

MINUTES  
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2020  
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WI

Members Present: Ken Curry, Robert Ashbeck, Jake Hahn, Dave LaFontaine, Carmen Good,  
Bill Leichtnam (arrived at 9:25 a.m.)

Members Excused:

Staff Present:

Land & Water Conservation Staff: Shane Wucherpennig, Lori Ruess  
Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn, Kim Keech  
Extension Staff: Jason Hausler, Nancy Turyk (via WebEx)

Others Present: Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, Dist. #15 Supervisor Bill Clendenning, Dist. #16 Supervisor Lance Pliml (via WebEx), Tami Hahn, City of Pittsville, Nancy Eggleston, Health Department, (Via WebEx) Al Thurber, Finance Director, Ed Newton, Deputy Finance Director, Kelly Maynard, UW Center for Cooperatives (via WebEx)

1. **Call meeting to order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Declaration of Quorum.** Chairperson Curry declared a quorum.
3. **Public Comments (*brief comments/statement regarding committee business*)**  
There was no public comments.
4. **Review Correspondence.** No Correspondence to review.
5. **Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following items: 1) minutes of the August 5, 2020 and August 18, 2020 CEED meetings, 2) bills from Land & Water Conservation, Planning & Zoning and Extension and 3) staff activity reports from Laura Huber, Matt Lippert, Nancy Turyk, Allison Jonjak, Jackie Carattini, Hannah Wendels, Kelly Hammond, Rachael Whitehair, Shane Wucherpennig, Caleb Armstrong, Adam Groshek, Rod Mayer, Lori Ruess, Emily Salvinski, Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn, Paul Bernard, Jeff Brewbaker, Kim Keech and Victoria Wilson.
  - a. **Approve minutes of previous meeting.** No additions or corrections needed.
  - b. **Approve bills.** No additions or corrections needed.
  - c. **Receive staff activity reports.** No additions or corrections needed.

<i>Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and accept the August 5 and August 18, 2020 CEED minutes, bills from Planning &amp; Zoning, Land &amp; Water Conservation and Extension, and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.</i>
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6. **Review items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda.** No items to review.
7. **Risk and Injury Report.** None.

At this time with approval from the committee, Chair Curry moved agenda item # 13a up on the agenda.

Update from the City of Pittsville and consider release of 2020 economic development grant funds (13a).  
Tami Hahn, City of Pittsville Clerk, thanked the committee for the consideration of the \$5,000 in grant funding for the 2020 Kayak Launch Signage project. The project has taken a bit of a turn from the original

application. The city council has decided to go with two signs proposed by the local business group instead of the original proposed design.

The goal of the project remains the same: to create awareness of recreation opportunity in Riverside Park and the city of Pittsville. The signage would advertise and direct people to the downtown businesses.

The city has already purchased the signs, but with COVID the installation has taken longer than expected. The project should be finished in October.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to release the \$5,000 in grant funds to the City of Pittsville for the Kayak Launch Signage project. Second by Ken Curry. Motion carried unanimously.*

Tami also thanked the committee for consideration of 2020 Housing Incentive Grant award in the amount of \$25,000 to the City of Pittsville. She explained that the City started the Housing Incentive Fund in 2019 with \$100,000 and Wood County approved the grant application in the amount of \$25,000 last year.

From March 27 to August 17, 2020, \$65,000 from the Housing Incentive Fund has been paid out, leaving a balance of \$23,239.37. Nine parcels already have new homes and the city is confident they will attract additional new homes. Wood County is looking to recover 120% of their \$25,000 initial investment.

Jason Grueneberg pointed out this is a good example of the county's re-investment of funds. Ken Curry complimented Tammy on an outstanding presentation. Jake Hahn stated he built a new home this year, did not receive any county funds, but would like to refrain from voting on this agenda item. Discussion followed with concerns expressed with granting \$25,000 when there is still a \$23,239.27 balance in the Building Incentive Funds. Jake Hahn explained that the City of Pittsville spent \$65,000 under the assumption that one-half would be covered by grant funds; therefore, more than the \$25,000 in grant funds has been spent. Jason Grueneberg recommended the committee approve the release of the funds.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to release the \$25,000 in grant funds to the City of Pittsville for the Housing Incentive Fund as it is a very good return on investment. Second by Ken Curry. Motion carried with Jake Hahn refraining from voting.*

Chair Curry added he wants to see a report when the money for the Housing Incentive Fund is all spent.

## **8. Land & Water Conservation Department**

### **a. Open and approve low bid for Dale and Jason Behrend's intermittent stream crossing project.**

Adam Groshek presented to Chair Curry one sealed bid. Adam shared this is the second time this project was bid as the first time no bids were received. Bid packets were sent to six contractors the first time and eleven contractors the second time. Adam commented that his estimate was approximately \$9,950. Bid was as follows: Kolo Trucking & Excavating - \$14,142.00.

Shane Wucherpennig and Adam Groshek explained that the reason for the high bid is that contractors are currently very busy so prices are going to be high. This project is cost-shared 50% and the landowner can reject the bid if he feels it is too high. Both Shane and Adam recommended moving forward with this project as they feel it is in the best interest of the landowner. Following discussion Dave LaFontaine mentioned that due to the excessive charge for excavation, he feels it would be better to rebid this project in the spring of the year. He would conditionally approve of the project if the landowner feels it has to be completed in 2020.

A question was asked if the Wood County Highway Department could bid or give a quote on this project. Bob Ashbeck shared that would be government competing against private business.

*Motion by Robert Ashbeck to approve the bid from Kolo Trucking in the amount of \$ 14,142 for the purpose of basing cost-share dollars for the Dale and Jason Behrend intermittent stream crossing project. Second by Ken Curry. Motion failed.*

*Voting Aye – Robert Ashbeck and Ken Curry*

*Voting Nay – Jake Hahn, Carmen Good and Bill Leichtnam – all commented it is better to wait until spring as may receive more bids and bids may be lower.*

Because the bid was not approved, cost-share dollars for this project will be carried into 2021.

b. Review/approve 2021 LWCD Budgets.

Lori Ruess handed out the LWCD budget packet, which included the 2021 Budget Narrative and Analysis, Department Operating Budget Narrative, Department Operating Budget Summary and Department Operating Budget Detail reports. Shane Wucherpennig reviewed the reports with the committee and stated the overall the tax levy decreased 2.89 percent. With no questions, Wucherpennig recommended the Committee approve the 2021 LWCD budgets. Discussion followed. Chair Curry mentioned that copies of the LWCD budgets were not included in the CEED packet as salary and fringes have not been updated due to the wage study and uncertainty of state grant amounts. He added he would like the Committee to review the budgets and send them to the Operations Committee for approval. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Ken Curry to review budgets and send to the Operations Committee. Second by Jake Hahn Motion carried unanimously.*

Discussion on budget review took place. Lance Pliml shared he feels it is the CEED's duty to review the budgets and recommends each committee member thoroughly review the budgets before they go to the Operations Committee.

Al Thurber recommended the CEED approve the operating expenses without salaries in the budgets, as he does not anticipate a drastic change in salaries following the wage study. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to review the Land & Water Conservation Department and Planning and Zoning Department budgets for approval at the September 14, 2020 CEED meeting. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.*

c. Committee Reports

i. **Citizen's Groundwater Committee meeting.**

Bill Leichtnam shared The Citizens Groundwater Group meeting was held virtually on Monday August 17. This was the first meeting in five months. At the meeting, they dealt with many smaller issues. He mentioned Representative Romaine Quinn acknowledged August as National Water Quality Month on the Wisconsin Politics GOP radio address and called for all communities to work together and address water issues.

Meetings will resume and be held every third Monday of the month.

Future speakers: September – Lance Pliml, Wood County Board Chair

October – Rachael Whitehair, UWEX Natural Resource Educator

November – Matt Krueger, Land & Water Conservation Association

ii. **Health Committee report.**

Bill Leichtnam gave a brief report on the quarterly AGC meeting regarding the MOU. He shared some statics from the meeting along with information on the field study and proposed Farmer Led Initiative.

Nancy Eggleston gave an update on steps they are taking to encourage well water testing to landowners in the corridor who have not had their wells tested.

iii. **Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGWCC) committee report.**

Bill Leichtnam gave a brief report and mentioned a research grant that is available through DNR, DATCP, and UW. A core group of people (including Shane Wucherpfennig and Nancy Turyk) are meeting weekly to write the grant application with the hopes of receiving \$60,000 to \$70,000 in a two-phase grant. The grant money would be used to continue and expand the efforts of the Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative.

9. **Private Sewage.** Nothing to report.

10. **Land Records.** Nothing to report.

11. **County Surveyor.** Nothing to report.

**12. Planning**

a. Review/Action on Town of Grant Rapids Zoning Map Amendment.

Adam DeKleyn presented the resolution to approve a zoning amendment to the Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Map. He explained in counties having a county zoning ordinance, no town zoning ordinance or amendment of a zoning ordinance may be adopted unless approved by the County Board of Supervisors. This rule also applies to town zoning map amendments. The Town of Grand Rapids request is to rezone a 4 acre parcel that is currently dual zoned Commercial (B-1) and Agricultural (A) to all Commercial (B-1).

b. Review/Action on Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance Amendment.

Adam DeKleyn presented the resolution to approve an amendment to the Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance. He explained the town zoning ordinance changes include amendments to section 52.3(J)(6) of the Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance 52; adding verbiage regarding portable storage containers.

The Grand Rapids Town Board approved both of the zoning amendments on July 14, 2020 and public hearings were held. Based on the information submitted to Planning and Zoning, the Town of Grand Rapids adhered to the process for zoning amendments as outlined in the Wis. Statutes. DeKleyn recommended the CEED approve and forward to County Board. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Ken Curry to approve and forward to County Board both the resolution to approve a zoning amendment to the Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Map and the resolution to approve an amendment to the Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance. Second by Dave LaFontaine Motion carried unanimously.*

c. Update on cancellation of fall CEED Tour. Jason Grueneberg shared the 2020 CEED tour is cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Departments will look at holding a tour in 2021.

**13. Economic Development**

- a. Update from the City of Pittsville and consider release of 2020 economic development grant funds.  
Note this item was moved up on the agenda.
- b. Discuss 2021 budgets and the 2021 grant program for economic development projects and organizations. Jason Grueneberg handed out the 2021 Transportation & Economic Development budget packet which included the Department Operating Budget Detail report, Department Operating Budget Summary report and the Department Operating Budget Narrative. He explained at the August 18, 2020 CEED meeting a motion was made to move the Junior Fair expenses to the Economic Development budget; that is not reflected in this copy of the budgets. He thoroughly explained each function of the Transportation and Economic development budget and added September 11, 2020 is the deadline for the Transportation and Economic Development grant applications to be submitted. These applications will be discussed at the September 14<sup>th</sup> CEED meeting. He also covered projects that would roll-out in 2021 and hopes to get a list of the projects, that is easier to review, put together for the September 14<sup>th</sup> CEED meeting. Discussion followed.

Jake Hahn questioned why the Airport Grants are separated out from the Economic Development Grants in the budget. Jason Grueneberg was not sure, but added the Airport Grants could be rolled into the Economic Development budget function.

Dave LaFontaine and Bill Leichtnam requested a breakdown of the grants and prioritization of the proposed projects for the September 14<sup>th</sup> CEED meeting.

Jason Grueneberg handed out the 2021 Planning & Zoning Budget packet. He explained

- The Planning and Zoning budget is the biggest portion of cost under staffing and that the budget was coming in pretty much the same as last year. Looking at a bit of an increase in revenue with the new well inspection program in 2021.
- The Land Records and Private Sewage budgets are non-levied, non-lapsing budgets.
- Working with Finance on a spreadsheet to calculate carryover.
- Both Private Sewage and Land Records programs are solid.
- Zeroing out the Census budget in 2021; the County Clerk's Office can absorb committee costs and Planning and Zoning can absorb staff costs.
- Surveyor budget – looking at purchasing a shipping container to store surveyor equipment (monuments and rebar).

Budgets will be reviewed and decided on at the September 14<sup>th</sup> CEED meeting.

- c. Update on the Rural Economic Development Innovative Initiative.  
This agenda item will be covered under Nancy Turyk's Educational Presentation (14d). Nancy mentioned that the Governor has two task forces, one to focus on Rural Prosperity and one to focus on expanding internet access and speeds across Wisconsin. Virtual listening sessions are scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 p.m. and September 16<sup>th</sup> from 3 to 5 p.m. Nancy encouraged the committee to participate.
- d. General Economic Development update.  
Jason Gruenberg gave a brief update.
  - A lot of focus around budget and placement of future projects in budget.
  - What's happening with VERSO
    - How is it affecting VERSO employees
    - Job Resource Fair
    - What role cooperative could play as far as site.
    - Meeting on Friday – What is County's role on site redevelopment of VERSO (just looking ahead if mill does not sell)?

e. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission update.

Jason Grueneberg shared he would like to have Dennis Lawrence, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Executive Director, come in and give an update at the October CEED meeting.

Still facilitating round-table for COVID-19 response, will continue to meet as long as there is a need.  
Meeting attendance/participation has decreased

Great Lakes Timber Cooperative Update – Kelly Maynard, UW Center for Cooperatives (Agenda item 14c was moved up on the agenda).

Kelly Maynard explained, in response to the VERSO mill closure, the Great Lakes Timber Professionals formed the Great Lakes Timber Cooperative. She explained Cooperatives are defined by State Statutes and added forming a Cooperative from an existing business is becoming increasingly common. On paper, the Cooperation has 20 members, which she believes are all from the United States. She answered questions from the committee following the update.

**14. Extension**

a. General Office Update

Jason Hausler provided the following updates:

- Moving forward with the shared County Horticulture Educator position. This will be a 70% Marathon County, 30% Wood County position.
- A “leave of absence” for one of the Administrative Assistance will be taking place soon. Working with staff to cover responsibilities of employee on leave.
- Slight transition in FoodWise Nutrition Education and Coordinator positions. Kelly Hammond will be going to .8 and Hannah Wendels will be going from .8 to full time. These are fully state funded positions.

- b. 2021 Extension Budget. Jason Hausler presented the 2021 UW Extension budget and reviewed operating expenses. As presented, the budget is at a 2% reduction (pending reclassification study). The cause of reduction – change in allocation of benefits and increase in remote delivery of publications. Junior fair expenses will be transferring to the Economic Development budget.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and forward to the Operations Committee the UW Extension budget operating expenses and revenue, excluding Junior Fair as this will be moved to the Planning & Zoning Budget. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.*

- c. Great Lakes Timber Cooperative – Update – Kelly Maynard UW Center for Cooperatives. This item was moved up on the agenda.

- d. Educational Presentation – Nancy Turyk. Nancy Turyk gave a PowerPoint presentation on Rural Economic Development. Covered in the presentation – REDI plan priorities and the goal to have a diverse and sustainable economy in Wood County.
- #1 priority – establishing e-infrastructure throughout the County.
    - Broadband & cellphone
    - Mary Ann Lippert put together a grant request for funding broadband service in outlying areas. Application deadline is December.
      - Pittsville Schools and Town of Sherry identified as priority outlying areas.
  - Other priorities

- Understand and address housing needs throughout Wood County.
- Develop a robust Comprehensive Plan for the County by 2025
- Rebranding or marketing Wood County.

Bill Leichtnam shared as a member of CEED he feels we need to rebrand and market Wood County.

Chair Curry shared it might be worthwhile to see what other counties are doing.

Dave LaFontaine shared he is in favor of marketing and eliminating the comprehensive plan.

Nancy also gave an update on the Clean-Sweep held on August 29<sup>th</sup> at the Marshfield Ag Research Station. Very good turnout, approximately 207 cars drove through with drop off items.

Nancy asked the committee on suggestions for the 2021 Clean-Sweep location, as she will be working on completing the grant application. Chair Curry shared that the Saratoga location works well.

**15. Schedule next regular committee meeting.**

The next regular CEED meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 9:00 a.m., at the Wood County Courthouse in Conference Room #114.

**16. Agenda items for next meeting**

*Agenda items are due by Wednesday, September 30, 2020.*

**17. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary.**

Special CEED for Economic grants and budget review/approval for Land & Water Conservation and Planning on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. in room 114 of the Wood County Courthouse.

**18. Adjourn.** Motion by Robert Ashbeck to adjourn at 12:10 p.m. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes by Lori Ruess – Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department