

Chippewa County Land Conservation  
Committee Meeting  
December 20, 2007

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, P. Michels, at 9:00 a.m. Members present were D. Boettcher, J. Dahl, M. Holte, P. Licht, P. Michels, and L. Willkom.

Members absent were L. Marquardt.

Agency staff present at times throughout the meeting were W. Reynolds (Co. Administrator), J. Sazama (Corp. Counsel), M. Dahlby, D. Masterpole, R. Yohnk, and J. Schemenauer - Recorder (LCD).

Others present were D. Dukerschein (Chippewa Valley Outdoor Resource Alliance - CVORA).

**Item #1 -Minutes/Bills/Plans/Contracts/Agreements.**

The minutes from the 11/15/07 meeting were presented. Motion to approve the 11/15/07 minutes: Holte/Dahl. Motion carried.

The LCD program bills, grant funded project bills, and recycling program bills were presented. Motion to approve bills: Dahl/Boettcher. Motion carried.

Staff presented and the LCC reviewed a map and an accompanying table titled: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Contracts, Completed by LCD for Approval in December, 2007, (LCD 12/20/07). The map and table shows the location of the field plan(s) developed by landowners to meet the requirements of State and Federal administrative rules, under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). They are as follows:

<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Tract</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Status</u>	NR151 <u>Eval.</u>
B. Grossman	T7946	T30N	R6W	10	5.3	Rev Bas	No
B. Lofthus	T5457	T31N	R10W	16	5.8	Rev Bas	Yes
C. Schroeder, etal	T4543	T31N	R6W	22	1.3	Rev Bas	No

Motion to approve CREP field plans: Dahl/Licht. Motion carried.

**Item #2 - Update on Hawk Metals Real Estate; Consider Request for an Increase in a Current Matching Grant Award Previously Allocated Under Sec. 6.3 of the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Policy and Procedures.**

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

1. Map titled: Location of Hawk Metals Property, Within Sections 1, 12, and 13, T32N, R9W, Town of Sampson, (LCD). The map shows the location of the Hawk Metals Property (approximately 720 acres) in relation to State and County-owned land.
2. Email correspondence to J. Sazama (Corporation Counsel), W. Reynolds (Administrator), and D. Richards (Forest & Parks), from D. Masterpole (LCD), (12/9/07).

The email outlines the results of a staff analysis and finding that it may not be possible for the County to allocate funding to the project, under the authority provided through the Forest & Parks Department Quality of Life Fund (Resolution 77-98).

The email outlines several options for the County to consider. They are as follows:

- Option A. Seek \$26,000 from another Forest & Parks budget, with Forest & Park Committee authorization, if the money exists and if it is possible within the bounds of County Board finance and budget rules.
- Option B. Consider a revised matching grant from West Wisconsin Land Trust to the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund to increase the amount allocated under the local match grant. This would require LCC authorization.
- Option C. Do neither of the above and reduce the County's commitment by \$26,000.
- Option D. (Other ideas).

D. Masterpole reported that this information was presented to the Forest and Parks Committee on 12/17/08. No action was taken at that meeting.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on the physical characteristics of the property and its location in proximity to the Round Lake Park and County Forest Blocking Boundary.

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

1. Correspondence from R. Remington (West Wisconsin Land Trust - WWLT), to D. Masterpole (LCD), (12/19/07). The correspondence requests an additional \$26,000 from the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund to complete the acquisition of Hawk Metals. This allocation would augment the \$50,000 in County Stewardship funding approved by the LCC in 2/07.
2. Tables titled: Initial Budget for Hawk Metals Project and Revised Budget for Hawk Metals Project. The initial total non-profit cash contribution is \$82,660 (WWLT & CVORA) and the County local match grant is \$50,000. The revised total non-profit cash contribution is \$82,660 and the County local match grant is \$76,000. (Note: The appraised value = \$252,000 and the assessed value approx. \$350,000).

D. Masterpole reported that a revised Chippewa County Stewardship Fund application has been filed by the WWLT requesting an additional matching grant of \$26,000 in County funding (Option B). The Option to Purchase negotiates the purchasing price for this property at \$277,200, which is 10% more than the appraised value.

D. Dukerschein (CVORA) addressed the Committee. He explained the mission of the Chippewa Valley Outdoor Resource Alliance (CVORA) and the interest that the organization has in supporting the public acquisition of the Hawk Metals property.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on WWLT's request for additional funding through an amendment to its current stewardship matching grant application. Additional discussion focused on the difference between the appraised value and the negotiated purchase price.

Motion that the Land Conservation Committee will consider an increase in the Matching Grant Award previously allocated to the project, but will defer such consideration until after a signed Purchase Agreement has been reached by the principal parties to the transaction. Further, that such consideration will take into consideration any differences between the appraised value of the real estate and the proposed purchase price for the same: Willkom/Boettcher. Roll call vote: Michels – Aye, Boettcher – Aye, Dahl – Aye, Holte – Aye, Licht – Aye, and Willkom – Aye. Motion carried.

**Item #3 – Review Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Policy and Procedures; Set Annual Criteria for 2008 Match Grant Component Under Sec. 6.3.**

M. Dahlby distributed and the Committee reviewed a handout titled: Annual Criteria for Evaluating and Selecting Projects Submitted the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Local Match Grant Program in 2008, (LCD 12/20/07).

It was noted that the Year 2008 grant criteria, as proposed, are conceptually the same as the Year 2007 grant criteria with proposed changes shown as highlights.

The 2008 annual criteria with changes were presented as follows:

“Year 2008 Annual Grant Application Evaluation Criteria

In the Year 2008 grant cycle, primary consideration will be given to:

- a. Applicants who propose projects that will be matched by other grant sources.
- b. Applicants who have not previously received a grant.
- c. Applicants who propose projects with a purchase price of less than or equal to the appraised value. Conversely, the County will carefully scrutinize and seek justification of any proposal where the purchase price exceeds the appraised value.

All applications submitted through the Chippewa County Stewardship Local Matching Grant allocation process will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

1. Priority will be given to:

- a. Municipal governments (cities, villages, towns) that request up to \$50,000 for acquisition of land or easements to establish green space, bicycle or pedestrian trail corridors, or nature-based park space, as identified in a current land use or public recreation plan.
- b. County Committees that request up to \$100,000 for the purchase of land (or options to purchase), for parcels located within the County Forest Blocking Boundary, or for acquisition of parcels which will be managed as part of the County park system.
- c. Non-profit Organizations or municipal governments (cities, villages, towns) that request up to \$50,000 for:
  - i. Acquisition of land or conservation easements to protect shoreland corridors or areas of unique geological, environmental, or biological significance; or
  - ii. Acquisition of land or conservation easements to establish green space or recreational trail corridors in urbanizing areas subject to development; or
  - iii. Acquisition of conservation easements to protect areas of farmland which have been identified in an approved Town land use plan and are zoned for “Production Agriculture” agricultural use which establishes a residential density of no more than 1 residential unit per 35 acres; or lands covered by an active Farmland Preservation Agreement.”

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. Section 1.c.iii of the annual criteria, as it applies to use of matching grants to acquire conservation easements on land covered by an active Farmland Preservation Agreement, and
2. Item c of the introductory clause, as it applies to considering projects with purchase prices that are less or more than appraised value.

As a result of the discussion, there was general agreement that new language be added to the annual criteria, to replace the language as proposed in item c.

The new language is as follows:

- c. "The County will not contribute to a proposed project in which the purchase price is higher than the appraised value, unless unique and extraordinary circumstances warrant paying more than the appraise value, as determined by the LCC."

Motion to adopt the proposed 2008 annual criteria for evaluating applications made to the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Local Match Grant Program, as presented and amended: Holte/Dahl. Motion carried.

The Committee requested that staff update the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Policy and Procedures for Program Administration, (LCD 12/7/99), by attaching the annual criteria to the core policy document.

**Item #4 – Consider Public/Private Sector Financing Options for Pharmaceutical Drug Collection; Provide Policy Guidance on Use of Public Funds to Support Short/Long Term Collection Efforts.**

R. Yohnk distributed and the Committee reviewed the following material:

1. Analysis titled: Policy Analysis of Public/Private Options for Financing and Conducting a Prescription Drug Collection, (12/20/07). The analysis was conducted to determine the procedures, costs, and benefits of implementing a pharmaceutical collection pilot project in Chippewa County.
2. Fact sheet titled: Drug Response Task Force, (Sub-Committee Meeting on "Clean out Your Medicine Cabinet" Project), (11/8/07). The Drug Response Task Force is considering a project to encourage people to clean out their medicine cabinets and turn medications into specified sites.
3. Meeting minutes from the Drug Response Task Force, (11/15/07).

R. Yohnk reported that the purpose of the "Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet Project" is to:

•Raise awareness of the importance of being aware of the contents of our medicine cabinets, disposing of expire medications, proper disposal methods.

•Call attention to the importance of safe storage, and of potential abuse by persons who might have access to these medications.

•Increase awareness of environmental issues with drug disposal.

•Initiate a multi-strategy campaign to increase public awareness of the increasing instances of prescription drug abuse and the role that access plays in this current problem."

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. The current disposal of controlled and non-controlled substances in Chippewa County.
2. The efforts of the Drug Response Task Force.
3. The short and long-term costs of establishing a pharmaceutical collection program.

There was general agreement that the LCC, working through the County Recycling Program, will work with the Drug Response Task Force to further explore public/private sector options to finance and collect pharmaceuticals (i.e. pharmacy take-back program or mail-back program).

**Item #5 – Report on Status of Efforts to Negotiate Extension of CREP Program and to Secure Legal Services for Easement Work.**

M. Dahlby distributed and the Committee reviewed correspondence from K. Foye (DATCP), to counties that participate in the CREP Program, (12/18/07). Key points of the report are as follows:

1. DATCP will not extend its contract with the County until after the current one expires on 12/31/07.
2. If the Farm bill is extended, a new county contract with a new expiration and other appropriate dates will be sent. The new dates will reflect whatever timeframe is adopted in the federal law.
3. There may be a period of time whereby DATCP and counties will not be authorized to sign and approve any CREP agreements or easements.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

- If authorized through an extension of the Farm Bill, the new contract between the State and County will likely be the same as the previous contract and will not be open to renegotiation.
- DATCP, under the new contract, will reimburse the County for legal services provided by an independent contractor to support the conservation easement option, as now administered by the County.

The Chair changed the order of the agenda.

**Item #7 – Consider County Participation in WLWCA Programs as a Dues Paying Member.**

D. Masterpole reported that the County has not been a member of the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association (WLWCA) for the past several years due to budget limitations and management decisions. The organization is now under new leadership.

J. Dahl reported that he and D. Boettcher attended the WLWCA Conference on 12/5/07 to evaluate the organization. As a result of that evaluation, he recommends the LCC rejoin the WLWCA.

There was general discussion regarding the WLWCA and membership fees.

Motion for Chippewa County to rejoin the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association (WLWCA) for a one (1) year period: Willkom/Dahl. Motion carried.

**Item #6 - The Land Conservation Committee will convene into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statute Section 19.85(1)(e) "Deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public property, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session", (CNN/Joas Property).**

Motion to adjourn the regular session at 11:10 a.m.: Willkom/Holte. Motion carried.

Motion to go into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statute Section 19.85(1)(e) "Deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public property, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session", (CNN/Joas Property): Willkom/Holte. Roll call: Michels – Aye, Boettcher – Aye, Dahl – Aye, Holte – Aye, Licht – Aye, and Willkom – Aye. Motion carried.

Motion to come out of closed session at approximately 11:35 a.m. to announce any action taken: Willkom/Holte. Roll call: Michels – Aye, Boettcher – Aye, Dahl – Aye, Holte – Aye, Licht – Aye, and Willkom – Aye. Motion carried.

No action was taken in closed session.

**Item #8 - Committee Communication.**

There was no committee communication.

**Item #9 - Public Wishing to be Heard.**

There was no public wishing to be heard.

The next LCC meeting was scheduled for Thursday, January 17, 2008, at 9:00 a.m.

Motion to adjourn: Willkom/Holte.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:35 a.m.