

# **GRANT COUNTY LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

June 2, 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, Grant Loy and Marvin Kettler. Others present were, Melissa Bartz, Lynda Schweikert, Kevin Lange, Jared Reuter, and Annette Lolwing.

## **Certification of Open Meeting Law: Annette Lolwing**

Annette Lolwing posted the agenda at the Ag Service Center and was sent to Karla Schwantes to post at the Administration Building and County Courthouse. It was also sent to WGLR Radio stating the date, time, and place of the meeting. Media notices were sent to WGLR Radio, and Herald Independent, Tri County Press, and Platteville Journal.

Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Grant Loy to approve the May 3, 2011 minutes with one change on the first page, last paragraph that was printed as 2099 and should have been printed as 2010. Motion carried.

Motion by Steve Adrian, seconded by Mark Stead to approve the Agenda with Jared Reuter's request to be moved up on the agenda to present his report. Moved his report ahead of the County Cost Sharing report, also Todd Johnson is not able to present a report on the Farmland Preservation Plan. Motion carried.

## **Bills: Annette Lolwing**

Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Grant Loy to approve the bills. Motion carried.

## **County Board Chairman Report:**

John Patcle reported that the County Board met with the WPPA which is the union for the Law Enforcement. Nothing was agreed upon at that time. The recount in the county is finished, and Kloppenburg conceded the election. Had a good turnout at the ribbon cutting of the new building at the fairgrounds.

## **FSA Report: Jared Reuter**

Jared reported that they are busy with crop reporting, deadline is July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Jared reported that the USDA agencies are having cutbacks. FSA has a 4.5% cutback. Grant County has always been just under 1.5 people short. With Jo Reynolds moving to the Farm Loan Office they will be 2.5 people short. Adjoining offices are shifting employees from Richland, Lafayette, and Crawford County to help with the Grant County workload. FSA will sustain what they have, and next year does not look any better. They are also looking at ways to cut the budget. Every time a FSA newsletter goes out it is \$80,000 for the state of Wisconsin. Usually send out 4 mailings per year. They have already sent out 2 mailings this year, and were told no more will be going out. Jared mentioned that he is looking into an E-Newsletter via the computer.

Jared reported that they are still waiting for the notice of who has been accepted in the last CRP sign up. FSA was told that they should find out the results in mid-May, and we still do not have the results.

FSA is required to do a yearly notification/newsletter to each landowner that tells you all the things that FSA is required to tell their landowners at least once a year.

Jared reported that there is nothing new on the leasing issue of the office building.

Jared reported that the deadline to sign up for DCP is June 1<sup>st</sup>. They are able to sign contracts until the end of July. Jared is not able to sign off on the contract; it must be one of the committee members. The FSA committee has not had a regular monthly meeting since April, due to cut backs. FSA's committee meeting will be by teleconference in June. They are only aloud 2 more meetings till the end of September. FSA will be offering some early outs, if you are 50 years of age or have 20 years of service in.

**County Cost Share Approval: Lynda Schweikert**

Lynda reported that she and Randy went to the Orchard Manor committee meeting to discuss the grade stabilization structure. It was voted that they will not go ahead with the grade stabilization structure. The \$3,500.00 County cost sharing and \$5,283.70 for DATCP cost sharing will be turned back to the appropriate accounts.

Lynda presented final approval request for county cost sharing on a well decommissioning for Sam Fox, South Lancaster Twp., \$500.00. Motion by Don Splinter, seconded by Mark Stead to approve payment. Roll Call: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Lynda presented final approval request for county cost sharing on a well decommissioning for Steve Hoffland, Wingville Twp., \$500.00. Motion by Marvin Kettler, seconded by Steve Adrian to approve payment. Roll Call: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Lynda presented final approval request for county cost sharing on a well decommissioning for Joan Heister, Harrison Twp., \$386.13. Motion by Lester Jantzen, seconded by Marvin Kettler to deny Joan's final payment request due to the fact that the proper procedure was not followed. Roll Call: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Lynda presented final approval request for county cost sharing on a waterway repair for Streich Capital LLC, Ellenboro Twp., \$1,560.00. Motion by Mark Stead, seconded by Steve Adrian to approve payment. Roll Call: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Lynda presented final approval request for 2010 county cost sharing of \$705.75, and 2010 DATCP cost sharing of \$7,500.00 for a total of \$8,205.75 on a rip rap site for Chris Neises, Patch Grove Twp. Motion by Mark Stead, seconded by Steve Adrian to approve payment. Roll Call: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Lynda presented tentative approval request for county cost sharing on an emergency well decommissioning for Brian Conley, Waterloo Twp., \$187.50. Motion by Marvin Kettler, seconded by Don Splinter to approve Brian's request. Motion carried.

## **Land and Water Conservation Department Report: Lynda Schweikert**

### **Animal Waste Storage Permit to Close Facility**

Lynda reported that Dennis Patterson has an old animal waste storage facility that he would like to close. The estimated cost is \$2,000.00, and has paid his \$2.00 permit fee. Motion by Steve Adrian, seconded by Mark Stead to approve Dennis to proceed with the storage closure. Motion carried.

### **Code of Conduct**

John reported that this was passed at the last full County Board meeting.

### **LWCD Display at Exhibition Hall Open House**

Lynda reported that on May 21<sup>st</sup> she and Melissa hosted a display for the NRCS and the LWCD offices at the Exhibition Hall Open House. She said that it was a very nice evening.

### **Letter from Senator Schultz**

Lynda wrote a letter to Senator Schultz regarding the funding for the Land and Water Conservation Departments. The WLWCA, WALCE and their lobbyist have 2 people on the finance committee, both Democrats, to bring our proposition forward. They have asked all the counties to see if they could get support. Lynda passed this letter on to WALCE and WLWCA to let them know that Senator Schultz is in favor of pursuing the deletion of the language making the funding reduction permanent and, if unsuccessful, he will work with us to restore funding in the next budget.

### **RC&D Aquatic Invasive Species Interviews**

Lynda reported that she has been working with SW Badger RC&C, Angie Wright, to interview an aquatic invasive species coordinator. RC&D received a grant from DNR to fund this position. Interviews were on June 1<sup>st</sup>, and Angie will be presenting it to the RC&D board on Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **SWTC Ag Program Board of Directors Meeting**

Lynda reported that she met with the Board of Directors to come up with some solutions to save the Ag Program. One solution was to increase the tuition for their classes. The Ag program will be offering a semester class that goes more in depth of NMP writing/training for landowners/producers to write their own NMP's.

### **Springbrook Financial Program**

Lynda reported on the Springbrook Financial Program that is fully implemented to do the payroll and our financials. Our computers are on the NRCS computer system and they did not give us permissions to install the program on our computers. Lynda is working with Jeff to configure one of our older computers for the use in our office. Looking at hooking it up with a wireless receiver.

### **Farmland Preservation Plan**

Lynda went to a Planning and Zoning meeting. Todd Johnson worked with Southwest Regional at the time that the Farmland Preservation Plan was being developed, before he got hired on with the UW Extension. Todd reported that he is basically following the Comprehensive Plan that the township had agreed to do.

Kevin and Lynda met with Terry Loeffelholz and Todd Johnson to have an informational meeting to be held on June 6, 2011 @ 5:00, in their town hall to meet with the Harrison Town Board. Terry mentioned that best case scenario would be October; worst case scenario would be December to have Harrison Township zoned. If Harrison Township is zoned in December all of their constituents would be eligible to apply for the program for 2011. By that time it will be too late to

get a nutrient management plan written. We want to let the landowners know that if they plan on taking the tax credit next year they need to start working on compliance this year.

Lynda reported that the Working Lands Initiative and tax related issues were brought up at the Southern Area Association meeting. Most counties are just tossing it out there saying that you need a NMP by 2015, and are then just sitting back waiting and wondering how they are going to deal with it all in 2015. Every county is doing it differently. We feel we are way ahead of the game.

Lynda reported that last week the State came down to audit the Farmland Preservation Program. Lynda and Kevin, along with 3 people from the Department of Ag went through a checklist of what they wanted to look at; wanted to see how we came up with the list of FPP participants and how we track compliance, and if we are sending out informational letters. Department of Ag. sent out 180 letters to FPP participants that were on their list stating that they need to contact our office. Only 14 of those landowners contacted our office stating that they wish to continue the FPP. The first letter was sent last summer to the FPP participants, so they have had 1 year to get into compliance. We have the FPP contract list; but the list of individuals from zoned townships is the list that we do not have. Lynda suggested having the Department of Ag send Notice of NonCompliance letters to the 166 FPP participants that did not contact our office. Auditors were satisfied with what we are doing.

#### **FPP Report: Kevin Lange**

Kevin presented 10 landowners with a Notice of NonCompliance. They had 1 year to provide us with a NMP and have not done so; so a Notice of NonCompliance has been sent to 7 landowners and there were 3 landowners that have voluntarily opted out of the FPP. Motion by Lester Jantzen, seconded by Marvin Kettler to approve the 7 Notice of NonCompliance and the 3 voluntary out of the FPP. Motion carried.

Kevin reported that has been trying to keep up with lots of sodbusting issues that keep coming over from FSA.

Kevin reported that within the next few days we should be starting to do the transect survey that we do this time every year. Department of Ag requires all the counties to do some type of system to monitor and track erosion. We have 642 stops, which we travel through each township twice, stopping every ½ mile looking left and right to see what the land use is, what crop was planted, what tillage was there and how much residue is there and enter the information into the laptop.

#### **Southern Area Association**

##### **Summer Tour**

Lynda reported that she, Grant, Don, Vince, and Annette attended the Southern Area Association meeting. Each year the Southern Area Tour is put on by 1 of the each 11 counties. This year is Rock County's turn to host the tour. With the reduction of budgets it is getting harder and harder to fund the tour. The Southern Area Association usually provides \$500.00 to the County that is hosting the tour. Looking at different options for hosting the tour; possibly do every other year, eliminate it all together, or if WALCE and WLWCA merge maybe to go into a tour for the areas. Tour is Wednesday, August 3, 2011. They would like to know who plans on attending as soon as possible. There will be discussion to see what the committee members would like to do as far as the yearly tour.

### **Conservation Farmer of the Year Award**

Every year WLWCA awards a Conservation Farmer of the Year. If your county's farmer gets chosen, your dues are waived the following year. Putting on a Conservation Observance Day could be as expensive as the dues that are waived. There was a significant amount of time and money put into the process. Committee recommended not pursuing this, this year.

Lynda reported on the Conservation Observance Day, June 13, 2011 is at the Fountain Prairie Farms, Columbia County. May attend if you wish.

### **WLWCA/WALCE Merger**

Lynda reported that she is sharing the information to the committee regarding the WLWCA/WALCE merger. They will be working on the By-Laws. There were no objections at the SAA meeting to not move ahead with the merge.

### **NRCS Report: Melissa Bartz**

Melissa reported that they were sent emails offering early retirement and buyouts that are being offered to prepare for a poor budget next year. Must have at least 20 years with the Agency.

Melissa reported that they will be tracking postage in October, because of budget reasons. Also, trying to reduce vehicles. Offices with 3 staff employees will only be allowed 2 vehicles.

Melissa reported that NRCS is getting a lot of HEL's, wetland determinations and sodbuster requests.

Melissa reported that Steve Bertjens is working on their 35 compliance reviews. There is lots of construction going on. Will be starting the CRP status reviews. Area office has a student that may be helping with the CRP status reviews.

Melissa reported that they had 8 CSP contracts obligated and all are signed contracts.

Melissa reported that in May, the UW-Platteville worked with approximately 15 High Schools who participated with the soil judging in Platteville. Contest was held at the Ted Kearns Winery Property.

Melissa reported that she was asked by Patti to work with Southwest Tech and UW Platteville to see what courses they offer to prepare students to be a conservation technician.

### **Call for Agenda Items for Next Months Meeting**

### **Other Business**

Motion by Mark Stead, seconded by Lester Jantzen to adjourn until July 5, 2011. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Annette Lolwing for Grant Loy

