

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Land Conservation & Ag and Extension Committee

Date of Meeting: Monday, April 4th, 2022

Chair Mr. Dwight Ruff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Dwight Ruff, Mr. Steve Nelson, Mr. John Sendelbach, Mr. William Bruegger-in person. Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht-Virtual

Others Present for All or Portions of the Meeting:

Mr. Cale Severson, Ms. Matison Hackensmith, Mr. Carl Duley, Steve and Beth Segerstrom, Ms. Patricia Malone, Ms. Mary Campbell-Wood, Mr. Kevin Masarik (UWSP), Mr. Ryan VanDeWalle, Ms. Roxane Weisenbeck, Mr. Briar Golden, Mr. Michael Owecke, appeared in person. Ms. Josie Knauber, Mr. Nels Anderson, Ms. Jamie Weaver, Mr. Tom Bilski, Ms. MaryAnne Urell appeared remotely.

Minutes: Mr. John Sendelbach made a motion seconded by Mr. William Bruegger to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on March 7th, 2022 as sent. Motion Carried.

Public Comments Regarding Posted Agenda Items:

None

Review/Discussion/Action ~ 2023 FoodWise Agreement Letter

Ms. Malone reviewed the 2023 FoodWise Agreement Letter with the committee. It highlighted what the program received in Federal Funds (~\$25,000) and laid out some of the support that is expected of the county. Motion by Mr. Nelson, second by Mr. Sendelbach to accept the FoodWise agreement for 2023. Motion carried

Educator Report ~ The committee moved the educator reports above the discussion of fair roles and responsibilities.

Carl Duley passed out his final hemp report for the 2021 growing year. They intend to continue the project this year. He passed out the most recent agriculture outlook prepared by specialist, Steve Deller. It highlights the current state of the county's agricultural economy. He highlighted work he has been doing on cash farmland lease agreements. He tries to encourage folks to use written rental agreements. He emphasized the importance of including soil fertility and conservation in the agreements. He was asked about the hazelnut project. There are many people interested, but he is waiting to see what kind of contract is needed by the project funders.

Mary Campbell Wood shared her report. She updated the committee on the Veteran's Project. They have been able to start offering re-entry training in the Buffalo County jail. They began in March. A major project that she will continue to work on is "Parenting Inside Out." This is an effort to modify a nationally recognized curriculum for prisons so that it works in the county jail setting. They are also including literacy components in the curriculum.

Annie Lisowski was unable to attend because of family health issues. Malone briefly shared her reports with the committee. She highlighted three elements. The first was a 4-H Thriving Model Program Quality evaluation. The Buffalo program is rated a strong 5.8 on a 7-point scale. This means the program is strong, but it has room to grow. She also shared the results of her work with the C-FC 4-H afterschool program. This effort has grown – nearly doubling since 2020-2021. Finally, she shared the annual report of the Pepin-Buffalo Teen Court program. This is another effort that has really grown and strengthened over the years.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Roles and Responsibilities of Extension and Buffalo County Fair Association

Ms. Malone shared the work she is doing with the staff and the Buffalo County Fair Association (BFCA) on roles and responsibilities. She emphasized that our office has been and will continue to be actively involved in the county fair. Given the change in university expectations and the Wisconsin Association of Fairs and the BFCA's desire to make the fair assistant their own employee we are going over the roles and responsibilities of each party. The general focus is to move the educators to educational roles and to continue to transfer administrative roles to the BFCA. Malone will be meeting with the BFCA on 4/18 to continue the dialogue. She encouraged Mr. Nelson and Mr. Ruff to attend if possible.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ A Resolution to Approve the Expenditure of CAPX2020 and/or ARPA Funds to Complete a Baseline Groundwater Quality / Well Sampling Project in Buffalo County

Mr. Dwight Ruff introduced Mr. Kevin Masarik, groundwater research specialist with UW-Stevens Point. Mr. Masarik led discussion on well sampling and groundwater sampling. MR. Masarik talked about the approach and strategies to well sampling and collecting data, also spoke about quantity of wells and the goal of how many samples that are wanted to be collected. Mr. Masarik discussed recruitment goals of eight hundred wells (800) to obtain desired number of three hundred (300) samples and the method to do that – grid, stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, proportional random sampling, with stratification based on geology or municipality. Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht made a motion to move forward with the resolution for the cost of forty-two thousand dollars (\$42,000) with a second by Mr. Steve Nelson. Roll call vote- Mr. Steve Nelson-yes, Mr. Dwight Ruff-yes, Mr. John Sendelbach-yes, Mr. William Bruegger-yes, Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht-yes. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion~ BWS Update

County Conservationist Mr. Cale Severson led discussion on how he had received correspondence from Mr. John Behling that SEH had made a site visit to Buffalo White Sands mine site to begin getting measurements for the purpose of creating an itemized bond sheet for a better calculation of bond amount. Mr. Severson spoke on the correspondence that was happening between the Wisconsin DNR and Buffalo White Sands. Mr. Severson held discussion that the Land Conservation Department is looking for an updated reclamation plan and bond amount and for BWS to be up to State code and the non-metallic mining County Ordinance.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Klevgard/Linse Bill

Mr. Cale Severson spoke about the topic. The waterway was constructed and was cost-shared. A berm was removed on the site that was not cost-shared and the county has been billed for the removal. The landowner paid for his share of the removal and the county is billed for their share. Two thousand one hundred (\$2100) is owed and it has been suggested to be paid in full to Klevgard. The Land Conservation Department is following the unbudgeted purchasing policy pertaining to Buffalo County guidelines. Mr. John Sendelbach made a motion to approve the \$2100 bill being paid by the Land Conservation Department. Mr. William Bruegger seconded the motion. Roll call vote-Mr. Steve Nelson-yes, Mr. Dwight Ruff-yes, Mr. John Sendelbach-yes, Mr. William Bruegger-yes, Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht-yes. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion ~ Hoksch/Greenheck Easement

Mr. Cale Severson led discussion on the CCC structure and that unrecorded easements were discovered, one for that structure. The maintenance is the responsibility of Buffalo County. The easements will be recorded.

Review/Discussion ~ PL-566 Maintenance

Mr. Cale Severson held a discussion about maintenance of the structures. They get mowed now and is there any other types of maintenance that can be done. Buffalo County has eight (8) structures that need to be inspected every ten (10) years, three (3) of them are under NRCS responsibility until 2053. A funding source will have to be established to cover inspections and maintenance in the future.

Review/Discussion ~ Extra Member(s) on the LCAE Committee

Mr. Dwight Ruff explained that the County Board approved these positions but suggested tabling appointment until after the elections.

Land Conservationist Report:

Mr. Cale Severson discussed having DATCP come for a training day which was very helpful. Mr. Severson discussed getting out on site visits and handling public contacts. Mr. Severson is working on grant applications and annual reporting and work plans.

Review/Discussion/Action Regarding the Next Meeting Date and Time:

First Monday of May, May 2nd, 2022, at 6:00pm

Chairperson's Report:

Mr. Ruff discussed plans to attend a Soil Social Event on April 14th to generate conversation about conservation practices that farmers are trying.

Public Comments Not Related to Agenda Items:

Mr. William Bruegger asked about the Tell Farm check situation. Mr. Severson explained the financial situation with Buffalo County and Tell Farms. The county overpaid Tell Farms and they now owe the conservation dept \$1100.

Adjournment: Mr. Dwight Ruff made a motion to adjourn at 8:58 p.m., Seconded by Mr. John Sendelbach, Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cale Severson
County Conservationist