



**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee**  
**Monday, May 9, 2022 Amended Minutes**  
**Courthouse County Board Room & Virtually by ZOOM**

**Committee members:** Chairman Jim Winkler, Bob Thome, Jr., Collette Sorgel, John Engel-Farmer Rep. were present. Linnaea Newman and Tommy Ryden: excused.

**Others Present:** Michele Sadauskas, Karl Jennrich, Stephanie Boismenuue, JoAnne Lund, Michael Stinebrink, Jim Tharman, Amber Rehberg, Sharon Krause, Terri Kolb, Anne Williams, Karly Harrison, Mary Stys, Allison Wilson, Jonna Jewell, and Merry Lehner. Zoom: Dan Butkus, Tom Johansen, and Baerbel Ehrig.

**1. Call to order and Chairperson's Announcements:**

Chair Winkler called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. and the meeting was properly posted and handicapped accessible and ADA compliant. The symbol /s/ indicates a valid virtual attendee's signature with no need to note it in the minutes. Winkler congratulated Bob Thome Jr. on his accepting the position with the State Land and Water Conservation board position. He ran for the position and due to a nominee who lost his re-election, Thome took his place. Bob Mott was approved as the new At Large member of Lumberjack RC&D and he will be their Treasurer.

**2. Approve Agenda:** A motion by Thome/Sorgel to approve the May 9, 2022 Agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

**3. Approve Minutes:** Thome/Winkler motioned to approve the April 11, 2022 minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

**4. Dates /Location of Future Meetings:**

Monday, June 13, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. Courthouse County Board Room

Monday, July 11, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. Courthouse County Board Room

Nicolet Northwoods Center rooms 207, 208, and 209 are equipped to record zoom blended meetings.

**5. Public Comment:**

The following people spoke on behalf of Crescent Lake who are in favor of Bob Thome being re-assigned as the Crescent Lake District Commissioner: Jim Gerke, Marie Rudisill- Director of Crescent Lake Bible Camp, Jim Pederson, Treasurer of Crescent Lake District, and Terri Goldbach, Squash Lake District. Zoom: Tom Johansen from Squash Lake District supports Thome as the County Representative. Dan Butkus, Treasurer for Squash Lake Protection Rehabilitation District and Regional Director, North Central Region for Wisconsin Lakes, supports Thome appointed as the Board of Squash Lake and Crescent Lake as the County Representative. An email was read into the record from Joel Knutsen supporting Thome as County Representative for Squash and Crescent Lakes. Winkler asked for further comments and there were none.

**6. Introduction of Committee Members:** Linnaea Newman excused due to medical issues and Tom Ryden was out of town. Winkler asked those present to introduce themselves giving a brief background of their experience.

Collette Sorgel, District 13 in Three Lakes. She has worked in the community for the last 13 years. She is Chair of Three Lakes Natural Resource Committee through the town of Three Lakes. She is on the Forward Three Lakes Natural Resources Committee with focus on Thunder Lake. She worked for Nicolet College as an adjunct instructor and led entrepreneur classes. She was past President of Grow North and past president of the Oneida County Tourism Council. Currently she is part of the Oneida County Economic Development team.

John Engel is the Farm Service Agency Representative (FSA) and this is his second year in the position. He works 400 acres of row crops around the towns of Crescent and Pelican and has been a resident of Rhinelander for 29 years. He grew up in Western Wisconsin on a farm. Engel is passionate about farming.

Bob Thome Jr. District 11 Town of Crescent Supervisor. He lives on the south end of Lake Julia and endeavors to keep the shore natural forever. He is president of the Lake Julia Lake Association, Director of the Oneida County Lakes and Rivers Association (OCLRA), and a lover of lakes.

Jim Winkler CUW Committee Chair and has been a member for the last six years. He received a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Outdoor Recreation with a focus on Tourism and Forestry management. He has been in the area for 19 years. He has worked for Extension in Minnesota, Green County for 11 years and Chippewa County for 3 years. He was the 4-H Youth Development Educator in Oneida County for 8 years.

Merry Lehner is the Extension Office Coordinator and takes the CUW minutes. She is the Master Gardener Coordinator and leads Strongbodies classes at the ADRC.

7. **Agenda Item to 16a.** **Brittany Beyer spoke on behalf of the Extension Community Development Institute (CDI) position.** As Executive Director of the Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation, she spoke on the beneficial and necessary aspects of the CDI position. She works with economic development professionals at the county and community level. The old way that economic development worked is that you attracted the business, that attracted the workers and the community became better. Now it works in the reverse: we need to make our areas better, which will attract the people, which will help employers have enough people to work in the area. There are two sides to her work; the economic development side but the community development side needs work too and the CDI position specifically speaks to that. She has worked closely with Community Development Institute with UW Madison in the past and it pulls its resources differently than the other Extension educators' institutes. She depends on the Community and Economic Development from Extension and Madison for CDI resources for successful outcomes. A resource in 2019, for an Economic Development Summit, where she used the helpful information as a basis for much of her work. A 2022 Fall Summit is planned. Without this Extension tie, it is more difficult to access these valuable resources. An Extension Community Development person is essential in planning the Summit. Without it, she cannot draw on those resources. Alexander was very good as an engaged facilitator. He was able to convene and bring people together to discuss difficult community concerns. Most of what happened in Forward Three Lakes was due to their relationship with the Community Development Institute out of the University of Madison-Division of Extension where they were able to tap into the expertise of professors and specialists. She hopes to foresee Extension assist in Walk-in Facilitation for Community Readiness. That happens with a full time CDI position dedicated to that work. As the Chair of the Governor's' Task Force on Broadband. Beyer oversees eight counties and having an Extension CDI person helps our interests locally. Beyer stressed the importance of finding a seasoned facilitator. During Covid, monthly meetings amongst Oneida County leaders worked through problems. The meetings have continued and address the issues and help this community thrive. She does not want to see this stop and encourages us to amplify the way resources can come available through Extension.

8. **Appointments:**

Winkler/Sorgel nominated Bob Thome as new Vice Chair of the CUW Committee. The nomination passed unanimously; all ayes. No other nominations were made.

NCLWCA (North Central Land and Water Conservation Association)

Michele Sadauskas is the Oneida County Conservationist. She manages a staff of four and AIS LTEs in the summertime. Please contact her with any inquiries. She distributed the Land Conservation Committee Handbook 2022 -2024 for background on Wisconsin Land + Water organization. See page 6, which defines "Who is WI Land+Water", and supports LWCD offices in the state with training, conservation standard development, youth education, grants, partnership building, and advocacy. North Central is one of eight area associations, representing nine counties, with a local representative for this County. A nomination for the NCLWCA representative made by Engel/Sadauskas nominated Jim Winkler as the Representative and Bob Thome Jr. as the Alternate by Engel/Sorgel.

**9. Introduction of Jim Tharman**, Wildlife Specialist, USDA-APHIS (United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) Wildlife Services. Tharman has been with the USDA since 1995 and has worked in Oneida for 8-9 years. Wildlife Damage Program is a state run program where counties administer it on the County's behalf. The program covers damage from bear, deer, geese, and turkeys to agricultural crops. In Oneida County, there are 11 enrollees in the program. Some of it was for row crop and much related to apiary problems where they will supply abatement materials. Three permanent fences constructed in the County abate damage to strawberry crops, a tree farm, and a nursery. He conducts appraisals and asks the County for crop price approvals. The State then approves it and the County pays for any claims. In October, he presents their budget for approval. The State provides funds for abatement, not the County.

**10. Introduction of Michael Stinebrink**, District Conservationist, NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service). He distributed the third quarter fiscal year 2022 (April-June) report. Stinebrink works out of Rhinelander and provides voluntary conservation assistance to private landowners in Oneida, Vilas, Forest, and Florence Counties. He administers federal assistance for two programs in our county. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) fixes conservation problems and environmental issues on private lands, averaging about \$75,000/year in Oneida County. The other program is Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). They provide financial assistance to maintain an existing level of conservation (reward) and implement additional activities. Eligible land uses are cropland, pasture, forestland, associated agricultural land, and farmstead. In Oneida County, they spend \$50,000 per year.

**11. Introduction of Tracy Beckman, Executive Director, Lumberjack RC&D**

Lumberjack RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development Council) works with governments and conservation groups who work to conserve natural resources while enhancing the quality of life and economic well-being of rural communities. Lumberjack formed in 1968, is a 501c3 non-profit. Lumberjack is composed of nine counties in NE Wisconsin: Florence, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano, and Vilas Counties. It consists of At-Large members and appointees from each county Land and Water Conservation Committee. They meet with municipal governments, WDNR, USFS, NCRS and other conservation groups. They fiscally sponsor smaller conservation organizations such as WHIP, TIP, WYFP, and FLOW. (Wisconsin Headwaters Invasive Partnership, Terrestrial Invasive Species, Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership, and Forest, Langlade & Oconto Waterways) Contracts and Grants sustain the work. Beckman works closely with Michele Sadauskas. Selection of Representative. Thome nominated Collette Sorgel as the new representative today. Sorgel accepted and there were no other nominations. All ayes.

**12. Lake Nokomis Lake District CBCW Partnership.**

Stephanie Boismenu received a Clean Boats Clean Water (CBCW) grant from the DNR that covers six water bodies with 200 LTE hours at each water body at the boat landings. One of the water bodies is Lake Nokomis, which is one of the busiest landings. She formed a partnership with the Lake Nokomis Lake District, who will be giving LWCD a donation that will help support one of the CBCW craft inspectors (one County LTE hired by LWCD) at that boat landing. Lake Nokomis District is providing a match.

**13. LWCD (Land and Water Conservation Department) Update.**

- a. Staff Introductions and Programming and LCC Handbook.

Michele Sadauskas, Conservationist, manages the department staff, oversight, guidance and support. A focus of her job is working with grants and project development. As money comes in, she assists and guides staff on those projects. Sadauskas oversees the Cost Share Program where State funding helps restore shoreline problems. See the Website at <https://www.oclw.org/>, which includes details on the Cost Share Program. There are before and after photos of Cost Share projects.

Baerbel Ehrig, Lake Shore Restoration Specialist and Pollinator Project Coordinator has worked with LWCD since 2016. Initially she started on the Pollinator Project and now works on the Lake Protection Grant 2020-2022. Shorelines have a very important role in our ecosystem. They provide a transition zone and are areas of high biodiversity. Shorelines serve

as a filter and buffer function for a body of water. She will be working with Partner Organizations: Three Lake Waterfront Assoc. (TLWA), Tomahawk Lake Association (TLA), and Pelican Lake Property Owners Association, (PLPOA). The goal is to assess shorelines, collect data, and identify priority areas for improvement. She will promote County Cost Share and Healthy Lake and Rivers Programs.

Jonna Jewell is the part-time Administrative Assistant for Land and Water since 2014, but worked for the County 30 years before retiring in 2012. She manages the department website. She assists with the Cost Share project where she processes the paperwork. She enjoys designing the flyers and brochures and overseeing the Environmental Awareness poster and speaker contests and Invasive Species Poster Contest. Oneida County has had a student speaker go to State almost every year.

Stephanie Boismenu, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator & Conservation Technician, joined the department in 2014. Through the DNR Surface Water Grants she is able to hire LTEs to help with 2022 Lake Monitoring and Protection Network funds on many projects such as AIS early detection monitoring, rapid response, management, control and removal. Other projects she leads the LTEs in are water quality monitoring, CBCW boat inspections, purple loosestrife biocontrol, and others out in the field. She provides AIS presentations, education, outreach, (including youth) training, workshops, field events and helps lake and community groups.

Karl Jennrich is the Conservation and the Planning and Zoning Director. They have been a merged department for many years and Michele does an excellent job. Jennrich has worked with others in LWCD in the past and Oneida County was a leader in establishing an AIS Coordinator and with Lake Associations to try to identify shoreline problems and restore them. Sadauskas has obtained many grants for this cause.

JoAnne Lund, River Grant Specialist and Special Project Coordinator, has a BS in Zoology and MS in Ecology. Hired in 2020, Lund conducted the Stream Crossing Inventory where the water crosses over roadways. She completed 105 surveys in 2020, 90 in 2021 and completes the remaining eight towns in 2022. The data went to the Great Lake Stream Crossing Inventory database mapped by the Michigan DNR. Crossings are assessed on three factors: passability, structural integrity, and soil erosion estimates. A goal is to prevent environmental damage and reduce public safety issues at public crossings. Constructing new culverts or repairs and providing information to responsible parties will maintain resilient and environmentally sound stream crossings.

- b. LWRM (Land and Water Resource Management) 5-year Work Plan. Postponed to June 2022.
- c. Up-Coming Events: NCLWCA meeting is Friday, June 3, 2022 for the new representative Sorgel.

#### **14. District Reports:**

- a. Overview/Role of County Representative. Sadauskas distributed documents defining a Lake Districts as a specialized unit of government designed to manage a lake or group of lakes and related responsibilities. An overview of Lake District Commissioners also was distributed. Winkler presented nominations. The new committee members will need to learn about lake districts and receive help at the first meetings. Winkler spoke with them earlier and the nominations are as follows.
- b. Nominated Lake District Representatives: Bear Lake - Tom Ryden. Crescent and Squash Lakes - Bob Thome. Horsehead Lake and Mid Lake – Jim Winkler. Lake Nokomis – Linnaea Newman. Thunder Lake – Collette Sorgel.
- c. Crescent Lake Report – R. Thome reported Terri Goldbach gave an in-depth 2022 plan for handling of AIS/Milfoil control and a \$25,000 donation was received from the Association for that purpose.
- d. Bear Lake Report - R. Thome. Bear Lake District discussed the shortage on the 2022-point intercept lake study program and how it will run into the 2023 budget.
- e. Squash Lake – R. Thome. Insurance premiums went up and they decided to cut certain areas of coverage. Divers hired for AIS removal are not meeting grant requirements for payment.

#### **15. Consent Agenda Items: Land and Water:**

Winkler asked for yearly approval of 2022 Out-of-County Travel Approval for Staff and/or Committee Members so it will not be on monthly agendas. The March Monthly budget report and approve monthly invoices/purchase orders. Thome explained how to read the green bar reports. A motion by Thome/Engel to approve agenda item 14 a, b and c as presented. All ayes; motion carried.

## 16. Area 4 Extension Director Update: - Amber Rehberg

### a. UW Madison Division of Extension Overview.

Amber Rehberg - Area 4 Extension Director presented an overview of Extension, sharing what Extension does and all that we offer. She joined Oneida County in July 2021, serving Florence, Forest, Oneida, Lac du Flambeau and Potawatomi. She has been at Extension almost 20 years in Lincoln, Price and Sheboygan Counties and as State Specialist in the Youth Development Program. She cares deeply for Extension as she grew up on a dairy farm in Price County where Extension services were important to her family and community. The goal of Extension is to bring the University resources to the people where they work and live to bridge that gap between communication and education. Extension reaches out to the local community. It is that collaboration and the Wisconsin Idea that develop and connect the research and education resources of UW Madison with local residents. Extension has transitioned in a reorganization and is now a Division under UW-Madison. Extension has deep local ties that develop regional and statewide networks that respond to emerging issues. Extension's work is County based through 71 local Counties and 3 Tribal Nations. The educators live in the communities they serve and understand the local issues and needs.

### b. Introduction of Staff & Specific Programming Efforts.

Health and Well-Being Institute promotes positive change in Wisconsin families through evidence-based programs covering nutrition, food security and safety, chronic disease prevention, mental health, substance abuse and health insurance literacy. The federally funded FoodWise Program is included.

Terri Kolb: Health and Well-Being Educator, works in Oneida and Forest County and with Oneida ADRC. Areas of focus to develop for Oneida County are StrongBodies and Mental Health First Aid, for adults to recognize and respond to mental /mental health crisis. Another, QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) is a basic skills class on suicide prevention on how to aid the person until professional help arrives. We Cope helps people cope with life stress and depression. Kolb has key partnerships with Social Services, Human Services, the Health Department, ADRC, and the VA. Kolb is active with two coalitions: the COPE coalition whose goal is to reduce the stigma related to mental health challenges and suicide awareness. Second, Oneida County Alcohol and other Drug Abuse whose effort is to increase community partnerships, capacity and collaborative efforts to support healthy choices.

FoodWise: Karly Harrison FoodWise Area 4 Coordinator. FoodWise is a healthy eating, active lifestyles, and healthy community for limited income families through federally funded SNAP-ed. (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education). They work with people considered low income, those qualified for FoodShare or Food Stamp dollars. There are 3760 individuals in the county currently on FoodShare. They work with different agencies and organizations help make healthy eating choices. They work with Pelican, Crescent, and Central Schools. They work with food pantries and at Head Start. Two part time educators are:

Mary Stys is a Nutrition Educator who has worked eight years with FoodWise. She just finished a nutrition lesson for first graders at Crescent School. She worked with Rhinelander Area Food Panty, offering nutrition lessons to adults. She worked at Rhinehaus offering nutrition lessons for low-income residents. They created a mobile food pantry there in partnership with RAFF (Rhinelander Area Food Pantry).

Allison Wilson, Nutritional Educator, has worked eight months so far in the Rhinelander schools teaching 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders about whole grains, fruits and vegetable to eat to be healthy. She will be working with the Food Pantry this summer and work on partnerships with the YMCA and others.

Positive Youth Development Program focuses on young people and providing opportunities to develop leadership and life skills. There are two educators in this Institute, who will help kids move into the future as adults helping to keep our community sustainable.

Anne Williams, 4-H Educator, explained that 4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential working and learning in partnership with caring adults. It is committed to provide youth to develop life skills by caring for others, generosity, and problem solving. In 4-H Community Clubs, youth and families gather to learn, lead and trains children to become leaders by leading meetings, making decisions, voting, and learning parliamentary procedure. She started a Cultural Arts Club, topic clubs such as robotics, where they learned from a UW Madison Computer Science graduate student. There are also affordable and inclusive After School Programming and Summer Camps and many statewide and national opportunities too.

Sharon Krause, Community Youth Development Educator, has worked with Extension for seven years. Krause works with youth development partnerships for junior and senior high students. The position was previously Teen Court Coordinator but the number of cases fluctuate. Teen Court operates for teens with minor offenses where they have the option to attend Teen Court as opposed to the normal court system. Krause recruits and trains high school students to become Teen Court Panelists who hear cases by interviewing the youth and parent/guardian. Their job is to figure out why the offense happened and then assign sanctions to help the youth learn from that experience. The panelists learn about mental health and about how to assign an age appropriate sanction. Panelists learn about leadership, communication, and understanding how to make a positive impact for the communities. Raise Your Voice, a NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) program, trains youth on what to do with those who are struggling. Krause works with the Lakeland Union High School students as well.

Bill Klase is a Natural Resources Educator works out of the Natural Resources Institute and his office is located at the Woodland Education center at the DNR office here in Rhinelander.

Institutes not accessed here, are the Human Development and Relationships, and the Agriculture Institutes.

Rehberg stated that a full time equivalent educator for the County costs about \$43,600. The last page of the handout lists salary breakdowns of the educators. Counties with a full-time educator are eligible to receive a \$10,000 discount. In 2022, budgeted positions totaled \$94,640. The State provides at least 50% of the educator's salaries and benefits. The County leverages another \$200,000 from the State portion of salaries for educators, FoodWise, and the Director. The overall budget for contracted services, support staff, and departmental resources is \$185,140. The County Report lists the metrics for people served by each educator. Please contact Rehberg with questions.

#### **17. Recommendation for Filling Community Development Institute Position – Discussion/Action**

See Agenda Item 7 above. Rehberg wishes to keep the CDI position as full time in Oneida County, to focus on leadership development, community capacity building, and some economic development. The position has a critical role with Extension meeting the needs of the County. Brittany Beyer spoke earlier on those needs, including childcare, housing, and retaining a young work force. The budget only allows Extension to offer select programs to benefit the County. Rehberg would love to offer more full time positions to the County. If Committee wants to continue with a full time CDI position, Rehberg must present that to the Institute, and once Madison approves it in their budget to fund the position, she can let Committee know. Rehberg discussed keeping it a full time with the institute, staff, and partners and concluded that she wants to move forward with a full time CDI position. Committee made no decision on will review at June meeting.

#### **18. Nicolet Lease for Extension with Oneida County.**

Rehberg presented the lease for Chairperson Winkler to sign. It will then go to the County Board Chairman and the Clerk for signatures. Payment is for 6 months or \$9,000. Signage on Hwy G under the Nicolet sign is included in the lease. Thome/Sorgel approved signing the 2022 lease between Extension and the County. All ayes, motion carried.

#### **19. Consent Agenda Items: (UW-Extension).**

The motion was made by Thome/ Sorgel to approve items a and b. All Ayes; motion carried.

#### **20. Items to include on next agenda.**

NOTE: Winkler requested all items to be included on the next agenda should be listed separately, under Consent Agenda Items for each department, before leaving the meeting. LWCD: 5 Year Work Plan 2020-2024, Pollinator Plan-Solar Farm and ask WPS to speak, Small Farm best practices. Extension: Details \$10,000 f/t educator discount. Filling CDI position.

**21. Public Comment:** Butkus offered that Wisconsin Lakes is available to new Committee members who have questions.

**22. Adjournment:** Motion at 4:40 p.m. to adjourn the meeting by Winkler/Thome. All ayes; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Merry Lehner, Recording Secretary

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Jim Winkler, Committee Chair