

GRANT COUNTY LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

March 3, 2011

9:00 a.m.

Ag Services Building
Lancaster, Wisconsin

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vince Loeffelholz at 9:00 a.m. Present in addition to Chairman Vince Loeffelholz were, Don Splinter, Lester Jantzen, Steve Adrian, Mark Stead, Marvin Kettler, and Grant Loy. Others present were, John Patcle, Melissa Bartz, Lynda Schweikert, and Sue Rojemann.

Motion by Grant Loy, seconded by Lester Jantzen that the Committee was in compliance with the Open Meeting Law. Agenda was posted at the Administration Building, the County Courthouse, the Ag Service Center building and was sent to the Herald Independent stating the date, time and place of the meeting.

Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Steve Adrian to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2011 meeting. Motion carried.

Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Marvin Kettler to approve the agenda as printed. Motion carried.

Bills: Sue Rojemann

Motion by Steve Adrian, seconded by Marvin Kettler to approve the bills. Motion carried.

County Board Chairman Report: John Patcle

John reported that they will be monitoring the budget bill to see if anything gets passed. The union negotiations are at a standstill right now.

Ethics & Conflicts of Interest: Vince Loeffelholz

Everyone received a copy of a UW Extension Article titled "Ethics and Conflicts of Interest" and on page 121 in the 2008 Wisconsin Officials County Handbook. It was agreed that the committee members will abstain if there is a direct personal connection to a project that is voted on during the LWCC meeting. A member may act in his/her own capacity during an open meeting setting.

County Cost Sharing Requests: Lynda Schweikert

Lynda presented final approval request for county cost sharing on 2 manure storage closure projects for Rick Bausch, Glen Haven Twp., \$1,050.00. Motion by Mark Stead, seconded by Steve Adrian to approve payment. Roll Call: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Lynda reported that there are no tentative approvals at this meeting. We are waiting on the EQIP sign up to see who signs a contract and to see how far the EQIP money will go down on the list. We still have not got a contract on the DATCP cost share money from the state. DATCP stated that we can go ahead and establish contracts for the landowners; however we don't feel comfortable contracting the money when we don't have it. All EQIP contracts need to be signed by April 1, 2011. If Lynda receives the DATCP cost sharing before the April meeting she will disclose it at the April meeting, otherwise Lynda will wait and bring the county and DATCP cost sharing requests to the May LWCC meeting.

Conservation on the Land Internship Program (COLIP): Lynda Schweikert

Lynda reported that the Conservation on the Land Internship Program grant money that was earmarked has been denied, therefore we will not be getting the grant money. There is still \$2,000 set aside in the budget.

Melissa has been approved to hire an intern through NRCS. This will be a work study; engineering technician student from UW-Platteville. Melissa will be able to keep the NRCS student through September 30th 2011.

Lynda reported that our DNR Forster, Craig Hollingsworth, has retired on February 18th. Matt Singer, forester, from Lafayette County will be helping out in Grant County. We will need to hire someone to supervise the tree planting. If there is any money left over from the \$2,000.00 county money we revisit the idea of an intern.

CREP Amendment: Lynda Schweikert

Lynda reported that in order to fund PACE agreements, the state will be taking money from the CREP program. DATCP went through to see how the counties allocated their CREP funds. At this time all the participating counties should have allocated at least 40 % of their money by now. Grant County allocated 36%, so DATCP will be taking 4% or \$82,903 from our allocation. Our initial allocation was \$1,850,000; it is now down to \$1,170,000. Motion by Marvin Kettler, seconded by Lester Jantzen to accept this amendment. Motion carried.

Photo Copy Machine Maintenance Agreement: Lynda Schweikert

Lynda received a letter from Gordon Flesch stating that the maintenance agreement had been cancelled immediately on our copy machine; do to losing money on them. They have given us 2 options for a maintenance agreement: 1. Yearly Agreement \$240.0/year for 12,000 copies, +.03 over that amount; or 2. Time and Materials - \$148/ 1 hour + \$48.00 each additional ¼ hour. Due to the fact that the copy machine has been very reliable and we only have 1.5 years on the lease, Lynda recommends going with time and materials.

WLWCA Dues: Lynda Schweikert

Lynda needs approval for the WLWCA dues in the amount of \$1,365.00, which is in the budget. Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Steve Adrian to pay the dues. Motion carried.

Wildlife Damage Abatement Claims Program

Lynda sent the committee members a letter in reference to what the results were from the WDACP special meeting. Arnold Cuchna was denied and Lynn Kirschbaum was approved. Dan suggested that we push our February meeting back 1 week so he has time to get all the paperwork by the end of February. It will also give Greg time to go and check on tags that may be missing or to see if there were problems at the registration stations. Arnold called and complained of being denied, however he has asked for help in getting the deer harvested, along with Jim Collins also requesting help. We sent letters out to the hunters that these 2 individuals are requesting hunting assistance.

Deer Donation Program

Lynda reported that we are still waiting for the Fennimore Butcher Shop's documentation. Greg Cerven sent them a letter stating that we need the charitable organization log sheet by March 5th for him to comply. Greg has not heard anything from him at this date.

Contribution Agreement Issue

Lynda sent a letter to Pat Leavenworth regarding the contribution agreement of the decreased flat rate amount of the funds after the CRP work was completed. Lynda has not heard anything back from Pat.

Southwest Technical College Speaking Engagement

Lynda reported that on Tuesday February 22th, Deb Ihm, from the Ag Production and Business Department at Southwest Tech received notice that Southwest Tech is thinking of disbanding their department completely. Lynda spoke at the public hearing to support how important these classes are in the rural community. These classes are needed in this highly agricultural and livestock production area.

Annual Report: Lynda Schweikert

Lynda reported that the Annual Report has been sent out in all the newspapers. She was asked to look into a cheaper way to publish and send out to the public.

RC&D Letter of Support

Lynda reported that Steve The Federal Government is proposing to cut 2011 funding for RC&D midyear. President has eliminated the program for 2012. The legislature is also looking at eliminating the 2011 funding also. Lynda sent a letter out to Federal Legislators; Ron Johnson, Herb Kohl, Ron Kind, and Tammy Baldwin in support of the RC&C. Lynda also explained the benefits of RC&D and how it affects the NRCS, County, and the local towns.

NMP Training

Lynda reported that on March 1st, a Snap Plus training for the Agronomist was hosted at the Youth & Ag. Building. There were 10 agronomists that attended the training and some attended to receive their further education credits. Susan Porter from DATCP was the instructor of this class.

FPP Report: Lynda Schweikert

Lynda presented 1 cancellation of Notice of NonCompliance for Dave and Marie McClain, Paris Twp. They failed to turn in a NMP in 2009. Dave has now gone through the classes that our department offers to write his own NMP. Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Lester Jantzen to approve the cancellation of NonCompliance for FPP. Motion carried.

Lynda reported that the Tree Sale orders are now done for 2011. We had received 115 orders, down, from 158 orders in 2010. Ordered 8,265 trees for 2011 and 2010 we ordered 13,460. Kevin is also taking litany orders from the churches, activity books for the schools and trees for Arbor Day.

Lynda reported that there have been a lot of phone calls with questions on FPP from tax preparers and landowners regarding the new Working Lands Initiative program. There were numerous landowners that did not take the FPP credit last year, so they were not grandfathered in. To get back in to the WLI program they will need to be 100% in compliance. May possibly offer a training session for the tax prepares for 2012.

NRCS Report: Melissa Bartz

Melissa reported that they have received their initial money allocation for EQIP. They have allocated around 20 landowners contracts for around \$410,000. They have 1 manure storage facility, a stream habitat project with Trout Unlimited on the David and Maria Drews farm. NRCS is in the process of contacting the landowners to get all the paperwork completed and signed. April 1st is the deadline to have contracts signed.

Greg Geiselman, the husband of the area NRCS clerk in Richland Center is coming down to work on entering the wetland slides into the computer. NRCS has 700 intermittent hours for Greg to work.

Melissa hired an engineering technician, Michael Long from UW-Platteville to work during the summer. He will be helping with the surveying and designing projects.

NRCS is also doing their contract reviews. Every contract that was signed last year needs to have a review done before their 1 year anniversary date. NRCS is very strict with keeping these contracts on schedule.

Lynda and Melissa talked with Jared regarding the CRP sign up; he will let them know what he found out at training regarding the new sign up. They reviewed a letter that FSA will be sending out concerning the maintenance on CRP.

FSA Report: Jared Reuter

Jared was not present at the meeting but submitted a report. CRP sign up starts on March 14th and will run through April 15th. CRP training will occur via live meetings over the internet. Once the three sessions of meetings are completed, NRCS, LWCD, and DNR will join FSA in a joint meeting to go over any changes in the CRP program. All CRP participants who are expiring this fall (September 30, 2011) have received notification letters last week about the sign-up.

Joanne Reynolds, CRP Program Technician, has taken another position with FSA to train as a Farm Loan Officer with Dennis Hottenstein in Grant County. She will be detailed to FSA Farm Programs to assist through the CRP sign-up. After the CRP sign-up she will be officially starting her new direction with FSA.

At this time there is a hiring freeze on for FSA so they will not be able to fill Joanne's position at this time. FSA Farm Programs in Grant County is over two people understaffed for the work that needs to be done.

Starting March 7th, FSA will have a manager trainee, Jon Lantz, dairy farmer in St. Croix County, who will be directing the CRP sign-up.

Call for Agenda Items for Next Months Meeting

Other Business

Motion by Mark Stead, seconded by Grant Loy to adjourn until April 5, 2011. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by
Annette Lolwing / Sue Rojemann for Grant Loy