

MINUTES
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #115, WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI

Members Present: Hilde Henkel, Robert Ashbeck, Bill Leichtnam, Harvey Petersen and Gerald Nelson.
(Nelson attended via telephone conference and was excused at 10:15 a.m.).

Member Excused: Ken Curry

Staff Present:

Planning & Zoning Staff – Jason Grueneberg, Julie Akey.

UW Extension Staff – Peter Manley, Matt Lippert

Land Conservation Dept. Staff – Jerry Storke, Tracy Arnold

Others Present: Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, Dist. #15 Supervisor William Clendenning, Jason Angell (City of Marshfield Director of Planning & Economic Development), Wis Rapids Mayor Zach Vruwink, Karen Madden (Daily Tribune), Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D)

1. **Call to Order.** Chairperson Hilde Henkel called the CEED meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Public Comment.** None.
3. **Review Correspondence.**
 - a. Jerry Storke informed the Committee Wood County's Land & Water Conservation Plan has been approved by DATCP.
 - b. Jason Grueneberg distributed a copy of a conceptual plan he received from a Town of Saratoga property owner to develop a Multi-Sports Recreation Area in the Town of Saratoga (Sections 19, 20, 29 and 30). This area would be about 2,000 contiguous acres that could provide a Central Wisconsin location for various sporting events and other activities in the two counties.
4. **Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following Items: 1) minutes of the February 4, 2015 CEED meeting, 2) bills from Planning & Zoning, UW Extension and Land Conservation and 3) staff activity reports from Jason Grueneberg, Justin Conner, Julie Akey, Jeff Brewbaker, Jerry Storke, Tracy Arnold, Shane Wucherpfennig, Peter Manley, Matt Lippert, Teri Lessig, Sarah Siegel, Jodi Friday, Chris Viau and Kyli Brown.
 - a. Minutes of February 4, 2015 CEED Meeting. Supervisor Leichtnam requested an update on Item #11.e. This will be brought up for discussion under the Land Conservation report.
 - b. Department Bills. No additions or corrections needed.
 - c. Staff Activity Reports. No questions or comments needed.

<i>Motion by Gerald Nelson to approve and accept the February 4, 2015 CEED minutes as presented, bills from Planning & Zoning, UW Extension and Land Conservation as presented and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.</i>

5. **Risk and Injury Report.** Nothing new to report this month.

6. Land Conservation

- a. Golden Sands RC&D Council Update Amy Thorstenson updated the Committee on the following projects: 1) Managed Grazing Assistance for farms in the Mill Creek Watershed, 2) 2015 Central Wisconsin Prairie Chicken Festival and 3) Emerald Ash Borer. She also distributed their 2014 Highlights brochure.

- b. Nonpoint Source Update Jerry Storke updated the Committee on a recently attended meeting held in Wausau. He pointed out there are 2 initiatives: 1) reducing phosphorus discharged from waste treatment facilities and 2) Total Maximum Daily Load (TDML) phosphorus reduction in watersheds. Tracy Arnold informed the committee WNDNR will be putting together brochures for information/educational purposes. It was noted they may be generic for now, with local inserts. Site maps showing the watershed of each area waste treatment facility were distributed to interested parties.

Supervisor Leichtnam requested an update on the Lee Accola matter which was discussed at length at last month's CEED meeting. Jerry Storke reported several agencies will be getting together to come up with options to help the owner. Storke also reported WDNR has referred this matter to the Dept of Justice for action. The Committee requested they be kept updated on this matter.

- c. NCLWCA Meeting Update Tracy Arnold updated the Committee on the Feb 20th NCLWCA meeting she and Supervisor Ashbeck attended in Rhinelander. She informed them two speakers and one poster from Wood County will be moving on to the State level. During their business meeting, it was noted Adams County may be moving to the Winnebago association.

7. UW Extension

- a. Farm Technology Days Update The Wisconsin Farm Technology Days is the largest agricultural show in Wisconsin. Each year, it is held in a different county, on a different host family farm. In 2015, it will be held in Dane County. Walworth County will be the host county in 2016 and Kewaunee County will host this event in 2017. Wood County has applied to host this event in 2018. Matt Lippert reported the 2018 host county will be announced at their April 1st meeting. Lippert will be attending this April 1st business meeting and will be inviting representatives from MACCI as well as Heart of Wisconsin to also attend. This date conflicts with the April CEED Committee meeting which will make it difficult for CEED committee members to attend the Farm Technology Days meeting.
- b. Secretary Position Update Peter Manley reported HR Dept is checking on references and anticipates this will be finished today. An offer will be made soon.
- c. Capital Connections Day Capital Connections Day is an opportunity to visit state legislators and their staff. This also offers an opportunity to thank legislators for their continued support. This event is scheduled for April 30th. This matter will be further discussed at the April 1st CEED meeting to finalize attendance.
- d. Leadership Program Peter Manley and Jason Grueneberg reported on the Community Leadership Program. Manley and Grueneberg co-chaired a recent session held in the Wood County Courthouse. Manley reported on Session #3: Conflict & Diversity and Grueneberg reported on Session #5: Government Services.
- e. E-Commerce Business Pilot Project Peter Manley reported Clark & Wood counties have been selected for an E-Commerce Business pilot project. They will be seeking businesses to participate in this project. Those participating will receive individual consulting to improve their business at no cost.

8. Economic Development

- a. Discussion on Redevelopment Efforts in Downtown Wisconsin Rapids Mayor Zach Vruwink updated the committee on the status of the redevelopment efforts in the vicinity of the Courthouse. Wisconsin Rapids officials have been working to buy property in the triangular-shaped block bordered by Market, Jackson and Second streets, across from the Courthouse.

Mayor Vruwink commented this is a great way to foster development in the area. The city has already purchased two buildings in this block and city officials are continuing to work on purchase of the remaining properties in the block. He is anticipating city employees can begin demolition in the fall. There was some concern on possible contamination from a former gas station in that block. The city was able to secure a grant last year to confirm the contamination and is anticipating working with the WDNR to obtain funding to help clean up the site. The city's plans for this triangular block are the perfect opportunity for a joint effort among city, county and private developers. Chairperson Henkel stated this development may help the county two-fold. The County of Wood's space needs study indicated additional office space is needed and the County owns a vacant building in this block. Mayor Vruwink also stated this project fits into the long-term plans previous city administrations had developed.

- b. Discussion of Wood County's Possible Involvement in Administering Escrow Funds for a Business Incentive Funds for a Tax Incremental District The Committee briefly reviewed draft agreement language as well as a draft resolution that would give Wood County authority to administer an escrow account for TID #5 (Mill Creek Business Park) in Marshfield. The escrow account will include \$400,000. The draft language will be discussed among County and Marshfield staff to work through agreement details later today. Grueneberg noted a final resolution and agreement will be finalized for inclusion in the County Board packet for the March 17th meeting. It was further noted this proposal will also be presented to the Executive Committee as well as the Judicial Legislative Committee in March with anticipation it will be co-sponsored with the CEED Committee. It was stressed action on this resolution and the transfer of escrow funds to Wood County will need to take place prior to March 25th. Chairperson Henkel requested the proposed resolution as well as the agreement be forwarded to Committee members as soon as possible to allow time to review these documents. The CEED Committee will meet Tuesday, March 17th prior to County Board to take action on this matter.

9. Planning & Zoning

- a. Discussion/Possible Action on State Budget Proposal to Eliminate Wis. Fund Grant Program. The Wisconsin Fund Grant Program was established in 1978 and provides financial assistance to homeowners as well as owners of small businesses when replacing their failing septic systems. Replacing these failing system can many times be accomplished only with the help of this program. This program provides a financial incentive to the owners as this is a GRANT, not a low interest LOAN like many other funding resources that are currently available. Wood County entered this grant program in 1985 (FY86). Committee members reviewed a table showing Wood County's Wisconsin Fund Program Trends for FY86 thru FY15. It was noted 1,259 Wood County residents have benefited from this grant program. To date, Wood County has been awarded \$2,951,929 through this program. Discussion was held on the State budget proposal to eliminate future funding of this program. It was the consensus of the Committee to co-sponsor a County Board Resolution with the Judicial and Legislative Committee to oppose the elimination of the Wis. Fund Grant Program and encourage legislators to continue this funding in the State budget.

10. County Surveyor. Nothing new to report.

11. Land Records. Nothing new to report.

12. Schedule Next Meetings

- a. Tuesday, March 17th @ 9:00 a.m. before County Board
 - i. To discuss/take action on escrow agreement with City of Marshfield.
- b. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 1, 2015 @ 9:00 a.m.

13. Adjourn

Motion by Bill Leichtnam to adjourn at 11:28 a.m. Second by Harvey Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved Electronically by Hilde Henkel

Hilde Henkel, Chairperson

Minutes by Julie Akey, Planning & Zoning Office

Review for submittal to County Board by Hilde Henkel (approved March 10, 2015)