

Chippewa County Land Conservation
Committee Meeting
March 20, 2008

The meeting was called to order by the 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 at times throughout the meeting were J. Myers (FSA), W. H. Reynolds (Co. Administrator), M. Dahlby, D. Masterpole, J.T. Jensen, and J. Schemenauer - Recorder (LCD).

P. Michels presented a conservation award of merit to J. Dahl in recognition of lifelong contributions toward the conservation of natural resources in Chippewa County.

P. Michels presented a certificate to D. Masterpole in recognition of 25 years of public service in Chippewa County.

Item #1 – Approve Minutes. Review Summary of Plans/Contracts/Agreements.

The minutes from the 2/21/08 meeting were presented. Motion to approve the 2/21/08 minutes: Boettcher/Willkom. Motion carried.

Staff presented and the LCC reviewed a table titled: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Contracts, Completed for Approval in March, 2008, (LCD 3/20/08). The 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> |
|------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| C. & L. Luczak | T6787 | T31N | R7W | 14 | 14.0 | RES CON | No |
| D. & B. Peterson | T5378 | T29N | R5W | 32 | 3.2 | RES CON | No |

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

D. Masterpole reported that the LCD and UWEX have entered an informal agreement to reestablish a bi-monthly crop scouting report, previously published by the LCD. Under the agreement, the UW Crops & Soils Agent (J. Clark) will prepare and distribute the report to media outlets. The LCD will contribute \$4,400 toward production and distribution costs.

The purpose of the report is to:

1. Provide current crop scouting information to assist producers to better manage crops, soils, and water.
2. Raise public awareness that production agriculture is an important industry that contributes to the County's economy.
3. Educate the public regarding the principles of crop production, soil and water conservation, and agricultural nonpoint pollution control.

Item #2 – Consider Resolution to Recommend Approval of Farmland Preservation Agreement; D. Vogler, T28N, R8W, Sec. 30 & 31.

D. Masterpole presented and the Committee reviewed the following material (distributed with 3/14/08 meeting mailing):

1. Draft Resolution titled: Resolution No. Recommending Approval of Farmland Preservation Application Filed January 28, 2008, (LCD). The resolution recommends approval of a Farmland Preservation application filed by D. Vogler, Town of Hallie, on 01/28/08.
2. Map titled: Donald & Cheryl Vogler, Farmland Preservation Tract Location, T28N, R8W, Sec. 30 & 31, (LCD 3/11/08). The map shows the location of the D. Vogler's property in Chippewa County.

Staff reported that:

- D. Vogler has properly filed a complete application for a Farmland Preservation agreement on 01/28/08.
- The administrative procedures for processing the application, as outlined in WI Stats. 91.13, have been followed.
- All State and local eligibility requirements have been met.

There was general discussion regarding the current Farmland Preservation Program and the application under consideration.

Motion to recommend that Chippewa County and DATCP approve the application as submitted: Holte/Marquardt. Motion carried.

Item #3 – Review Report on Status of Intermunicipal Storm Water Agreement Between Chippewa County and Eau Claire County; Consider Resolution to Authorize Renewal of Chapter 66.03 Intergovernmental Agreement to Implement a Joint Storm Water Education Program.

D. Masterpole presented and the Committee reviewed the following material, (distributed with 3/14/08 meeting mailing):

1. A report titled: Status of Activities Conducted Under A Chapter 66.03 Intermunicipal Agreement Between Chippewa County and Eau Claire County to Develop and Implement a Storm Water Public Education and Outreach Program, (LCD 3/13/08).

The status of activities accomplished through the agreement is as follows:

- Eau Claire County and Chippewa County have participated in monthly meetings of the "Chippewa Valley Storm Water Forum" from 5/1/06 to present.
- Through the forum, a joint storm water public education and outreach plan has been developed to meet the needs of all municipalities in the Chippewa Valley.
- All scheduled activities have been implemented (i.e. storm water tours, radio & TV broadcasts on storm water, education conference & training session).
- A state storm water education grant has been prepared and awarded to implement the joint storm water education program.

2. A revised agreement between Chippewa County and Eau Claire County, titled: Storm Water Management Public Education and Outreach Cooperative Agreement, (3/5/08). The purpose of the revised agreement is to further develop and implement a joint storm water education program, meeting the requirements of Wis. Admin Code NR 216.07.

Under this agreement, each of the twelve (12) municipalities in the Chippewa Valley, that are required to implement a storm water public education and outreach program (as a condition of an existing WPDES permit), will be invited to contribute to the project.

3. Example of draft addendum to the core agreement titled: Town of Washington Addendum to Storm Water Management Public Education and Outreach Cooperative Agreement.

Through the addendum, each municipality will be invited to:

- Participate in activities to develop and implement a storm water management public education and outreach program in the Chippewa Falls/Eau Claire urban area.
- Provide technical support and staff time for the implementation of activities.
- Pay \$1,512.50 p/yr. as its share of the project matching grant obligations.

4. Draft resolution titled: Resolution to Continue Chapter 66.03 Intermunicipal Agreement with Eau Claire County to Develop and Implement a Public Education and Outreach Program. The draft resolution recommends that:

- The Administrator be authorized to extend this effort by entering into a two (2) year Chapter 66.03 intermunicipal agreement, and
- The County determine the scope of its future program commitments and evaluate the different institutional arrangements that are available to manage a joint program on an ongoing base, and
- The LCC provide to the County Board an annual written report which outlines the status of activities that are being pursued through the agreement, and upon completion of the agreement, a final report which provides a recommendation regarding the continuation or termination of the agreement.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

- The scope of activities to be pursued through the agreement.
- The role of each County in the administration of Grant USP-LC-18-09000-08 (Eau Claire County lead; Chippewa County support).
- The project budget and matching grant requirements (70% state – 30% local).
- The anticipated level of interest by local municipalities.

Motion to approve and advance the resolution to continue the Chapter 66.03 intermunicipal agreement with Eau Claire: Dahl/Holte. Motion carried.

M. Dahlby presented and the Committee reviewed the following material, (distributed with 3/14/08 meeting mailing):

1. Draft document titled: Conceptual Working Draft, Policy and Procedure for Managing Conservation Easements Held by Chippewa County, (LCD 3/13/08). The general structure and scope of the policy content is as follows:
 - A. Introduction.
 - B. Policy Objective.
 - C. Easement Language.
 - D. Routine Communications and Ongoing Customer Service.
 - E. On-Site Monitoring.
 - F. Records Management.
 - G. Documentation and Voluntary Correction of Easement Violation.
 - H. Landowner Appeal Rights.
 - I. Urgent Response to Easement Violations.
2. An example of a post card format that will be used by the County in 2008 to communicate with clients with CREP conservation easements.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

- Elements of the policy that describe procedures for landowner notice and scheduled site reviews.
- Elements of the policy that describe procedures that will be used to seek compliance, in circumstances where terms of the easement are not met.
- The customer service messages and communication approaches that are best suited for easement management.

Item #5 – Consider Costs of Cash Grain Production; Discuss Method to Evaluate Adequacy of CREP Rental Rates.

M. Dahlby distributed and the Committee reviewed the following material:

1. Table titled: Average Production Costs and Returns of PEPS Participants for the Previous 15 Years, (WI Ag Statistics). The table provides the production costs in Wisconsin for seed, fertilizer, chemical, and land from 1993 – 2007.
2. Report titled: Production Costs and Return for “Best of the Best Producers” on their “Best of the Best” Fields, (LCD). The report lists the production costs, payment from sale of corn and soybeans, and return (profit or loss), as compiled from the best producers in the state. It also provides a table of current base rental rates and CREP rental rates for the land categories in Chippewa County.

J. Myers (FSA) distributed several handouts. The handouts contain the detailed information used to generate USDA program cropland rental rates for different areas of the County, based on soil type, irrigation status, and potential yield.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

- The cost of grain production and escalating land rental rates in Chippewa County.
- The current CREP rental rates.

Item #6 – Benchmark Report on the Status of the Chippewa County Groundwater Inventory Project.

J.T. Jensen presented a PowerPoint report on the status of the Chippewa County Groundwater Inventory Project.

The status is as follows:

- The sample collection phase is complete.
- All samples have been analyzed.
- Results have been mailed to participants.
- Public informational meetings have been held to explain the individual results.
- A full analysis of the sample results is now being conducted.
- A preliminary report of findings is anticipated before July 1, 2008.

There was general discussion.

Item #7 – Review Conservation Planning and Policy Initiative; Section 2006-2007 Land Conservation Committee Report of Activities.

D. Masterpole distributed and the Committee reviewed the long-range planning and policy section of a draft report titled: Chippewa County Land Conservation Committee – A Report of Activities, 2006 – 2007, (LCD 3/20/08). This section outlines the policy and planning work done by the LCC from 2006-2007.

There was general discussion.

Item #8 – Committee Communication and Acknowledgements.

P. Licht reported that she has been contacted by area producers who had heard about training sessions for nutrient management planning sponsored by the Eau Claire County LCC. These producers have asked whether Chippewa County will have a similar program in the future.

D. Masterpole indicated he would inquire about the funding sources used by Eau Claire County and determine the feasibility of Chippewa County producers attending training sessions sponsored by Eau Claire County, or other service providers.

Item #9 – Public Wishing to be Heard.

There was no public wishing to be heard.

Motion to adjourn: Boettcher/Dahl. Motion carried..

The meeting was adjourned at approximately at 5:20 p.m.