

MINUTES  
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021  
WOOD COUNTY RIVER BLOCK AUDITORIUM, ROOM #206, WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI

Members Present: Kenneth Curry, Robert Ashbeck, Jake Hahn (via WebEx), Dave LaFontaine, Bill Leichtnam, Carmen Good

Staff Present:

Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn (via WebEx)  
Land & Water Conservation Staff: Shane Wucherpennig (via WebEx), Lori Ruess  
UW Extension Staff: Jason Hausler, Rachael Whitehair, Nancy Turyk (all via WebEx)

Others Present: Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, Dist. #15 Supervisor Bill Clendenning (via WebEx), Dist. #16 Supervisor Lance Pliml (via WebEx), Carrie Edmondson, NCWRPC (via WebEx), Angel Whitehead, Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce (via WebEx).

1. **Call to Order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Declaration of Quorum.** Chairperson Curry declared a quorum.
3. **Public Comment.** None.
4. **Review Correspondence.** Chairperson Curry mentioned an email he received from the WI Farm Bureau. He asked the CEED if they would be interested in having Ben Tilberg come to a future CEED meeting and give a presentation. Shane Wucherpennig will contact Ben to see when he would be available for a presentation to CEED.
5. **Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following Items: 1) minutes of the January 6, 2021 and January 19, 2021 CEED meetings, 2) bills from Extension, Land & Water Conservation and Planning & Zoning and 3) staff activity reports from Laura Huber, Matt Lippert, Nancy Turyk, Allison Jonjak, Jackie Carattini, Hannah Wendels, Kelly Hammond, Rachael Whitehair, Janell Wehr, Caleb Armstrong, Emily Salvinski, Lori Ruess, Rod Mayer, Shane Wucherpennig, Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn, Paul Bernard, Jeff Brewbaker, Scott Custer, Kim Keech and Victoria Wilson.
  - A. Minutes of January 6, 2021. No additions or corrections needed.
  - B. Minutes of January 19, 2021. No additions or corrections needed.
  - B. Department Bills. No additions or corrections needed.
  - C. Staff Activity Reports. No additions or corrections needed.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and accept the January 6, 2021 and January 19, 2021 CEED minutes, bills from Extension, Land & Water Conservation and Planning & Zoning, and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.*

6. **Review Items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda.** None.
7. **Risk and Injury Report.** None.
8. **Land & Water Conservation Department.**
  - A. Open/approve low bid for Dale and Jason Behrend's intermittent stream culvert crossing project. Shane Wucherpennig stated no bids were returned; therefore, there are no bids to open.
  - B. Review/action on resolution to support efforts of four statewide organizations. Bill Leichtnam explained, four long-established and well-respected statewide groups (Wisconsin Land +Water Conservation Association, Clean Wisconsin, the Dairy Business Association and The Nature

Conservancy) have joined forces to improve legislative action for statewide clean water and to bolster current conservation efforts. This resolution resolves that it is time for the state legislature to codify and set timelines to accomplish these goals. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Bill Leichtnam to approve and forward to the Judicial & Legislative Committee the resolution supporting four statewide organizations to introduce clean water measures legislatively this term. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion passed with Bob Ashbeck opposed – there is not enough in the resolution; it needs to be more specifics on what we are looking for to achieve clean water.*

- C. Review/action on resolution to amend the 2021 Land & Water Conservation (LWCD) Admin Budget Function 56121 for additional expenditures not anticipated during original budget process. Shane Wucherpfennig explained the Land & Water Conservation Department's 2021 budget included a capital outlay purchase for a roller-crimper. The roller-crimper was on the 5-year capital improvement plan and he overlooked including a trailer for hauling the roller-crimper. This resolution is to amend the 2021 budget for a trailer for hauling the roller-crimper. The \$4,100 is a transfer of money between LWCD budgets/line items. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and forward to the Operations Committee the resolution to amend the 2021 Land & Water Conservation Admin Budget Function 56121 for additional expenditures not anticipated during the original budget process. Second by Ken Curry. Motion carried unanimously.*

- D. Discuss and review annual Golden Sands RC&D membership dues. Chairperson Curry had a copy of the invoice and letter from RC&D requesting the 2021 Membership Renewal Dues from Land Conservation Committees. Wood County's dues for 2021 are \$1,900. Shane Wucherpfennig shared that "only a handful" of counties pay the dues in full. Wood County has paid \$800 in dues in past years and budgeted \$800 in the 2021 budget. Chairperson Curry added he brought this up so the CEED committee is aware and to discuss payment of future dues (2022 and beyond). Discussion followed.

Dave LaFontaine shared he agrees with paying \$800 this year, but suggests that at least 50% of the dues be paid in the future. Bill Leichtnam mentioned he likes what he is seeing out of the organization since the reorganization took place. He agrees with increasing future payment of dues to 50% of the total amount invoiced and ask for increased assistance to Wood County from RC&D staff. It was the consensus of the Committee to pay \$800 in 2021 and increase dues to 50% of the total invoice in 2022.

- E. Update Committee on Engineering Technician and Summer Intern Position. Shane Wucherpfennig shared he interviewed three candidates for the Engineering Technician and held second interviews along with the LWCD staff. Klayton Kree was offered and accepted the Engineering Technician position and will start his employment with Wood County on February 15th. Shane also interviewed candidates for summer internship. Julianna Kollross was offered and accepted the 2021 summer internship position.

F. Committee Reports

- i. Citizens Groundwater Group meeting. Bill Leichtnam reported on the January 18<sup>th</sup> Citizens Groundwater meeting. David Trimner, a young agri-business professional from Miltrim Farms Inc., located in Athens, presented at the meeting. Miltrim Farms is the largest automated farm in Wisconsin and is the first farm in North America to be Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) certified. Bill added the presentation was very good.

Leichtnam also commented on a landowner from Port Edwards that attends the Citizens Groundwater meeting whose well is contaminated with the pesticide Imidacloprid. Use of this pesticide is a concern, especially in sandy soils.

The next Citizen's Groundwater meeting is scheduled for February 15<sup>th</sup>. Bill asked Shane to reach out to Ben Tilberg to see if he would be interested in presenting at the February meeting.

- ii. Health Committee report. Chairperson Curry announced Nancy Eggleston is retiring from the Health Department. Bill Leichtnam commented that Nancy is an incredible person and he suggested the CEED recognize her for her 40 years of service to Health.
- iii. Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGWCCC) committee report. Bill Leichtnam reported the first CSGWCCC meeting in six months was held on January 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - A weeklong Water Week Conference will be held March 8-12. Breakout sessions will be on-line.
  - The Clean Water referendum will be on the April 6<sup>th</sup> ballot.
  - Should hear mid-February on the \$60,000 GAP analysis grant.
  - The next meeting will be held April 26<sup>th</sup>.
- iv. Golden Sands RC&D Report. Bill Leichtnam shared that he was only able to attend part of the Golden Sand RC&D meeting due to a conflict with another meeting that day.

Bill Clendenning shared that he received the minutes from the meeting and will be forwarding to Lori Ruess to include in the County Board packet.

## 9. Private Sewage.

Jason Grueneberg reported on the Annual Sanitary Permits. He referred to page 39 of the CEED packet. Half the systems put in in 2020 were replacements and the other half were new development. He anticipates 2021 will be very similar to 2020 numbers.

## 10. Land Records.

Jason Grueneberg shared the Land Information Council meeting was held last Wednesday. This group typically meets once a year, but they are looking at holding quarterly meetings. They discussed budgeting, current fund carryover balance and priorities of current/future projects. Jason explained the requirements of the Council and added the group can make recommendations on the Land information budget, but that would still need CEED approval.

## 11. County Surveyor.

Jason Grueneberg shared currently wrapping up for 2021 public land survey system.

## 12. Planning.

- a. **Annual Plat Review Report – 2020.** Adam DeKleyn introduced himself and shared that he prepared the Annual Plat Review Report which can be found on page 40 of the CEED packet. The Wood County Land Subdivision Ordinance is administered county-wide within the unincorporated areas of Wood County. The report highlighted:
  - 33% increase in the number of CSM's reviewed.
  - 100% increase in number of lots created by CSM or plat.
  - 50% increase in the number of subdivision plats reviewed.
  - The Town of Saratoga led in land divisions.
  - Top three towns for land divisions – Saratoga, Grand Rapids, and Auburndale.

For more information on the Plat Review, see the link on the Planning & Zoning webpage.

### 13. Economic Development.

- a. Update on the Rural Economic Development Innovation Initiative. Nancy Turyk reported the draft copy of the REDI plan was sent to CEED and full REDI team and she received a few comments. She asked the CEED Committee's intent for moving forward with the plan. Chairperson Curry commented; now is the time to move forward, with the plan reviewed at the March CEED and an April special order of business at County Board; assuming Board members have copy of the full plan. Bill Leichtnam suggested having a bulleted presentation with a timeline at the March CEED. Dave LaFontaine expressed concerns with the "2020" dates in the plan and requested a reference for all the acronyms in the plan. Nancy shared the 2020 dates are correct as many of the initiatives were implemented in 2020 and are underway. It was suggested that (ongoing) be noted after the 2020 dates. Dave LaFontaine added the plan is a very extensive and well prepared document.
- b. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission update. Jason Grueneberg stated Carrie Edmondson will be giving a NCWRPC presentation next on the agenda. He added that he attended a Directors meeting this past week along with Supervisor LaFontaine. He reported briefly on the 2021 work programs and outlined what projects are included for Wood County. Supervisor LaFontaine added the approval of the updated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic plan will pretty much fall within the REDI plan and many statics in the comprehensive plan are very valuable. He added there is a need to get increased dollars to partners as well as the importance of Wood County Planning and Zoning budgeting more Economic Development money in 2022.
- c. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Presentation on Regional Recovery work, Carrie Edmondson, Planner. Carrie Edmondson, Planner with NCWRCP gave a PowerPoint presentation. She explained the North Central Wisconsin Planning Commission provides regional and local assistance in areas of economic development, grant writing, GIS, intergovernmental coordination, land use and community planning and transportation. The presentation covered objectives, background, COVID-19 Economic Impact and CARES Act. COVID was the largest economic shock since the Great Depression. The NCWRPC was awarded a grant through the CARES Act. She highlighted the five "umbrellas" that grant money will be used for;
  - 1) Regional Recovery Plan
  - 2) Update of CEDS (to include recovery and resiliency)
  - 3) Regional Health Pandemic and future Response document
  - 4) Business and Industrial Park Inventory
  - 5) Technical Assistance and Planning Support.The grant has assisted locally with the City of Wisconsin Rapids Recovery and Resiliency Project and McMillan Memorial Library remodeling project. Bill Clendenning shared that McMillan Memorial Library did not accept the grant money as it would delay construction.

### 14. Extension.

- a. General Office Update. Jason Hausler gave a brief general office update, not specific to Wood County but may have an impact on Wood County.
  - He gave an update on the suggested \$50 donation to the Wisconsin Extension Association (WEXA).
  - Projected in person programming at 25% or less could affect some Extension summer and spring activities.
  - Early reports indicate the State budget is looking better than projected.
  - He received a call from Dale Christianson, Central WI State Fair regarding Extension's partnership with county and district Fairs. Jason noted that Extension is committed to assisting with the County Fair in areas where they can. He added that County Board Chairperson Lance Pliml is serving on the new Fair Advisory Committee.

Jason answered questions from the CEED and briefly explained the history of the Ad Hoc Fair Association.

- b. Situational Analysis Debrief. Jason Hausler gave an update on the Situational Analysis. He mentioned following the January 19<sup>th</sup> special CEED meeting to discuss the Situational Analysis, he received an email from Supervisor Hahn regarding vaccination education. There is a vaccination education webinar today (February 3<sup>rd</sup>) at noon for Extension colleagues and community partners. Jason also reached out to Sue Kunferman, Health Department Director, to let her know Extension is available as an education resource. Marathon, Clark and Portage counties are holding discussions in February and the kick off meeting with staff will be the middle of March. Jason will have the report to CEED by July.
- c. Educator Presentation – Rachael Whitehair, Natural Resources Educator. Rachael Whitehair gave a PowerPoint presentation on Understanding Extension's Role in Farmer-Led Watershed Councils. Covered in the presentation was the important role Farmer Led Councils play in addressing non-point source pollution and how to better understand how Farmer Led Councils function as an organization. She also gave an update on the Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo.

**15. Schedule Next Meeting.**

The next regular CEED meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. at the Wood County Courthouse in Room 114.

**16. Agenda items for next meeting.**

- A. Chairperson Curry will talk to Nancy Eggleston and Health Department.
- B. Agenda items are due February 24th.

**17. Adjourn.** Chairperson Curry declared the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Minutes by Lori Ruess, Land & Water Conservation Department