

Chippewa County Land Conservation
Committee Meeting
January 21, 2009

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, L. Willkom, at approximately 8:00 a.m. Members present were D. Boettcher, M. Goettl, E. Rineck, and L. Willkom.

Members absent were J. Brost, S. Lane, and P. Licht.

Agency staff present at times throughout the meeting were R. Brown and D. Clary (Zoning), M. Dahlby, D. Masterpole, H. Weiland, R. Yohnk, and J. Schemenauer - Recorder (LCD).

Others present were J. D. Armstrong and D. Swan (Chippewa Valley Chapter of Pheasants Forever).

Item #1 – Public Wishing to be Heard.

There was no public wishing to be heard.

Item #2 – Approve Minutes. Review Summary of Conservation Plans/Contracts/Agreements.

The minutes from the 12/17/08 meeting were presented. Motion to approve the 12/17/08 minutes: Boettcher/Goettl. Motion carried.

Staff presented and the LCC reviewed the following conservation easements contracts developed and accepted by the County to meet the conservation objectives of the landowners:

<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Tract</u>	<u>Town, Range, Section</u>	<u>Type</u>
G. Krumenauer	T1702	T28N, R8W, Section 26	Riparian buffers
J. Lane	T3877	T31N, R8W, Section 7	Full farm development protection

The Chair changed the order of the agenda.

Item #4 – Authorize Negotiations to Consider Right of First Refusal and Amend Conservation Easement; Lewis Property, T32N, R9W, Section 35.

D. Masterpole reported:

1. Chippewa County and West Wisconsin Land Trust (WWLT) now hold a full farm conservation easement on 240 acres, located in T32N, R9W, Section 35 (S. Lewis).
2. The LCD has received written notice that the owner now intends to sell the property. The owner has requested the WWLT and County to:
 - A. Amend the conservation easement to allow the property to be divided. The land division would allow the property to be split and sold as two (2) or more parcels. The conservation requirements would remain in place and be transferred with the parcels.
 - B. Extinguish the one “development right” that was reserved for development on the entire 240 acre property.

3. The purpose of the easement is to assure that the “Protected property will be preserved in perpetuity in its natural, scenic, forested, and open space condition and to prevent any use of the Protected property that will significantly impair or interfere with its conservation values”.

The easement restricts any activity on or use of the property inconsistent with the purpose of the easement.

4. The easement establishes five (5) management zones (Fishery Management Zone, Agricultural Zone, Residential Zone, Public Access Zone, and Restricted Access Zone) in the “Protected” property.
5. As a condition of the easement, the WWLT can not agree to any amendment of the easement without prior written concurrence from Chippewa County, acting through the Land Conservation Committee.
6. As a condition of the easement, Chippewa County has been assigned the Right of First Refusal and if interested, could purchase and/or convey all or part of the property.

There was general discussion regarding the terms of the easement. Additional discussion focused on the division of the land and possible changes to the easement that would be beneficial to the public.

Motion to:

1. Authorize the Land Conservation Department to negotiate with the West Wisconsin Land Trust (WWLT) and S. Lewis to develop a proposal that would maintain the stated purpose of the conservation easement and create new terms that would benefit the public, and
2. Present the proposal to the LCC for its consideration:

Rineck/Boettcher. Motion carried.

Item #6 – Review Application for 2009 Match Grant, Chippewa County Stewardship Fund; Pheasant’s Forever, Melville Property Acquisition; Hallie Marsh Wildlife Area; T28N, R8W, Section 16.

M. Dahlby introduced J.D. Armstrong and D. Swan (Chippewa Valley Chapter, Pheasant’s Forever).

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

1. Report titled: Staff Review of an Application Submitted by the Chippewa Valley Chapter of Pheasants Forever for a Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Local Match Grant in the Amount of \$50,000 Towards the Purchase of the 60 Acre Melville Property in Section 16, T28N, R8W, Village of Lake Hallie, (LCD 1/15/09). The report (on file) is an analysis of the grant request.
2. Map titled: Location of the 60 Acre Melville Property in Relation to Adjacent County & State Owned Land, (LCD 1/15/09). The map shows the location of the Melville property in proximity to adjoining State and County owned properties, (mailed 1/16/09).

The proposed project budget is as follows:

Appraised Fair Market Value (Estimate)	\$285,000.00
Miscellaneous Acquisition Expenses	\$4,077.00
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$289,077.00
Amount Requested from County	\$50,000.00 (17%*)
Total Sponsor Match Contribution	\$94,577.00 (33%*)
Includes anticipated funding from:	
-National Wild Turkey Federation (\$10,000)	
-Ducks Unlimited (\$10,000)	
-Additional Grants & Donations will be pursued	
Anticipated State Grant Contribution	\$144,500.00 (50%*)
*Percentage of total project costs	
TOTAL PROJECT REVENUE	\$289,077.00

The report concludes that all requirements, as established in the Year 2008 Annual Grant Application Evaluation Criteria, have been met by the applicant (mailed 1/16/09).

J.D. Armstrong and D. Swan presented the project and addressed questions from the Committee.

Under the proposal, the project would be open to the public and managed as part of the Lake Hallie Wildlife Area.

There was Committee discussion. Discussion focused on the location of the property and the public value of conserving it to connect other blocks of County and State land (Kemper's Woods and the Lake Hallie Wildlife Area).

Motion to award a \$50,000 match grant to the Chippewa Valley Chapter, Pheasant's Forever, as administered through the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Year 2008 grant cycle, to advance the Melville project: Goettl/Rineck. Motion carried.

Item #3 – Authorize Negotiations to Explore Public Paper Recycling Collection and Marketing Agreement.

R. Yohnk distributed and the Committee reviewed an analysis titled: An Analysis of Opportunities to Collect and Market Paper from the Chippewa County Facilities and Other Institutions, (LCD 1/21/09) (on file). The analysis was conducted to determine whether it is feasible and cost effective to coordinate the collection of paper generated from Chippewa County facilities and other public institutions, and to market the material to local brokers and industries.

The analysis concluded that it now is feasible and cost effective to pursue this opportunity. To proceed, the following steps would be taken:

1. Seek authorization to request RFP's or negotiate directly with interested vendor(s). If necessary, amend and consolidate existing waste disposal contracts. Develop new contracts to collect recycled paper products from Chippewa County facilities.
2. Educate County staff regarding proper separation of paper products. Improve signage in the Chippewa County facilities recycling centers.
3. Introduce a paper recycling program to the Highway Department.
4. Contact other institutions to determine if they may have an interest in exploring this arrangement, as coordinated by the County.

There was general discussion.

Motion to:

1. Authorize the Land Conservation Department to negotiate with a broker to collect recyclable paper from Chippewa County facilities and, at a later date, to approach other public institutions that may have a similar interest to collect and market the material, and
2. Work with the appropriate administrative authorities to create and enter contracts to collect and market the material:

Boettcher/Goettl. Motion carried.

E. Rineck left the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Item #5 – Review/Authorize Use of Proposed Wild Lakes Reserve Landowner Services Agreement.

M. Dahlby provided a brief history of the Chippewa County Wild Lakes Reserve. It is as follows:

1. On 2/21/08, the LCC reviewed the concept of a "Conservation Registry" and options for applying a registry to establish a wild lakes reserve to facilitate the voluntary protection of undeveloped lakes.
2. On 7/16/08, the LCC approved a county grant proposal that:
 - A. Authorized the LCD to seek grant funding over the next five (5) years for the Chippewa County Wild Lakes Reserve: Voluntary Conservation and Biologic Inventory Project, and
 - B. Directed the LCD to pursue a working agreement with non-profit conservation organizations (NCO's) and land trusts to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the county and land trusts, as needed to manage conservation easements on protected lakes.

3. On 7/31/08, the LCD applied for grants through the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources to fund a wild lakes reserve pilot project.
4. On 10/10/08, the LCD received notice that the grant proposals had been funded and incorporated the pilot project into the LCD 2009 budget and work plan.
5. On 11/7/08, the County entered and returned the grant agreements.

M. Dahlby reported that in 2008, the Beaver Creek Reserve developed and conducted a biological assessment on a parcel with several wild lakes in the Chippewa County Forest (John H. Thurman Wildlife Area). Based upon that experience, the Beaver Creek Reserve has expressed an interest in contracting to do the biologic inventories of wild lake properties, as currently planned under the pilot project.

M. Dahlby distributed and the Committee reviewed a draft agreement titled: Wild Lakes Reserve Stewardship Agreement, (LCD 1/16/09), (mailed 1/16/09).

The purpose of the agreement is to:

1. To permanently protect wild lakes and adjacent property from development so that high quality plant and animal communities remain intact and continue to provide valuable services, and
2. Create a baseline inventory of the physical, biological, and chemical characteristics of wild lakes and adjacent land.

Under the agreement, the County agrees to:

1. Provide planning and technical services to assist the landowner to manage the land described in an undeveloped site.
2. Provide direct consultation to assist the landowner to explore options for permanent protection of the lake and property.
3. Provide a written report that describes the physical characteristics of the lake and property.
4. Within the limits of available funds, arrange site assessments to provide a limnological overview of the lake and biological assessment of the property.
5. At the request of the landowner, provide Wild Lakes Reserve signs to be displayed on the property.

Under the agreement, the landowner agrees to:

1. Manage the land described above, in an undeveloped state, to preserve its ecological integrity and undisturbed, natural character.
2. Notify the reserve of any threats to the lake and surrounding land that may affect the water quality, ecology, or the scenic value of the property.
3. Inform the reserve of any intent or plans to sell the land or change the way in which it is used and managed.

The agreement is non-binding and can be cancelled at any time by either party.

There was general discussion regarding the pilot project and landowner interest.

Item #7 – Consider Revised Land and Water Resource Management Objectives, Chippewa County Land and Water Resource Management Plan.

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

1. Revised draft of “Section 4.4 – Resource Management Goals and Objectives”; Chippewa County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LCD 1/20/09) (on file). The draft establishes resource management objectives as follows:
 - 4.41 Land Management Objectives.
 - 4.42 Surface Water Management Objectives.
 - 4.43 Groundwater Management Objectives.
 - 4.44 Wetland Management Objectives.

It was noted that the resource management objectives were revised based upon comments received from the Citizen’s Advisory Committee, through its review conducted on 1/12/09.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. Proposed changes to the existing land management objectives made to:
 - Recognize and maintain the natural functions of the landscape.
 - Recognize and maintain the capacity of the land to support blocks of productive forests and agricultural “working lands” to sustain food, fiber, and renewable production.
2. Limited changes to the surface water and groundwater management objectives made to:
 - Recognize the hydrologic relationships between storm water runoff, groundwater recharge, groundwater storage/elevation, and stream base flow.

The revised resource goals and objectives will be revised to reflect LCC discussion.

It was noted that the land, water, and natural resource goals and objectives, as stated in the Land and Water Plan, could be conceptually retained and abbreviated to be included in the County Comprehensive Plan.

An initial working draft of “program goals and objectives” will be submitted and reviewed by the Citizen’s Advisory Committee on meetings scheduled 1/26/09 and 2/9/09. A public informational meeting will be scheduled the end of February, 2009, to provide an initial opportunity for public review and comment.

Item #8 – Committee Communication.

There was no correspondence or communication with other committees.

The next regularly scheduled LCC meeting is set for 2/18/09 at 8:00 a.m.

Motion to adjourn: Boettcher/Goettl. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately at 9:55 a.m.