

CITIZENS (WOOD COUNTY) GROUNDWATER GROUP MEETING

DATE: Monday, September 16, 2019
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Wood County Riverblock Building, Conference Room 206

Present: Bill Clendenning, Bruce Dimick, Gordon Gottbeheit, Seth Hofmeister, Mark Holbrook, Tamas Houlihan, Kim Keech, Bill Leichtnam, Logan Manthe, Doug Passineau, Rick Potter, Cecile Stelzer Johnson, Nancy Turyk and Shane Wucherpfennig.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Bill Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
2. **Public Comment:** Bruce Dimick shared that Governor Evers issued an executive proclamation instructing the DNR to look into limiting manure spreading and fertilizing spreading on sensitive soils. It isn't defined at this point what that means. Tamas Houlihan commented that in August Governor Evers issued an executive order for targeted performance standards for nitrate contamination and groundwater on permeable soils which the DNR is just starting to undertake. The executive order from August is different than the one just issued. Bill Leichtnam shared that the Wood County Board is voting on Resolution 19-9-7 "to encourage the Wood County Board of Supervisors to support the Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative" on Tuesday, September 17th.
UPDATE: Wood County Board Resolution 19-9-7 passed unanimous.

3. **Correspondence/Updates:**

Bill Leichtnam shared three articles as handouts at the meeting:

- A. Town of Grand Rapids "Choose to Re-Use" – Saturday, September 21st from 8 a.m. to Noon at the Grand Rapids Town Garage.
- B. "Manure Spreading Limits Up For a Vote" – Marathon County Environmental Resources Committee will review a proposed restriction on winter manure spreading by mid-sized, licensed dairy farms.
- C. "Do Something" Editorial – In 2009, there was a giant fish kill in the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. The editorial mentioned that the Marathon County leadership pledged at that time that the fish kill would never happen again. A full decade later, the pledge goes unfilled. The editorial expressed that it has been 10 years do something.

Bill Leichtnam shared that Kewaunee County recently had a manure spill which will be a first test of their new ordinance which is called Chapter 39. If anyone finds any information regarding the manure spill this can be discussed further at the October meeting.

4. **SPEAKER - Seth Hofmeister, League of Conservation Voters**

Rick Potter introduced the speaker. Governor Evers declared that 2019 is the year of the water which is League of Conservation Voters top priority concern regarding groundwater and surface water. League of Conservation Voters are a very efficient and effective group. They follow legislatures and committees on how they vote on issues reporting back to the voters. A National Environmental Scorecard on legislation can be found on their website at www.lcv.org.

Seth Hofmeister shared he is a graduate from UW-Stevens Point. He is the Organizing and Political Director for the League of Conservation Voters in Green Bay.

Presentation highlights:

- A. Citizen groups are beneficial.
- B. Mission Statement – To engage voters to protect Wisconsin's environment. The League of Conservation Voters are a non-partisan non-profit group.
- C. Seth chairs newly created Sustainability Commission for the City of Green Bay.
- D. League of Conservation Voters make sure politicians consider land, air and water in legislation.
- E. Clean water has been the focus for the last 4-5 years. The consensus is the need of action for clean water.

- F. Lead pipe issues in Milwaukee similar to Flint, Michigan.
 - G. Kewaunee County challenge has bedrock with shallow top soil.
 - H. NR151 deals with surface water runoff. Kewaunee County is included in a 15 county expanded NR151 district.
 - I. Senator Robin Vos created Water Quality Task Force earlier this year with meetings scheduled across the state. Meetings have been completed with a possibility of one more scheduled. Proposal recommendations to come within next few months.
 - J. Strongest budget on clean water in the last 8 years with a lot of work to do.
 - K. County Conservationists are the boots on the ground.
 - L. Policies created to keep pollution out of water.
 - M. NR151 Natural Resource Board plans to expand new standards. There is a meeting scheduled on September 25th in Mishicot. Hearings will be scheduled over the next year.
 - N. Encourages everyone to test your well.
 - O. Please contact your politicians to advocate for legislation and policies.
- Discussion followed.

5. **Report of Speaker Vos's Task Force on Groundwater Quality
(Vice Chair Dimick/Chair Leichtnam/Others)
Public Hearings Conclude/Task Force recommendations**

There are no more meetings scheduled. There is the possibility that one more may be scheduled in Madison. Proposal recommendations from the task force is expected to come within the next few months.

Additional Comments:

- A. No confidence that anything will be done.
- B. Legislators need to have the presence at the door.
- C. Time is past to talk to the legislatures.
- D. Public needs to be involved.
- E. Engage farming community to solve local issues by creating local movement.

6. **Report on progress of DATCP/DNR Hearings on "Livestock siting"** Cecile Stelzer Johnson updated the progress of the DATCP/DNR Hearings on Livestock Siting law. If power is removed from local people then you need to encourage legislatures to get the laws on the books to enforce the laws. Comment period has passed on siting law.

Livestock Siting Law:

- A. Livestock Siting Law developed in 2004.
- B. The 2004 law affected the ability of elected officials in local government to regulate livestock farming but particularly Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's).
- C. Law is designed to be revised every 4 years.
- D. Regulates the location of livestock facilities, odor and air emissions, nutrient management such as phosphorus and nitrates that can pollute surface and groundwater, manure waste storage facilities and runoff management of liquid manure applied to the land.
- E. Law does not protect local communities, health or quality of life.

The dairy board attended the hearings defending their standard of living and operations. Farmers make minuscule profits and prefer not to be dictated.

Midwest Environmental Advocates suggestions:

- A. Technical Committee should be provided with a copy of the previous Technical Committees December 21, 2010 report and recommendation.
- B. Technical Committee members should also include organic sustainability farming, public health and environmental communities.
- C. Revisions to the siting law should be made so that local government can police powers are restored so they can protect the public health and safety of its citizens.

- D. Should formally adopt latest technical standards.
 - E. Setback requirements should be updated to modern industrial livestock practices.
 - F. Include additional Nutrient Management Plan standards.
 - G. Ensure local governments are able to perform compliance monitoring and enforcement of local permit requirements.
 - H. Proper facility design.
 - I. Litigation and abandonment of wells and facilities. Local government are tagged to fix issues.
 - J. Local government should have a say on local fees and bonds when a correction is needed.
 - K. Should include a nuisance impact.
 - L. Spray manure irrigation. Over spraying by growers on roadways should be reported to the Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association at (715) 623-7683.
7. **CGG “Action Items”** Most legislation issues will be considered in early 2020. Citizens are encouraged to contact their representatives.
8. **Update on Wood/Juneau County MOU w/AGC**
Nothing to report. Monthly teleconference call is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17th.
9. **“Outreach Activities” (Planning for Pittsville “Water” meeting in evening in the fall, possible water testing on site & hiring of “Natural Resources Educator” who could facilitate)**
Wood County is waiting for the hiring of a Natural Resources Educator. Interviews are coming up. Hiring is expected to be late October. The possibility of the first project for the Natural Resources Educator might be an outreach into the rural parts of Wood County to talk with farmers about best practices.
10. **Future Speakers to invite**
Bill Leichtnam shared that Senator Patrick Testin will be at the October meeting. Bill has not heard anything from Representative Nancy VanderMeer. Please contact Bill if you have any ideas for future speakers.
11. **Roundtable**
 - A. Rick Potter – Water Walk is scheduled for Saturday, September 21st beginning at 8:00 a.m. at the Lake Arrowhead Park Pavilion. Sunrise Ceremony begins at 6:30 a.m. based on American traditions.
 - B. Tamas Houlihan – Excited to give the EPA grant to the Village of Plover through the Wisconsin Wetland Association. Wisconsin Vegetable and Potato Growers made a donation toward the project.
 - C. Nancy Turyk – Clean Sweep more than doubled the number of vehicles (130 to 280) that attended with over 1,000 pound materials dropped.
 - D. Bruce Dimick – Savion is proposing a solar 150 megawatt project in the Town of Saratoga.
12. **Additional announcements of members / visitors (upcoming parallel events / meetings)**
A public hearing for the solar project is scheduled for September 25th at 6:00 p.m. at the Saratoga Town Hall. Climate Change Forum II: Community Solutions is scheduled for Thursday, October 3rd at 6:00 p.m. at the McMillan Library.
13. **Next Meeting**
Monday, October 21, 2019. 2:00-4:00 p.m. @ Wood Co Riverblock Building, Room 206
Speaker: Senator Patrick Testin
14. **Adjourn Groundwater Group Meeting** Bill Leichtnam adjourned @ 3:42 p.m.

Notes by Kim Keech, Planning & Zoning Office