclusions. There is a farm that has gone totally to cover crop. This farm has been nominated for an award from the PACRS group for signage. Check out videos on the Wood County Land & Water Conservation webpage.
- D. Rachael Whitehair – Roth Farm Visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJF9NmIclq8>
- E. Allison Werner – River Alliance is looking for nominations for farmers who are doing those great practices.
- F. Ken Winters – A farmer is experimenting with no till and cover crops with mustard plants.
- G. Rhonda Carrell – Looking forward to Allison Werner presentation in December.
- H. Nancy Eggleston – Would like an update on the UW and DNR study through AGC program.
- I. Katrina Shankland – Thank you to Don Ystad and his presentation. These partnerships make a long lasting impact on water quality. Shared that the state legislature changed slightly with the November election. Interim period where people look at committee assignments and what committees are formed. Has asked for a Water Quality Task Force committee be part of the 2021-2023 legislature session. Watch the DATCP and DNR budget sessions. Listening Session on Environment, Infrastructure, and the Economy is on Wednesday, December 2, at 6 p.m. Registration will be live one week before the listening session date. For more information on the Listening Sessions: <https://evers.wi.gov/Pages/BudgetListeningSessions.aspx>
- J. Gordon Gottbeheit – Has seen test wells.

7. **Announcements of members / visitors (upcoming parallel events / meetings)** Announcements shared throughout the meeting.

8. **Future Speakers:**

December – Allison Werner, River Alliance
January – Open

9. **Agenda Items for next meeting**

Agenda items should be submitted to Bill Leichtnam. Discuss Bylaws.

10. **Next Meeting** Monday, December 14th, 2:00 p.m. (VIRTUAL)

11. **Adjourn Groundwater Group Meeting** Bill Leichtnam adjourned @ 3:26 p.m.

Notes by Kim Keech, Planning & Zoning Office