

Conservation/UW-EX Education (CUW) Committee
Monday, March 13, 2023 Minutes
County Board Room – COURTHOUSE and Virtually by ZOOM

Committee members: Chairman Jim Winkler, Collette Sorgel, Tommy Ryden. On Zoom: Bob Thome Jr. Not Present: John Engle & Linnaea Newman.

Others Present: Karl Jennrich, Michele Sadauskas, Amber Rehberg, Allison Wilson, Anne Williams, Jean McNaughton, and Merry Lehner. Jonna Jewell on Zoom.

1. Call to order and Chairperson’s Announcements:

Chairman Winkler called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. The meeting was properly posted and handicapped accessible and ADA compliant. The symbol /s/ represents a valid virtual attendee’s signature.

2. Approve Agenda: A motion by Sorgel/Ryden to approve the March 13, 2023 Amended Agenda with the order of items at the Chair’s discretion. Sorgel/Thome made motion to accept amended agenda. All ayes; motion carried.

3. Approve Minutes: Sorgel/Ryden motioned to approve the February 13, 2023 minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

4. Dates /Location of Future Meetings:

Monday, April 10, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.	County Board Room at Courthouse
Monday, May 8, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.	County Board Room at Courthouse

5. Public Comment:

No comments from people in person at County Board Room.

Erick Rempala- Zoom: Pelican River Forest support. Shoreland Protection issues, he feels that the bar has been lowered for protecting the waters. He did not support any further than what the State requirements currently list.

John Scott- Zoom: Amendment from SPO first came from Landscapers and land developer. He is concerned over the septic system language regarding setbacks.

William Cody-Zoom agrees with John Scott.

Kathleen Cooper-Loher -Zoom: Supports the Pelican River Easement to preserve a beautiful piece of land.

Jan Reggie: In favor of Pelican River Forest Area Easement.

6. Proposed Shoreline Protection Ordinance (SPO) Amendments Update:

Mike Fugle, Corporation Counsel, spoke on Agenda Item 6. Concerned about mitigation and suggested that information be presented at a separate meeting. It is a fairly controversial issue and asked that we provide more sufficient notification to the public. He wanted proper notice given for public comment. This was in regard to discussion/decision concerning Ordinance Amendment #13-2022 for Chapter 9, Article 1, Article 3, Article 9, Article 10 of the Oneida County Zoning and Shoreland Protection

Ordinance. Winkler/Ryder made motion to postpone to next scheduled meeting. All ayes; motion carried.

7. Definition of Vegetation Recommendation to Zoning Committee:

Sadauskas: Brought forward to be on the agenda. Thome said it would be good time to insert a definition of vegetation into the ordinance. Thome would like it to be reconsidered or added. He wants to make the recommendation that it be adopted and presented it at the public hearing on March 29, 2023. A motion by Ryden/Thome was made to adopt the definition as discussed, native or non-invasive (not listed in Wisconsin Administrative Code NR40) live plant material which will mitigate erosion or stormwater runoff, and send back to Planning and Zoning. All Ayes; motion carried.

8. Proposed Pelican River Forest-Resolution 25-2023:

The Pelican River Forest Easement project represents an opportunity to protect over 68,000 acres of working forestland in Wisconsin. The Conservation Fund, the current owner, is partnering with the Wisconsin DNR to use funding from the state-based Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, federal Forest Legacy Program and private funding via the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to secure an easement focused on public access and forest conservation. This will protect the state's largest remaining unprotected private working forest. This was put on both the Forestry and CUW Agenda to have a conversation over the proposal. A special committee, which committee member, Ryden, is now participating, was established. Forestry Department Head said Forestry had conversation but not a recommendation. Most were in favor of the Pelican River Forest Easement in the public comments. No action was taken at the Forestry Committee. ATV trails are not in property now but there is a proposed trail. There will be future ATV trails and the details were discussed. It will continue to be managed as a sustainable forest. CUW Committee will monitor the proposal for now with no recommendation.

9. Recommendation on how much land and water should the government control in a Town of Oneida County and Oneida County as a Whole:

Land is being tied up in Federal, State, and County lands. How much of the land does Oneida County need and what amount is too much? Bob Thome sent in his recommendation to the Committee. There remain many open questions at this time. The committee acknowledges the public support, but there remains discussion and no recommendation at this point.

10. Lumberjack Update: Collette Sorgel

Sorgel participated in selection: Three grants were approved for Oneida County. Friends of Townline Lake Park, WI Headwaters Invasive Partnership (WHIP) Purple Loosestrife, and Town of Crescent Pollinator projects.

11. LWCD Update: – M. Sadauskas

a. Cost Share Reimbursement Approvals

- i. Kornack Project – Seawall Removal and Rock Installation. The \$7,029.70 partial reimbursement just came in, which is 50% of the invoice.
- ii. Framke Project – Finished last week for seawall removal and rock installation. They are still waiting for receipts. \$11, 975 is the full amount. It was signed off by the engineer, but does not have the exact amount pending the contractor invoice. Sadauskas

suggested an up to \$10,000 approval since there is additional project installation to occur in summer. Motion Ryden/Sorgel was made to approve the \$7,029.70 (Kornack project) and up to \$10,000 (Framke project)

b. Grassworks Grant Update:

Hand out from Jill Hapner, Emerit Executive Director, Grassworks, Inc. sent an update regarding efforts to get project going, where amendments to project budget by NFWF (National Fish & Wildlife Foundation) staff and federal NEPA and ESA documentation. Required paperwork was completed and submitted by Grassworks, but approval was back-logged by NFWF. They received a fully executed agreement-with Golden Sands and Glaciarland RC&Ds who are currently hiring two Regenerative Agriculture Specialists.

c. Survey: WI Land & Water Conservation Board Survey for CUW Committee. The survey will be submitted by Sadauskas on behalf of the CUW Committee and shared with the committee at a later date.

12. Lake District Reports:

a. Thunder Lake: No news at this time of year. Financials and Future projects.

13. Consent Agenda Items: (LWCD)

Line Item Transfers: Final 2022 Budget Clean Up
Cost Share Budget Adjustment (2022 & 2023)
County Lakes Grant Budget Adjustment (2023)

Motion to approve a, b and d by Ryden/Thome. All Ayes; motion carried.

14. LWCD items to include on next agenda

Agenda Item 6 brought back next month, SPO Shoreland Protection. Lake District Reports (Crescent, Squash, Mid, Bear). Land and Water Conservation Board Update.

15. Public Comment: Joe Steinhage-Vegetation term; there is no definition in any documents. We need one. Does not want total clear cutting of shoreline.

16. Programming Educator Report – FoodWise –Allison Wilson

Wilson gave a FoodWise PowerPoint presentation on what she does. FoodWise is a federally funded program to help low-income individuals to make healthy choices. She defined Food Insecurity and lack of high quality food. Poor diet can lead to negative health consequences. She shared a chart covering: Food insecurity, poor food quality, stress, chronic disease, etc. She reviewed poverty levels, SNAP benefits (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Total Vegetable Consumption by Income Level, and Children Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunches. The Biden-Harris Administration Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health report was stressed for the Committee to review. Wilson goes to all four elementary schools in Rhinelander teaching 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders, going over five basic foods groups, importance of eating fruits, vegetables and whole grains, nutrition labels and Food Safety Practices. FoodWise collaborates with the Rhinelander Area Food Pantry (RAFP), to educate adults on good nutrition, recipes, and food preparation classes. Hodag Food Wagon hands out food bags to children during the summer in partnership with the YMCA and RAFP. The RAFP Community Garden gives all their produce to recipients at the pantry. FoodWise introduces new ways to try and prepare food. She teaches nutrition education at the Boys and Girls Club as well. The mission of FoodWise is a wonderful endeavor. She shared links for the Committee to access.

17. Area 4 Extension Director Update – Amber Rehberg

- a. Extension Status Update: The Extension office currently is small. They are doing their best to provide Broadband information. As they are shrinking in staff, which is part time, continue to help the community with information.
- b. Staffing and Communication Plan: The staff has been on the news often, but they would like to open up to more communication on the website. Recognition of Merry Lehner, who started in the summer of 2014. Moved Extension during Covid. Discussed the Administrative duties and Fair, Master Gardener, and StrongBodies.
- c. Nicolet Collaboration: Nicolet has had transition and retirements as well. New programming and collaboration will continue. We are holding StrongBodies Training session at Nicolet in August, 2023.

18. Extension Annual Report to the County Board Update:

Rehberg was able to present by zoom due to the weather. Rehberg's presentation was kept to five minutes and the information presented was what the committee wanted her to touch on. It was suggested that the Community Development position might be brought back, especially, as it relates to Agenda item #8. Proposed Pelican River Forest. The Committee as a whole felt that the position should be revisited at next year's annual report. Rehberg complimented the staff on putting together the Annual Report.

19. Recruitment for Extension Positions:

Terri Kolb's position covered .33 ADRC .4 and .2 Health and Well Being Educator position. Rehberg is working with the State to fill this vacancy. They stress that the person hired will live-locally. The other vacancy for Lehner had 25 applicants for the position. They will be interviewing and hope to have the position filled by April, 2023.

20. Consent Agenda Items: Extension

A motion by Ryden/Sorgel to accept agenda items a. b. and c. and d. was approved. All Ayes; motion carried.

21. Extension Items to include on next agenda.

Staffing vacancy update. Communication Plan and Nicolet Collaboration.

22. Public Comment: None

23. Adjournment: 3:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Merry Lehner, Recording Secretary