

MINUTES
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2022
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI

Members Present: Kenneth Curry, Robert Ashbeck, Jake Hahn, Dave LaFontaine, Bill Leichtnam, Carmen Good

Staff Present:

Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn - (WebEx), Paul Bernard.
Land & Water Conservation Staff: Shane Wucherpennig, Lori Ruess.
UW Extension Staff: Jason Hausler, Rachael Whitehair.

Others Present: Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, Dist. #15 Supervisor Bill Clendenning, Dist. #16 Supervisor Lance Pliml - (WebEx), Susan Smith, Health Department Director - (WebEx), Ben Jeffrey, Environmental Health Supervisor - (WebEx), Scott Larson, Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

1. **Call to Order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Declaration of Quorum.** Chair Curry declared a quorum.
3. **Public Comment.** Carmen Good mentioned Jake Bourget, FSA County Executive Director (CED) retired in January and Laurie Konkol-Glodowski has been hired as the new FSA CED. She will cover Wood, Portage and Waupaca Counties. Chairperson Curry suggested that Laurie be invited to attend a future CEED meeting.
4. **Review Correspondence.**
 - A. On behalf of Extension, Planning and Zoning and Land & Water Conservation Departments, Jason Hausler and Jason Grueneberg thanked Chairperson Curry for his years of service to Wood County and great leadership. They also thanked Bob Ashbeck for his service. Ken served on County Board for 10 years and Bob Ashbeck for 18 years.
5. **Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following Items: 1) minutes of the March 2, 2022 and March 15, 2022 CEED meetings, 2) bills from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and Extension and 3) staff activity reports from Laura Huber, Matt Lippert, Allison Jonjak, Hannah Wendels, Janell Wehr, Jackie Carattini, Rachael Whitehair, Shane Wucherpennig, Caleb Armstrong, Emily Salvinski, Lori Ruess, Rodney Mayer, Jason Grueneberg, Adam DeKleyn, Paul Bernard, Jeff Brewbaker, Scott Custer, and Victoria Wilson.
 - A. Minutes of March 2, 2022 and March 15, 2022. No additions or corrections needed.
 - B. Department Bills. No additions or corrections needed.
 - C. Staff Activity Reports. No additions or corrections needed.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and accept the March 2, 2022 and March 15, 2022 CEED minutes, bills from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and Extension, and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Review items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda.** None.
7. **Risk and Injury Report.** None.
8. **Land & Water Conservation Department.**
 - A. Update on Conservation Engineering Technician position. Shane Wucherpennig gave a brief update on the vacant Conservation Engineering Technician position. The position has been posted for over a month and only received six applications. Two out of the six applicants have

the AutoCad and GIS requirements. The application deadline will be extended; interviews will take place after April 21.

- B. Discuss potential Central Sands Groundwater Model and County involvement. Shane Wucherpfennig shared in speaking with Dr. Carla Romano it was brought to his attention that there is potential funding available through a USGS grant for a Central Sands Groundwater Model. The proposal would be to repurpose an existing Central Sands groundwater model to predict water levels and nitrate concentration according to future possible variations in groundwater recharge, nitrate load and water pumping rates. The grant does require match funds and there is a short timeline to act, as the proposal due date is April 26. Discussion followed.

Ken Curry commented that he was reluctant to make a motion to approve without more information; there are too many unknowns.

Bill Clendenning mentioned Judicial and Legislative Committee could put something together for the upcoming meeting. Bill also mentioned that maybe ARPA money could be used towards the matching funds requirement.

Shane Wucherpfennig will get more details on the grant following the meeting and forward to the CEED and Lance Pliml.

- C. Discuss Mill Creek 9-Key Element Plan implementation. Shane Wucherpfennig shared with the CEED, information on the progress of the Mill Creek 9-Key Element Plan implementation. In December of 2019, Wood County received a Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Grant in the amount of \$600,600 of which 10 percent of the local assistance portion of the grant could be used for staffing. In early 2020, DNR sent out notification that revisions were made to large-scale TRM Grants, which included increasing the local assistance grant cap from 10% of the BMP grant award to 40% of the BMP grant award. Wood County LWCD was under the assumption that this increase applied to their existing grant, however after submitting their 2021 reimbursement request, they found out that the increase did not apply to existing grants. Wucherpfennig submitted a variance letter and budget amendment request. The variance was denied, but the budget amendment was approved. Wucherpfennig recently submitted a revised proposal and is awaiting approval from DNR. Shane added he wanted to share this information with the CEED and expressed his frustration with DNR for their lack of explaining the increase did not apply to existing grants.

D. Committee Reports

- i. Citizens Groundwater Group meeting. Bill Leichtnam gave a brief update on the March 21 Citizens Groundwater Group meeting.
- Lisa Anderson, Portage County resident was the speaker. She spoke on "The Nelsonville Story". Nelsonville, a village of 150 residents, has a 2300 animal unit Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO). In 2018, Portage County received a grant to study the water quality in their 880-acre recharge zone. Results showed nitrates were widespread throughout the village. An environmental engineering firm was hired by the Village to analyze data. The results indicated agriculture as the predominant source of nitrate contamination. The Village has formed a Groundwater Protection Committee to help raise awareness of this problem.
 - Bill shared information from a Town of Armenia Supervisor who has lived in the same house in the Town of Armenia for 60 years and the past 30 to 35 years has experienced high nitrates. Per DATCP's request, he had his well tested for imidacloprid insecticide and following testing found out his water is not suitable for drinking.
 - In 2021, Juneau County tested wells in Armenia and Port Edwards and found Imidacloprid in 66 private wells.

Ben Jeffrey, Wood County Health Department stated he is aware of this issue.

- ii. Health Committee report. Ben Jeffrey reported the March AGC meeting was cancelled. He will keep the CEED posted.
- iii. Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGWCC) committee report. Bill Leichtnam reported, when the Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative began, there were four partners; that has now expanded to seven partners (DNR, DATCP, US Geological Society, Wisconsin Geologic and Natural History Survey, UW Madison School of Soils, UW Stevens Point Water Analysis Lab and UW Madison Water Research Institute).
 - All six counties give a report each month.
 - Juneau County tested 2,700 well
 - Portage County tested between 2,500 – 3,000
 - Bill Leichtnam expressed concern with only having enough money remaining in Wood County to fund testing of approximately 110 wells. Discussion followed.

Bill Clendenning mentioned that 22 people in the Town of Grand Rapids wanted to have their wells tested for nitrates and were turned down. Shane Wucherpfennig explained the Land & Water Conservation Department has been offering sample bottles for testing of nitrates for four years and have never turned down anyone who asked for a well testing kit. He added that if those 22 people are still interested please refer them to the Land & Water Conservation Department for the free nitrate testing.

- iv. Golden Sands RC&D report. Bill Leichtnam reported briefly on the March 17th Golden Sands RC&D meeting he attended.
 - Hiring watercraft inspectors to teach the public about boat inspection habits that protect lakes.
 - Expanded groundwater lessons to 5th grade classes to include Wood County schools.
 - Golden Sands RC&D will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary in September.
 - Voluntary dues to RC&D - \$1,900/county. Wood County has paid \$800 in dues the past several years. Bill Leichtnam mentioned he would like to see Wood County pay the full \$1,900 in dues. Discussion followed.

Motion by Bill Leichtnam to put on the May CEED agenda, discuss/consider increasing the amount of voluntary annual dues Wood County pays to Golden Sands RC&D. Second by Ken Curry. Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Private Sewage.** None.

10. **Land Records.**

- a. Land Records CIP request for 2022 Lidar. Paul Bernard explained what Lidar is (light detection and ranging) and handed out a copy of the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) request to acquire high quality elevation data, which meets FEMA map accuracy standards. He explained that the base project has already been funded by cost-sharing from Wood County Land Records, Wood County Land & Water Conservation, Wood County Highway Department, the City of Marshfield and the City of Wisconsin Rapids. This request is for moving beyond the base project and acquiring additional deliverables including hydrography polygons, 1-foot elevation lines or contours, classification of buildings versus vegetation, bare earth dataset, digital surface model, intensity imagery, full county-wide culvert inventory and online 3D web mapping. These additions would greatly enhance the usefulness of elevation data. The CIP request is for \$70,000; Land Records will cover \$8,250 if the CIP is approved.

Motion by Ken Curry to approve the \$70,000 CIP Request for the advanced Lidar program. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.

11. **County Surveyor.** None.

12. **Planning.** None.

13. **Economic Development.**

- a. North Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission update. Jason Grueneberg gave a brief update on the bicycle pedestrian plan. The second meeting will be held this month.

Jason also gave a brief update on the broadband speed testing. Hope to have 10 percent of the population in rural areas complete the test. Marketing to inform residents of the speed testing availability could include radio, website, school districts, and towns. People who live in rural areas and don't have broadband in their area can call the Planning and Zoning office.

Dave Lafontaine expressed a concern with the broadband speed testing. He tried to complete the testing twice, but never received confirmation of the test being submitted. Jason will follow-up on this to see if a submission verification notice can be sent following completion of the speed testing.

- b. Update from Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry and consider release of 2022 Economic Development Grant Funds. Scott Larson, MACCI Executive Director, thanked the CEED for letting him present. He presented the Wood County Economic Development 2021-2022 Annual Report, which covered County Data, Workforce and Talent Development, Marketing/Promotion, Business Support and Region/County Development. Brief discussion and questions followed his presentation.

Jake Hahn commended both Chambers for doing a phenomenal job in promoting Wood County.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to release \$19,500 in Economic Development Grant Funds to the Marshfield Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.

14. **Extension.**

- a. General Office Update. Jason Hausler provided the following updates:
- The Extension office has finally received the 2021 revenue dollars for the Clean Sweep reimbursement. The 2022 Clean Sweep will be held in Marshfield.
 - The Judge agreed with the transition of the Meadowbrook 4-H club and Extension has the deed. Will continue to work with Peter Kastenholz.
 - Last week, staff attended the area meeting which was held at the NEPCO shelter house. It was a great team building opportunity.
 - The Extension staff will be participating in "Career Day" on Friday, April 29.
- b. Staffing Update. Jason Hausler provided the following staffing updates:
- The Community Development position application deadline was extended to March 18. Minimal pool of qualified applicants. Will hold interviews April 18 for two of the candidates; one at 9:30 a.m. and one at 11:00 a.m.
 - The FoodWise program is being realigned and Kelly Hammond, FoodWise Coordinator, will now serve Wood, Portage, Marathon and Clark Counties.
 - Jasmine Carbajal has been hired as the Associate 4-H Coordinator. This is a full time position split between Wood and Marathon Counties.
 - A newly created Water Quality Position will work with Ag producers in Central Sands area (Wood, Portage, Adams, Juneau and Waushara counties). This position will be

based out of Portage County and is supported by Waushara and Portage Counties and State dollars.

- c. Educator Presentation – Rachael Whitehair, Natural Resource Educator. Rachael Whitehair shared a PowerPoint presentation on Extension’s Role in South Wood County Cultural Coalition. Her presentation covered:
- The Purpose, Statement and Pledge of the Cultural Coalition.
 - Extension’s role in Cultural Coalition.
 - Upcoming Focus Groups
 - April 20th – in person at McMillan Library – Multi-Use Room 5-7 p.m.
 - April 21st – Virtual – 2 p.m.
 - Data Sources
 - Focus Group Protocol
 - Community Connections & Outreach
 - Civic Engagement & Leadership Development
 - Public Education and Youth Development
 - Brief Actions and Outcomes
 - Actions – Maintaining monthly meetings & social media updates.

Following the presentation, Dave LaFontaine asked why the group is limited to South Wood County. Rachael noted it came down to capacity; however, there are efforts to expand throughout Wood County.

15. Requests for per diem for meeting attendants.

Bill Leichtnam requested per diem for attending the April 5, ARPA Funding Adhoc Committee meeting.

Motion by Jake Hahn to approve Bill Leichtnam’s per diem request for attending the ARPA Adhoc Committee meeting. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.

16. Schedule Next Meeting. The next regular CEED meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4, 2022 at 9:00 a.m., at the Wood County Courthouse Room #114.

17. Agenda items for next meeting. *Agenda items are due Wednesday, April 27.*

- A. Discuss Golden Sands RC&D voluntary annual dues.

18. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary.

Judicial & Legislative Organizational Meeting – April 25 at 8:15 a.m., Room 114
CEED Organizational Meeting – Monday, April 25 at 8:30 a.m., Room 114

19. Adjourn. Chair Curry declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Minutes by Lori Ruess, Land & Water Conservation Department