

Chippewa County Land Conservation
Committee Meeting
August 22, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Chair, P. Michels, at 3:30 p.m. Members present were D. Boettcher, J. Dahl, M. Holte, P. Licht, L. Marquardt, P. Michels, and L. Willkom.

Agency staff present were G. McDowell (Auditor), D. Masterpole, J.T. Jensen, R. Yohnk, and J. Schemenauer - Recorder (LCD).

Item #1 - Review Scheduled 2008 Project Activities and Potential Grant Proposals.

D. Masterpole distributed a table titled: Schedule of Activities to Implement Plan, (LCD 8/16/06). The table contains a quarterly schedule of activities for the years 2007-2008, which is being systematically implemented to pursue program objectives, as established in the Chippewa County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, (12/15/04).

The Committee reviewed the status of activities scheduled for 2007 and 2008. Priority activities for 2008 were identified as follows:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness and deficiencies of the County's existing Farmland Preservation approach.
2. Systematically review and provide policy input into the natural and cultural resource and land use elements of the County Comprehensive Plan.
3. Implement joint stormwater management program for the Chippewa Falls Urban Area by meeting obligations under the proposed Chapter 66.03 intermunicipal agreement.
4. Complete the update to the 1985 Chippewa County Groundwater Inventory.
5. Review the current policy and facilitate the acquisition of select land and/or conservation easements through use of the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Program.

There was general discussion regarding the 2008 activities and project priorities. Discussion focused on the value of pursuing a conservation easement on a working farm through the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Program to define the costs and practical issues which would need to be overcome if the County were to implement an agricultural purchase of development rights program (PDR).

Item #2 - Review 2008 Budget Guidance.

The Committee reviewed correspondence from the Finance, Budget, and Claims Committee and County Administrator, (7/17/07). The guidelines for the 2008 budget process direct that:

1. Governing committees and departments to prepare the 2008 budgets within 1% of 2007 levy rates.
2. All fees and charges for services be examined and updated.
3. Expenditures funded by revenue sources other than tax levy be budgeted within the constraints of the available revenue sources.
4. No new or expanded services be budgeted without implementing tradeoffs of other budgeted expenditures or revenues.

Item #3 - Review Proposed 2008 Recycling Program Budgets.

R. Yohnk reported that the 2008 recycling program budgets have been prepared according to Finance Committee guidelines.

The Committee reviewed the following budget material:

1. Summary table titled: Chippewa County Land Conservation Department, Recycling Program - 2008 Budget Summaries, (8/22/07). The table is a spreadsheet which shows line item expenses and revenues for the following budgets:
 - #100-17-54810 - Solid Waste
 - #100-17-54815 - Tire Facility
 - #100-17-54822 - Household Clean Sweep Program
 - #100-17-54825 - Recycling
2. Chippewa County 2008 Budget justification sheets for those budgets:
3. Analysis titled: 2008 Land Conservation Department, Recycling Program Budget Analysis, (8/22/07). The analysis explains how the recycling budgets were developed within the prescribed budget guidelines. The explanation is as follows:

Revenue:

- As responsible unit (RU), the County maintained its historic portion of 2008 recycling grant (20% of allocation). The remainder will be distributed to municipalities using the current distribution formula.
- The LCC applied for and anticipates receiving a special Recycling Efficiency Grant. If successful, the grant award will be applied to temporarily offset the County tax levy.

Note: With regard to application of \$39,300 in revenue anticipated from Recycling Efficiency Incentive (REI) Grants, followed the LCC directive established through motion (3/15/07) to “Apply the 2008 grant revenue (if received) to temporarily offset the 2008 County tax levy, with the understanding that if this grant is not received in 2008, that the tax levy will be returned to the historic levy allocation used to fund the recycling program before it was first deferred using REI grants in 2003.”

- The LCC will maintain its current service contract as negotiated with the City of Chippewa Falls (3% annual rate increase through December, 2008).

Expenses

- The LCD froze operational expenses in all recycling budgets at 2007 levels.
- The LCD has frozen the Contracted Services expenditure for the ½ time Recycling Consultant at 3%.
- The LCD has applied the 1% authorized levy increase to partially offset the negotiated salary/fringe benefit increases for Recycling Coordinator.

There was general discussion regarding the Recycling Program revenue and expenditures for 2008.

Item #4 - Review Proposed Land Conservation Program Budgets.

J.T. Jensen reported that the 2008 Land Conservation Department budgets have been prepared according to Finance Committee guidelines.

The Committee reviewed the following material:

1. Summary table titled: Draft 2008 Budget Summaries, Chippewa County Land Conservation Department (8/22/07). The table is a spreadsheet which shows line item expenses and revenues for the following proposed LCD budgets:

- #100-52-57410 Land Conservation Department
- #100-52-57412 Farmland Preservation
- #100-52-57420 Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Grants
- #100-52-57417 SWRM
- #100-52-57423 Gravel Pits
- #100-52-57424 Farmer's Fund
- #100-52-57425 CREP Fund
- #100-52-57414 Plan/Zone Project
- #100-52-57422 Urban Stormwater

2. Chippewa County 2008 Budget justification sheets for those budgets.

3. Analysis titled: 2008 Land Conservation Department, Conservation Program Budget Analysis, (LCC 8/22/07). The analysis explains how the Land Conservation Department budgets were developed within the prescribed budget guidelines. The explanation is as follows:

•#100-52-57410 - Land Conservation Department & #100-52-57417 - State Staffing Grant.

Revenues

- The LCD has increased existing service fees 5% across the board to account for inflation.
 - Animal Waste Ordinance permit fees.
 - Gravel Pit Reclamation Ordinance permit fees.
 - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) service fees.
- The LCD has increased engineering design service fees from 70% to 100% of federal Technical Service Provider (TSP) rates for structural livestock pollution control practices, as authorized by LCC (8-17-06); and has established a new reduced design fee category for small scale manure storage structures.
- The LCD has established new service fees to cover personnel and program costs incurred by providing new or expanded services.
 - Stormwater plan review fees charged to developers and stormwater program service fees charged to select municipalities subject to WPDES stormwater permit requirements.
 - Wetland delineation service fees charged to the Highway Dept.
- The LCD has decreased the amount of revenue that is anticipated to service Forest & Parks Dept. capital improvement projects to reflect the number and type of projects planned for 2008.
- The LCD has applied minor state staffing grant revenue increases to partially offset the negotiated increases in salary and fringe benefits.

Expenses

- The LCD has frozen operation expenses at 2006 rates.
- The LCD has applied 1% levy increase to partially offset the negotiated increases in salary and fringe benefits for program staff.
- The LCD has deferred all capital improvement requests.

4. Summary titled: Land Conservation Committee Revenue Projection Summary for the Distribution of Funds to Support Staff & Operations 2008 Budget, (LCD 8/22/07). The summary shows revenue projections for 2008 for the following budgets:

#100-52-57410	Land Conservation
#100-52-57423	Gravel Pits
#100-52-57422	Urban Area Stormwater
#100-52-57425	CREP
#100-52-57417	Soil & Water Resource Management
#100-52-57412	Farmland Preservation

5. Summary titled: Land Conservation Committee Revenue Projection Summary Distribution of Funds to Support Nonpoint Pollution Control Practices Installed by Private Landowners & Municipalities 2008 Budget, (LCD 8/22/07). The summary shows revenue projections for 2008 to support nonpoint pollution control practices for the following budgets:

#100-52-57425	CREP
#100-52-57420	Targeted Runoff Management
#100-52-57424	Farmer's Fund

6. Analysis titled: Non Tax Levy Accounts (#100-52-57425 - CREP, #100-52-57420 - TRM Grants, #100-52-57424 - Farmer's Fund, #100-52-57422 - Stormwater, #100-52-57414 - Lakes Planning, #100-52-57423 - Gravel Pits, #100-52-57412 - Farmland Preservation).

The anticipated budget activity within each account is as follows:

-No tax levy allocated to these accounts (expenditures equals outside revenues).

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Budget

-Administer State payments to landowners for conservation easements along stream corridors. (Note: There is no direct funding for staff or program support. Expenses are absorbed through the LCD conservation program budget).

Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Budgets

-Distribute State cost share grants which enable farmers to meet state pollution control standards.
-Continue to administer three grant awards from the DNR's TRM (Targeted Runoff Management) program.

Lakes Planning Budget

-Apply \$25,000 in County non-lapsing funds toward state matching grant to implement a Wild Lakes Pilot project (property or easement acquisition).
-Apply \$20,000 in County nonlapsing funds to conduct a land use inventory and nutrient management assessment in the 303d TMDL - Little Lake Wissota.

Gravel Pit Reclamation Budget

-Implement Phase II of a nonmetallic mine restoration pilot project to encourage the private sector or a nonprofit organization to establish a turn key restoration service to be used by the aggregate industry subject to ordinance reclamation requirements. (Note: Funded by industry 100% through annual permit fees.)

Farmland Preservation Budget

- Subcontract a crop consultant to provide crop scouting report to assist agricultural producers and raise public awareness of the importance of the economic impacts of agriculture as an industry.
- Co-sponsor a conference with UWEX which focuses on the current status and future of production agriculture in Chippewa County.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on the management approach used in preparing the budgets, and on the specific line item expenses and revenues as proposed.

Motion to adopt the Recycling budgets, as presented, and to forward the budgets to the Finance Committee: Marquardt/Holte. Motion carried.

Motion to adopt the Land Conservation Department budgets, as presented, and to forward the budgets to the Finance Committee: Boettcher/Dahl. Motion carried.

Item #5 - Review Staff Recommendations; Proposed Use of Arrowhead-Weston Mitigation Funds.

D. Masterpole distributed and the Committee reviewed a handout titled: Land Conservation Department Staff Recommendation to Land Conservation Committee, Finance Committee, and County Administrator on Use of Arrowhead-Weston Mitigation Funds, (LCD 8/22/07).

The handout restates the statutory requirements for use of the funds, and provides a justification for the recommendation based upon the concept of compensatory mitigation.

The recommendation is as follows:

1. Apply \$100,000 toward the purchase, development, and maintenance of Kemper's Woods to compensate for the immediate and secondary environmental impacts associated with the construction of the Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line.
2. Apply \$7,019 toward the purchase of a high fuel efficiency energy conserving vehicle, to be added to the County fleet for demonstration purposes to compensate for the environmental impacts associated with energy production at the Weston coal and gas fired power plant.

There was general discussion regarding Committee action, to date, and the staff recommendation.

Motion to approve the LCD recommendation, (LCD 8/22/07), as presented, and to forward to the Finance Committee: Willkom/Licht. Motion carried.

Item #6 - Consider Funding Request to Maintain County Stewardship Fund Balance.

D. Masterpole distributed and the Committee reviewed the following material:

1. Table titled: Land Conservation Department Summary - Stewardship Fund #236-52-57760, (LCD 8/22/07). The table outlines Stewardship Fund appropriations, projects, expenditures, and ratio match from 1999-2007.
2. Map titled: Location of Conservation Easements and Parcels with Public Access, Chippewa County Stewardship Program, 2000-2007, (LCD 8/07). The map illustrates the individual projects sponsored through the Stewardship Fund and their location in the County.
3. Resolution (45-06), adopted as part of the 2007 budget process. The resolution reestablishes a planned funding allocation to maintain the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund. The resolution resolves that:

- A. A \$50,000 allocation of sales tax funds be provided to replenish the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund, and
- B. The allocation shall be used exclusively to gain access to grant sources offered by corporate interests, public agencies, and nationally based non-profit organizations and endowments, and
- C. All funds received shall be administered following the policies and procedures for administration of the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund, as previously adopted by the County Board through Resolution #89-99, and shall be targeted toward high priority areas of the County to achieve land use and resource management objectives, as defined in the Chippewa County Land and Water Resource Management Plan and the Chippewa County Forest and Parks 10 Year Plan, and
- D. In the event that outside matching grants are not gained, the sales tax allocation will not be appropriated.

Note: Year 2007 and 2008 funding requests are contingent upon receipt of outside matching grants, and upon subsequent approval by the County Board through separate resolutions, as part of the Year 2007 and 2008 budget process.

If possible, the sales tax allocation and outside grants will be reallocated as local incentive match grants which provides the potential to achieve a 4:1 return on the local sales tax allocation.

There was general discussion.

Motion to:

1. Use Resolution #45-06 as a template.
2. Request an allocation of \$50,000 of sales tax funds as part of the 2007-2008 budget process to replenish the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund.
3. Forward the resolution to the Finance Committee for consideration as part of the budget process.

Holte/Dahl. Motion carried.

Item #7 - Committee Communication.

There was no correspondence or communication with other committees.

Item #8 - Public Wishing to be Heard.

There was no public wishing to be heard.

The next LCC meeting was scheduled for 9/20/07 at 3:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn: Boettcher/Licht.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:15 p.m.