

MINUTES
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2021
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WI

Members Present: Ken Curry, Robert Ashbeck, Jake Hahn, Dave LaFontaine, Bill Leichtnam, Carmen Good

Staff Present:

Land & Water Conservation Staff: Shane Wucherpennig, Julianna Kollross
Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn
Extension Staff: Jason Hausler, Laura Huber, 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), Sue Kunferman (Wood County Health Department - via WebEx), Amber France

1. **Call meeting to order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED meeting to order at 9:00am.
2. **Declaration of Quorum.** Chairperson Curry declared a quorum.
3. **Public Comments (*brief comments/statement regarding committee business*)** Supervisor Bill Clendenning requested item 13b be moved up on the agenda.
4. **Review Correspondence.** Chair Curry passed out an article from Fond du Lac County to committee members regarding no till drilling. It reinforces that the Land & Water Conservation office isn't alone on this as one of the first working to change farming practices.
5. **Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following items: 1) minutes of the May 5th, 2021 and May 18, 2021 CEED meetings, 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, Julianna Kollross, 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 May 5th and May 18th, 2021 CEED minutes, bills from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and Extension, 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. Introduce Julianna Kollross, LWCD Summer Intern.
Shane Wucherpennig introduced Julianna Kollross to the committee. Julianna attends UW-Madison and is majoring in Civil Engineering with an environmental emphasis and an Environmental Studies minor. Discussion followed. Chair Curry welcomed Julianna and wished her a good summer.
 - b. Discuss Dale and Jason Behrend's stream crossing access road project, set price and select contractor.
Shane Wucherpennig explained Adam worked with Dale and Jason on this last year. LWC bid it out four different times and only received one bid. At the last meeting, the final recommendation was for Shane to reach out to contractors and figure out why they weren't bidding. Shane reached out to several contractors. A lot of them didn't get back to him. Shane was able to get ahold of Kolo Trucking, who bid it last summer. The committee rejected the bid because it was too high; about \$4000 more than the estimate. Kolo Trucking is still willing to do the project and for the price they bid a year ago. Shane noted

the project required DNR permits that last 2 years. They are still valid and it would cost the farmer another \$1200 in permitting fees if they expire. Discussion followed.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to accept 2020 bid from Kolo Trucking for Dale and Jason Behrend's stream crossing access road project to base the state cost sharing on. Second by Carmen Good. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Committee Reports

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

Supervisor Bill Leichtnam shared the speaker for the May meeting was Dr. Russ Groves, Entomologist from UW-Madison. He spoke on neonicotinoids.

Tomorrow evening (June 3rd) in Portage County, John Exo (Extension) and Chris Clayton (DNR) are speaking. People can attend in person or virtually. The meeting is at 6:30pm.

The next Citizen's Groundwater Committee meeting is virtual on Monday, June 21st at 2:00pm.

• **Health Committee report.**

Sue Kunferman shared there is an AGC call coming up next week. Sue isn't able to attend but Ben Jeffrey will be on the call. Ben hasn't had a chance to set up additional testing opportunities for Port Edwards/Armenia as they are catching up on inspections and are short staffed. There is a new sanitarian starting in a few weeks, which will help.

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

Supervisor Bill Leichtnam noted the group is meeting quarterly.

Nancy Turyk shared the Research Associate position was posted last week. There are two options for the position – post-doc or master's degree with qualifying experience. Nancy noted they are looking at the end of the month to review applications.

• **Golden Sands RC&D report.**

Supervisor Bill Leichtnam gave a brief update on the May 20th meeting.

- As of May 20th, a budget amendment was introduced where some or all of the 13 water bills might survive.
- Under new leadership of Golden Sands RC&D, there will be a document retention policy. Bill noted there will be more to come on that.

The next meeting location is to be determined. Supervisor Bill Clendenning noted a copy of the meeting minutes will be in the County Board packet as they just came in yesterday.

9. **Private Sewage.** None.

10. **Land Records.** None.

11. **County Surveyor.** None.

12. **Planning**

a. Request to approve the Town of Lincoln Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map

Adam DeKleyn presented the request from the Town of Lincoln to approve zoning ordinance and official zoning map. He included a memo on page 29 of the packet. The Town of Lincoln did adopt their zoning ordinance this past May 2021. They followed up with submitting that zoning ordinance to Planning & Zoning for final review and approval.

Adam explained the Town of Lincoln in 2019 worked with Planning & Zoning to update their comprehensive plan. The Town wanted to revisit the zoning ordinance to see if it needed to be updated or amended. Plan commission reviewed the zoning ordinance and determined no specific revisions, thought it was working well for them. They recommended the Town Board readopt the zoning

ordinance to reaffirm their dedication to local planning & zoning. The Town went through the process for formal adoption; final step is recommendation by CEED committee and final County Board approval.

Adam included a resolution in the packet based on the information the Town of Lincoln submitted to Planning & Zoning. The Town of Lincoln did follow the appropriate process for adopting the zoning ordinance and there is no conflict with any county Planning & Zoning programs administered. Adam recommended CEED committee approve the resolution.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve the resolution for Town of Lincoln Zoning Ordinance. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Economic Development

a. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission update.

Jason Grueneberg gave a monthly update and covered some of the projects. First, the ATV/UTV return on investment study. Hopefully the study will be done by fall. The hope is to use this summer to get surveys out to riders to get feedback from them on their spending habits in the county. Next, Jason shared they are on the front end of updating the county bicycle/pedestrian plan. A survey has been developed and will be going out.

Jason mentioned Verso has been in the news lately. EDA funding was secured for Verso mitigation plan that looks at redevelopment of the Verso site and diversification and mitigation of the community as well. A request for proposal was prepared and will be sent out to consultants to guide this process.

b. Update on the town of Grand Rapids Bicycle and Pedestrian trail/signage project, and consider release of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds.

Gary Johnson, Owner of United Ambulance, spoke to the committee. Gary shared United Ambulance, Sully's Sports and Dwayne's Automotive oppose this walking trail. One of the main reasons is it is only 100 yards from current trail. Gary noted he has no problem spending money on community activities like this, personally. He explained the reason for locating his station at this location 12 years ago was for security. If the walking trail goes behind, one of the closest spots to the existing walking trail is their business. He noted people will cut through the property to get between trails. Gary shared there are many reasons for opposing this walking trail. He doesn't see the reason why it has to parallel the existing walking path and it causes security concerns. Gary also noted landowners are not happy; 14 out of 19 were at a meeting opposing it. Gary thanked the committee for letting him speak. Discussion followed.

Jason Grueneberg explained the grant application process. In 2020, as part of the budget cycle, grant applications were solicited. Grand Rapids submitted an application for this project, among 15 other projects. The CEED Committee decided to fund this project at the time. \$15,000 was earmarked in the 2021 budget. The committee does request an applicant come back at a later date to give the committee an update on where the project is at. It was determined the committee could release funds, deny funds, modify amount given or postpone if more information or time is needed.

Amber France, Town of Grand Rapids, shared what they would like to do is connect the existing walking trail to Lake Wazeecha. Currently, the trail ends at WoodTrust Bank. The Town of Grand Rapids has moved to find a safer route for residents to get from the trail to the lake. Amber noted this came out of a Chamber Leadership project in 2015.

A listening and Q&A session was held a few weeks ago. Amber explained they are looking into what the options are and if it's even possible to do this. It has taken a while because they've been working with

the city on the trail agreement. The Town of Grand Rapids wants to consult with someone who is familiar with developing trails and get their input on feasibility. Residents requested someone do a feasibility study or opportunity analysis to see if they are putting the appropriate materials into this project. The proposal is to put hardpack down and make it look as natural as possible. Amber stated they value resident input and integrate their input throughout the process. They just got to the point where they can start planning since they recently got the trail agreement. Funding will help with those pieces and moving forward. Discussion followed.

Chair Curry asked Amber how much money the Town of Grand Rapids has committed to fund the trail right now. Amber said there isn't an answer right now, they are just starting to look for different funding sources. Following lengthy discussion, Jason Gruenberg offered to make the Town of Grand Rapids grant application available to the committee after the meeting and give members time to ask more questions, think and talk about it at a later time.

Motion by Ken Curry to table discussion of 2021 Economic Development Grant Funds for the town of Grand Rapids until the July 7th CEED meeting. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Discuss implementation of Wood County Rural Economic Development Plan.

Jason Grueneberg shared they are moving to a point where we'll need to start considering meeting separately for Economic Development. They are trying to establish different teams to lead efforts forward; there is more to do in the plan than County or Extension staff can handle. The goal right now is to loosely assemble teams, identify a lead person and have them facilitate and solidify team membership. Jason noted they found a lead for the broadband team – Scott Larson. Nancy Turyk added that she is planning to lead the branding team.

Jason explained the approach is to move teams forward. The other piece is considering how to handle funds dedicated toward REDI implementation. Jason is working to format a budget to bring to the committee.

Nancy shared that she, Jason and possibly Victoria, will be working to help get these groups off of the ground. Jason added they want to get them operating somewhat independently but also report back to CEED and County Board, as to not lose track of efforts.

Chair Curry asked if they want to go back to a standalone Economic Development meeting and what date? Jason suggested starting in July, as they would have grant applications back by that meeting. Following discussion, it was determined the special Economic Development meeting will be held on July 20th, immediately following County Board meeting.

d. Discuss 2022 Economic Development budget.

Jason handed out copies of the Grand Rapids grant application to committee members to review leading up to reconsideration of releasing funds. Jason will contact Amber and remind her of the grant funding parameters. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Dave LaFontaine asked about state funds for economic development. County Board Chair Lance Pliml shared we received a little over 7 million dollars from the state and it is in a separate account. The guidance on it is still fairly vague; economic development is one of the things they're looking at but the county is waiting for further clarification. Lengthy discussion followed.

e. Broadband grant update and discussion.

Bug Tussel was awarded \$1 million by the Public Service Commission to help implement broadband projects.

The next steps were guided yesterday by Bug Tussel when they talked to the Operations Committee. They explained their next steps by providing broadband in Wood County. Bug Tussel has a vision of what rollout in Wood County would look like and asked the Operations Committee for a conduit bond.

Lengthy discussion followed. County Board Chair Lance Pliml noted we do have an initial commitment to come up with roughly \$400k, which won't be borrowed, and an additional \$1 million moving forward. Bug Tussel has already started the process of getting some towers up.

Jason will keep this as a standing agenda item to keep the committee in the loop.

14. Extension

a. General Office Update

Jason Hausler provided the following updates:

- Numbers for programming have drastically changed – effective today (June 2nd), there are no limits on programming size, indoor or outdoor. For indoor programming, educators will use their judgement for adequate space for social distancing. Things are back to a “pre-Covid” level. The office is open Monday through Friday.
- Educators started doing a lot of programs virtually to engage new audiences that weren't being reached prior to Covid. Extension is now engaging in a lot of new audiences and will continue to maintain that.
- Clean Sweep funding request for 2022 has been submitted.
- Operations asked for a telecommuting office plan review. This is happening at the state level as well, as an organization (UW-Madison). The telecommuting policy likely won't drastically change.
- An updated Situational Analysis is in process. This will help all colleagues when their plans of work are submitted in July (18 month plan to talk about future, upcoming programs, etc.) and will help them plan accordingly.
- Laura and Wendy are actively involved with Central Wisconsin State Fair and helping transition some of the things our office has traditionally done, such as Fair Entry. Fair Entry is the fair's program so Extension transitioning it to their ownership, since they pay for it.

b. Monthly Report Feedback

Wood County is the first in Area 7 (Central Wisconsin) to pilot this new reporting layout. There are 15 counties around the state doing it and Portage County is now in the onboarding process. The goal is to create consistency across counties of what is being reported to oversight committees. Jason Hausler noted this is the first run of it and there will be tweaks as we go; there will be things committee members haven't seen before in the normal report. Jason brought it to the CEED Committee for feedback and asked if they liked it, didn't like it or would like to see more or less of anything in it?

Jason explained this report is generated from a database that all colleagues are putting information into on a monthly basis. It creates one reporting mechanism instead of multiple.

Supervisor Dave LaFontaine shared that he likes the format.

Jason noted that in the past, staff have included meetings they attended. The new format has taken that out. This highlights the outcomes and educational impact of the meetings.

This new report format is still a pilot so things will continue to change, morph and adapt. Portage County Extension is the next coming on board. If any committee members have suggestions, please let Jason know. He will continue to seek feedback as this rolls out.

c. County Board Presentation

Jason is planning to get on all Area 7 County Board floors before the end of summer/early fall. He is considering feedback to do an annual update and is looking at either July 20th or September 21st for Wood County. Jason asked if he has the committee's support to do that this year. The CEED Committee

expressed their support with no preference on the meeting date. Jason will work toward the September 21st date and will get in touch with Chair Pliml to schedule.

d. Educator Presentation – Laura Huber, 4-H Program Educator

Laura Huber presented on a review of the last year, where 4-H is at right now and where things are going. Laura mentioned there has been a lot of programming on how to get back to connection and how to get into a room with people and regardless of what people feel about various topics, realize we have more in common with one and other than a me/them division.

Laura had the committee members and meeting attendees participate in an activity. Everyone was asked to write on a notecard what they think is the most beautiful sound in the world. The goal was to find commonality and build trust in one another despite differences.

Laura shared that in the last year, 4-H went through some huge challenges, when suddenly they couldn't meet in person anymore. Activities like this one have been done to help Club Leaders build connection within their clubs while meeting over Zoom, WebEx and Google Meet. Overall, the program has taken a hit in the last year. Laura hopes to see numbers go back up as they can now meet in person again.

In 2020, 4-H camps were cancelled. A team from Clark, Wood, Marathon, Shawano, Lincoln, Langlade and Oneida counties offered "Camp in a Box". Young people were able to enroll in camp and get kits with materials including things like a camp schedule, camp cookbook, even campfire times over Zoom. Camp in a Box has been recognized at the state level and is also up for a national Excellence in Camping award for the North Central region. Laura shared that as they were faced with this unexpected and impactful change, educators sat down and got creative on how to do the things they've always done but in a brand new way.

The Virtual Learning Community also earned a national award for the North Central region. Laura mentioned the most popular has been poultry – over 300 young people across Wisconsin attended a series of 5 different poultry workshops. The Virtual Learning Community provides real education programs for young people all across the state who wouldn't have anyone to guide them locally.

Laura shared information about this summer's programming. Aerodynamics and model air planes, a 3 day minicamp will be held at MARS at the end of June. Youth do not have to be members of 4-H to participate, but must be in at least 6th grade.

Day camp will be held at North Wood County Park. Clark and Marathon counties will bus kids to participate. There will be one day for each age group (6-8th grade, 3rd-5th and Cloverbud K-2nd). They've partnered with Northward Paddle and Paddle for canoes, kayaks, etc. Laura is excited that active youth leadership development will be in action again. Youth don't have to be 4-H members to participate in day camp. Discussion followed.

e. **Schedule next regular committee meeting.** The next regular CEED meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 7, 2021 at 9:00am at Wood County Courthouse in Conference Room #114.

f. **Requests for per diem for meeting attendants.**

Motion by Ken Curry to approve per diem and mileage for Supervisor Bill Leichtnam to attend on June 3rd in Portage County. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.

g. **Agenda items for next meeting.** Agenda items are due by Wednesday, June 30th.

h. **Schedule any additional meetings if necessary.** None.

i. **Adjourn.** Chair Curry declared the meeting adjourned at 12:10pm.