

MINUTES  
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2021  
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WI

Members Present: Ken Curry, Robert Ashbeck, Jake Hahn (arrived at 8:36am), Dave LaFontaine, Bill Leichtnam

Members Excused: Carmen Good

Staff Present:

Land & Water Conservation Staff: Shane Wucherpfennig, Rod Mayer  
Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn, Kim Keech (via WebEx)  
Extension Staff: Jason Hausler, Karli Tomsyck (via WebEx) Nancy Turyk

Others Present: Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, Dist. #15 Supervisor Bill Clendenning, Dist. # 16 Supervisor Lance Pliml (via WebEx), Trent Miner (Wood County Clerk - WebEx) Ben Jeffrey (Wood County Health Department – WebEx) Ray Bossert (Village of Port Edwards - WebEx), Amber France (Town of Grand Rapids), Tami Hahn (City of Pittsville), Matt McLean (Visit Marshfield), Scott Larson (Marshfield Chamber Foundation)

1. **Call to order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED Public Hearing to order at 8:30am.
2. **Declaration of Quorum.** Chairperson Curry declared a quorum.
3. **Open Public Hearing – Ordinate #708 Private Well – Water Systems**

Kenneth Curry read, “The purpose of the Public Hearing is to accept public testimony and comments on Wood County Ordinance #708 Private Well – Water systems. This ordinance will establish the Wood County Well – Water Systems Program and allow for local administration pertaining to Wisconsin Administrative Code – Chapters NR 812 and NR 845 – Well Location, and Well/Drillhole Filling and Sealing.”

The ordinance provides the opportunity to protect public health and the environment as well as provide for the protection and safety of county citizens by inspecting new well installations, discovering old wells that should be filled and sealed, and learning more about groundwater and soil conditions within the county

Link to ordinance and more info: <https://www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/PZ/WellWaterSystemsProgram.aspx>

Adam DeKleyn presented a brief summary:

- a. Wood County Ordinance #708 Private Well – Water systems Ordinance is in draft form until approved by the CEED Committee and Wood County Board of Supervisors.
- b. The ordinance was developed with input and assistance from local well drillers, pump installers, public, Wisconsin DNR and CEED Committee.
- c. Ordinance has been available for review and comment since July 2021.
- d. No comment or testimony has been requested to be entered into the record.
- e. Wisconsin DNR’s goal is to inspect 10% of new wells in a 9 county region with 1 staff person.
- f. A local program will allow 100% of new wells in Wood County will be inspected by Planning and Zoning with 3 certified staff.

Kenneth Curry shared an email from the Wisconsin Well Drillers Association:

- a. Discussion ensued

Discussion Comments:

- a. Sandpoint Wells currently require a well notification from the Wisconsin DNR.
- b. A person can construct their own well but are subject to the same NR 812 construction requirements and must obtain a Well Location Permit.

- c. An individual has to be licensed to fill & seal a well.
- d. Permit Fees:
  - \$50 – Well notification to DNR. DNR does not review or issue a permit.
  - \$125 – County Well Location Permit. Planning and Zoning will review, permit and inspect all new wells that require well permit.
  - \$175 – Total fees
- e. Wisconsin DNR created NR845 specific for counties to create and adopt a Well Delegation Program.
- f. Well data prior to 1980 is sporadic.
- g. Well Delegation Program is to provide county and local resources and services related to wells for residents and well drillers.
- h. Land & Water Conservation Department provides a cost share program for well closures. Well closures have only been GPS the last 10 years but not for constructed wells until recently.
- i. Wells should be properly abandoned according to NR812.
- j. Enforcement forfeiture updated \$25 - \$500 per day.

**4. Close Public Hearing.** Chairperson Curry declared the Public Hearing closed at 9:10am.

*Minutes for agenda items #1 through #4 by Kim Keech, Planning & Zoning Office.*

- 5. Call meeting to order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED meeting to order at 9:11am.
- 6. Declaration of Quorum.** Chairperson Curry declared a quorum.
- 7. Public Comments (*brief comments/statement regarding committee business*)** None.
- 8. Review Correspondence.**

Shane Wucherpennig shared an article with the committee about a company that is working on finding environmentally friendly alternatives to synthetic nitrogen fertilizer. The product is called proben which supplies nutrition of nitrogen from microbes in the soil. The product doesn't leach or runoff into waterways like traditional synthetic nitrogen fertilizers. Some states have worked with it and outcomes look extremely positive. It seems to be a more stable nitrogen source and more consistent. Shane wanted to bring this to the committee's attention after Supervisor Ashbeck brought it to him. Discussion followed.

Chair Curry commented on the recent online rural economic development session. He noted one of the problems with economic development is looking for revenue sources; maybe we should be looking at different plans that would benefit rural areas, for the county in general, to try to fund rural economic development. Chair Curry has talked with Jason and Nancy about this. Moving forward, it might make sense for USDA to have a closer relationship locally. There is a need to expand revenue source.

- 9. Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following items: 1) minutes of the September 1, 2021 CEED meeting, 2) bills from Land & Water Conservation, Planning & Zoning and Extension and 3) staff activity reports from Laura Huber, Matt Lippert, Nancy Turyk, Allison Jonjak, Hannah Wendels, Janell Wehr, Jackie Carattini, Rachael Whitehair, Caleb Armstrong, Emily Salvinski, Klayton Kree, Lori Ruess, Rod Mayer, Shane Wucherpennig, Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn, Paul Bernard, Jeff Brewbaker, Scott Custer, Kim Keech and Victoria Wilson.
  - a. **Approve minutes of previous meeting.** No additions or corrections needed.
  - b. **Approve bills.** No additions or corrections needed.
  - c. **Receive staff activity reports.** No additions or corrections needed.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and accept the September 1, 2021 CEED minutes, bills from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and Extension, and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.*

**10. Review items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda.** None.

**11. Risk and Injury Report.** None.

**12. Land & Water Conservation Department**

a. Open/approve low bid for BudzNBudz wildlife damage fence project.

Chair Curry opened the following two bids:

- Straight Line Fence (Wittenberg) for \$39,5000.00
- Real Fence, LLC for \$35,000.00

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to accept bid from Real Fence, LLC bid for wildlife damage fence project in the amount of \$35,000.00. Second by Ken Curry. Motion carried unanimously.*

b. Update/discussion on hearing on Senate Bill SB346 held at the State Capital on September 29, 2021.

Shane Wucherpennig shared a Wild Parsnip brochure with the committee. He noted that in March 2017, wild parsnip was designated a noxious weed within county boundaries. Shane was made aware of the bill a couple weeks ago. Katrina Shankland asked Shane if he would be willing to go to Madison to testify at a public hearing for the committee on Natural Resources and Energy on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The bill goes to the Natural Resource and Energy committee for review and if it's approved, it leaves the floor and goes to the Senate for a vote. Shane asked Supervisor Leichtnam to accompany him to Madison to help navigate the Capitol.

Shane shared the criteria to be eligible for the bill mimics the exact same steps Wood County has taken since March 2017 including declaring wild parsnip a noxious weed and appointing a weed commissioner. Shane feels they are in a perfect position to apply for funds. He testified after the DNR and was able to rebuttle opposition by showing everything done in Wood and Portage Counties since 2017. Shane gave hope that this is a plant that can be treated and eradicated if done properly. Shane noted having funds would give them a better arsenal to go after wild parsnip.

Shane drafted a resolution in support of the bill and shared it with the committee in hopes to take it to the next County Board meeting.

c. Review/action on resolution to support Senate Bill SB346 – Wild Parsnip State Grant Program.

*Motion by Jake Hahn to approve resolution in support of Senate Bill SB346. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.*

d. Committee Reports

• **Citizen's Groundwater Committee meeting.**

Supervisor Bill Leichtnam shared an update. Randy Romanski (DATCP) was the speaker for the September meeting.

Dr. Carla Romano is working out of Madison and has an office in Stevens Point. Dr. Romano is working on compiling data on nitrates in groundwater over the last decades.

Portage County group is meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup> at the Annex in Stevens Point.

The next Wood County Citizen's Groundwater Committee meeting is scheduled for October 18<sup>th</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday) in Room 114 and via WebEx.

• **Health Committee report.**

Ben Jeffrey shared there was an AGC meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Some of the farmer led initiative data was presented and reviewed and they came up with more presentable data points.

Ben noted the Health Department has been focusing on Covid but he contacted an AGC representative for bottled water. The AGC representative recommended parties interested in getting the bottled water

should call the AGC helpline, which is included in packets that are being sent out to residents within probably the next week. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Bill Leichtnam shared he received a call from a resident who was perturbed they weren't getting bottled water, didn't have RO system installed and had to make calls every week to get water. Following discussion, Ben offered that Supervisor Leichtnam should give them his contact number.

- **Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGCC) committee report.**

The next meeting will be held on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

- **Golden Sands RC&D report.**

Shane Wucherpfennig shared an update on the meeting discussion on the AIS program. Counties are eligible for grants to do lake planning, AIS work, education, etc.

RC&D is having a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Shane is on the planning committee so he'll have details on the event.

**13. Private Sewage.** None.

**14. Land Records.** None.

**15. County Surveyor.** None.

**16. Planning**

a. Consideration and recommendation on adoption of Wood County Ord #708 Private Well – Water Systems

Adam DeKleyn updated committee on questions from public hearing. The ordinance states a county well location permit would be required for any private potable wells being utilized for consumption. A private sand point irrigation well that is constructed would not require a county well location permit; however, it still needs to meet all state NRE12 construction code requirements. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve resolution Wood County Ord #708 Private Well – Water Systems and forward to County Board. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.*

b. Request to approve a zoning map amendment/rezone – Town of Grand Rapids

Adam DeKleyn shared that a request was received for County Board approval for a rezone in the Town of Grand Rapids. Staff memo, maps and resolution are included in the meeting packet. The site of the proposed rezone location is off of Eagle Road/County Highway U. The parcel is a little over 53 acres and is split-zoned residential and a sliver of agricultural. The proposed rezone request is to rezone all of the approximately 53 acres to agricultural to allow for construction of a 4 acre pond. Town ordinance reads larger ponds are only allowed in agriculturally zoned parcels.

Town of Grand Rapids Plan Commission recommended approval of the rezone in September. Town Board held a public hearing and approved the zoning amendment in September. The final step is County Board approval. Planning & Zoning reviewed the proposed rezone and information submitted and concluded the town followed zoning amendment process outlined by state statute. Adam noted no concern or issue with county ordinances, plans or programs. Adam would recommend CEED approve the zoning amendment.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve Town of Grand Rapids zoning map amendment/rezone. Second by Bob Ashbeck. Motion carried unanimously.*

c. Discuss 2022 budgets (Planning, County Surveyor, Land Records & Private Sewage)

Jason Grueneberg noted they haven't heard anything back from the Operations Committee at this point so there is not much needed for action on this item.

County Chair Lance Pliml gave an update and noted things are moving along pretty well in the budget process. From the general county budget perspective, we are in pretty good shape moving forward with

everything presented. Discussion followed.

Jason requested action on the proposed Land Records budget.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve 2022 Land Records budget. Second by Ken Curry. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **17. Economic Development**

### **a. Discuss 2022 Economic Development Budget**

Chair Curry noted Jason Grueneberg presented to Operations Committee and answered their questions on the Economic Development budget and return on investment.

### **b. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission update.**

Jason Grueneberg gave an update and noted it's the time of year where they're trying to develop a work program for the next year. If Supervisors have any projects in mind, please let Jason know. He shared county wide projects being considered include a county-wide housing study and what broadband looks like in the county.

Supervisor Jake Hahn asked about the ATV survey. Jason confirmed it was done through North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and there is a draft in hand right now. Supervisor Hahn also asked about the bicycle pedestrian survey. Jason shared the survey is currently out; the Regional Planning Commission has been doing background work and the next step is to get the planning team together to look at survey results.

Supervisor Dave LaFontaine shared information about groundwater and broadband from the WCA meeting. Discussion on broadband followed.

### **c. Update from the Town of Grand Rapids on the bicycle and pedestrian connecting trail and signage and consider release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds.**

Amber France, Town of Grand Rapids, provided an update on the bicycle and pedestrian trail project. They have completed the planning phase and collected information from 2020 Grand Rapids residents survey. Through this planning process, they've held Question & Answer sessions with residents along the area and taken into consideration their questions and concerns.

The Town of Grand Rapids is looking to use the grant funding to put up a fence that is part of the agreement with the City of Wisconsin Rapids to use the property since it is owned by the city. The Town of Grand Rapids would take on the cost of clearing the pathway, getting it ready and maintaining it to put hardpack down. The Town of Grand Rapids attorney has been part of the process to get the agreement with the City of Wisconsin Rapids and continues to work with the town as well. The timeline for the project will depend on grant funding and budget request for next year. For the purpose of this funding, the first phase is to get started with implementation. Planning is done and now they are on to the next phase of implementation.

Supervisor Bill Leichtnam noted as supervisors well know, they typically don't get a lot of calls; Bill received calls of opposition on this. Lengthy discussion followed.

*Motion by Jake Hahn to decline release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds to Town of Grand Rapids at this time. Second by Bill Leichtnam.*

*Ayes – Ken Curry, Bob Ashbeck, Jake Hahn, Bill Leichtnam*

*Nay – Dave LaFontaine*

*Supervisor LaFontaine noted further explanation is needed; they need money to start their project and he is in favor of that.*

*Motion carried.*

d. Update from Visit Marshfield and consider release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds.

Matt McLean, Visit Marshfield Executive Director, shared an update that the sports tourism strategic plan and facility recommendations study was completed near the end of June and has been paid for. They are asking for \$5,000.00 from CEED toward the \$30,000.00 total spent.

Matt noted Marshfield's ice rinks are failing. Clubs are trying to look toward future of how they can be sustainable and have facilities that function properly.

The study has recommended 1) a flexible indoor ice venue 2) curling venue 3) indoor multi-sport venue. Building something with 2 sheets of ice for hockey could take a 1.4 million dollar economic impact, from 4 tournaments that are run, to 3.5 million dollar economic impact by adding 9 new events. By adding 9 new events, an additional 10,400 attendees would bring in \$50,500 in additional hotel occupancy taxes, \$31,565 in city sales tax collections and over \$3,000 in county taxes.

Matt explained the study says there is a demand and they're now determining how to pay for the facility and land to be used for the next steps. They are in early phases; the study is completed and they needed something with analytical data. Matt appreciates the opportunity to have help with funding for the study. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds to Visit Marshfield in the amount of \$5,000.00. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.*

e. Update from the City of Pittsville on their Building Incentive Program, and consider release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds.

Tammy Hahn, City of Pittsville, shared another new home will be started at the end of the month. With that new home, paid out incentives for 2021 will be \$26,000.00. In 2020, 2 duplexes, a spec home and 2 brand new homes were built.

*Motion by Jake Hahn to approve release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds to City of Pittsville for the Building Incentive Program in the amount of \$25,000.00. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.*

f. Update from the City of Pittsville on their Outdoor Recreation Plan, and consider release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds.

Tammy Hahn explained the City of Pittsville was awarded \$6,000 to complete an outdoor recreation plan contracted with North Central Regional Planning Commission. The plan is almost complete; a final draft will be brought to the October meeting. \$4,000.00 has been paid and remaining \$2,000.00 will be disbursed after October meeting when draft is delivered.

Tammy shared the survey went really well. It is the first step in applying for stewardship grants from the DNR, as an outdoor recreation plan is required to apply. They want to put flushable toilets in the park and need a stewardship grant from the DNR to bring water and sewer to the park.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds to City of Pittsville for the Outdoor Recreation Plan in the amount of \$6,000.00. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.*

## 18. Extension

### a. General Office Update

Jason Hausler provided the following updates:

- Extension utilized Zoom prior to 2020 and the pandemic. Wood County IT had security concerns with Zoom so 80% of the Extension office was taken off of the network. Jason met with IT last month and has resolved all concerns with Zoom so the state staff are now moving back to the network. This resolves issues with printing, network capabilities, etc.
- The contract for 2022 is ready and will be in the November CEED meeting packet. Jason has to have all contracts approved and routed by December 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Master Gardener Volunteer Update – Jason received a message yesterday regarding changes with the Master Gardener Volunteer program systematically statewide. An email will be coming out to explain changes to be more flexible and adaptable to the needs of the local associations.
- It is cranberry harvest season so Allison Jonjak, Cranberry Outreach Specialist, has been out in the field. The feedback from cranberry growers, integrated specialists in Madison, pest management, etc. has been that Allison is hitting it out of the park. Wood County is the first to jump in on a regional specialist like this. This is now the model that will be focused on for hiring moving forward; having specialists in the community/markets vs. in Madison. Discussion followed.

### b. 4-H Associate Extension Educator

Per the contract, the state 4-H program office has decided and agreed to contribute more funding toward Laura Huber's position. Laura was 100% county funded and will now be co-funded. This creates additional funding to hire a new 4-H staff member. The new position should be posted by end of this week or early part of next week. It will be just under half time to assist Laura in community club development pieces, special interest groups and free up some of Laura's time to work on cross-collaborations with other counties. There will be no additional cost to the county but the state is adding additional funding to their investment here in Wood County. Jason will be looking for a volunteer, if anyone from CEED is interested, for the interview committee. Let Jason know if interested.

### c. County Board Presentation Recap

Jason requested committee feedback on the September County Board presentation. Supervisor LaFontaine thought it was good. If there is any other feedback, please let Jason know.

### d. Educator Presentation – Nancy Turyk, Community Development Educator

Nancy Turyk shared she has been working on a variety of specialized projects; one being the groundwater study, which is moving along well. The other project is with a team of Extension staff around the state on a Community Resiliency Menu. They recognize that a number of departments and elected officials don't know where to begin with climate change. There is a lot of information out there but unless you have a staffer, it's hard to know where to go to find that information. Rather than develop more information, the group decided to develop the Community Resilience Menu webpage based on different topics that communities can use to get started or continue in this kind of work. Nancy noted the webpage is still in beta testing mode. It will be presented to the local government Extension group on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Nancy shared a preview of the webpage with the committee and explained topics include: Ag and local food systems, Built & Natural Environment and Energy Efficiency & Renewables.

The group submitted and successfully received a proposal from the Dean's innovation fund to hire 6 UWSP students on sub teams for a semester to help pull the information together. The next step after

this is published on the web, will be to provide training opportunities for Extension educators across the state. Currently, Extension doesn't have a climate change educator for the other educators to lean on.

Nancy noted there is a workshop "Planning for Community Climate Resilience Tools for Local Governments" on November 4<sup>th</sup> from 2-3:30pm via Zoom.

- 19. Requests for per diem for meeting attendants.** None.
- 20. Schedule next regular committee meeting.** The next regular CEED meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021 at 9:00am at Wood County Courthouse in Conference Room #114.
- 21. Agenda items for next meeting.** *Agenda items are due by Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.*
- 22. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary.** None.
- 23. Adjourn.** Chair Curry declared the meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.

*Minutes for agenda items 5 through 23 by Karli Tomsyck, UW-Madison Division of Extension - Wood County*