

Chippewa County Land Conservation
Committee Meeting
August 19, 2009

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

Members absent were: S. Lane.

Agency staff present at times throughout the meeting were W.H. Reynolds (Administrator), M. Dahlby, D. Masterpole, D. Nashold, R. Yohnk, J.T. Jensen, and J. Schemenauer – Recorder, (LCD).

Others present were J. Bennesch and K. Schmitt.

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 of the 07/15/09 LCC meeting were presented Motion to approve the 07/15/09 meeting minutes: Boettcher/Rineck. Motion carried.

Staff presented and the LCC reviewed a table titled: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Contracts Completed for Approval in August, 2009, (LCD 8/09, on file). 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>Type</u>	NR151 <u>Eval.</u>
A. & S. Steinke	T50248	T29N	R7W	16	2.4	Easement	No
A. & A. Sime	T4676	T30N	R5W	6	30.5	Easement	No
J. Sime	T904	T60N	R5W	5	1.3	15 Year	No

Motion to accept the CREP field plan(s): Brost/Goettl. Motion carried.

D. Masterpole reported that:

1. The Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Board approved the 2009 Chippewa County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, (7/2/09), on 8/4/09.
2. The Contribution Agreement between the Chippewa County Land Conservation Department and the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service; (USDA), has been signed at the county level and has been returned to the USDA for signature.

Item #3 – Introduce Mission Statement(s) for Committee Consideration.

D. Masterpole distributed and the Committee reviewed a draft mission statement (LCD 8/14/09, on file). The mission statement was developed, at the request of the Executive Committee, so that it might be considered as part of the county's strategic planning process. The draft mission statement is as follows:

“The mission of the Chippewa County Land Conservation Committee is to encourage “stewardship for sustainability.”

“We provide the services that encourage people to make the conservation choices that benefit us all.”

There was general discussion.

Motion to accept the mission statement, as presented: Brost/Cronquest. Motion carried.

Item #4 – Review 2010 Budget Guidance and Status of Anticipated Revenue Streams.

J.T. Jensen distributed and the Committee reviewed the following material (on file):

1. Correspondence from W.H. Reynolds (Administrator), to Dept. Heads and County Board Supervisors, (8/3/09). The correspondence sets guidelines for the 2010 Chippewa County budget process.
2. Summary titled: Summary of Land Conservation Department Revenue Sources as Applied to Offset Service Costs, (LCD 8/19/09). The summary outlines the anticipated 2010 LCD revenue sources as follows:

Staffing and Operational Grants

- Grants received from public agencies to administer state regulatory programs.

Permits and Fees

- Permits and fees collected from rural landowners, municipalities, and private businesses for administration of regulatory and non-regulatory programs and technical services.

Service Contracts

- Service contracts with public agencies to perform tasks the agencies do not have time to complete.

Miscellaneous

- Landowner charges for specific tasks and services.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. The status of the 2010 block grants administered through DATCP and DNR, as used to fund staff to implement state mandates and administrative rules (Wis. Stats., 92, 281, 287).
2. The limited availability and high administrative costs of pursuing small, short-term, project-based grants.
3. The trade-offs associated with using permit fees (regulatory) and service fees (voluntary) to offset service costs.

It was agreed that staff would prepare draft 2010 budget proposals following the budget guidelines, and fully evaluate available revenue streams.

Item #5 – Review Record of Land Conservation Department Staffing Levels and Funding Sources.

J.T. Jensen distributed and the Committee reviewed a stickman figure titled: Diagram Illustrating Staffing Levels, 1990-2009, Land Conservation Department, (LCD 8/18/09, on file). The figure illustrates the number of staff positions in the Land Conservation Department from 1990 through 2009, and the funding source used to maintain each position.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. A decrease in LCD staffing levels that have occurred since 1990 as a result of declining state program support and county department consolidations.
2. An increase in state program mandates that have occurred during the same period, including NR 151 nonpoint pollution control, NR 135 non-metallic mining reclamation, and WPDES urban storm water management.
3. The status of a current transition that eliminates a recycling service contract (1/2 FTE) and expands the Recycling Coordinator position to the ¾ FTE range.

Item #6 – Introduce an Analysis of Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation Program Costs and Permit Fees Assessed Through the Chippewa County Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance.

D. Masterpole reported that in preparation for the upcoming budget process, staff will prepare a detailed analysis of non-metallic mine program costs and permit fees assessed through the Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance. The purpose of the analysis is to:

1. Compile existing information generated through a 2007 DNR program audit that documents historic program costs, and the proportion of these costs that were offset under the county fee structure in place at that time.
2. Identify the specific activities, hourly time commitments, current costs of issuing non-metallic mine permits, and the associated costs of verifying ongoing permit compliance.
3. Evaluate how these costs are now distributed to permitted facilities under the county's existing fee structure.
4. Identify options that could be considered by the Committee to adjust and/or amend the current fee structure to most equitably distribute program costs to individual permit holders.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. The methods that will be used to conduct the evaluation and the anticipated timeframe.
2. The advantages and disadvantages of indexing fees for inflation.

The analysis will be presented as part of the 2010 budget meeting.

W. H. Reynolds and J. Brost left the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Item #7 – 2009 Chippewa County Stewardship Fund; Overview of Current Activities and Project Status.

M. Dahlby distributed and the Committee reviewed the following material (on file):

1. Summary titled: Stewardship Fund Summary, 1999-2009, (LCD 5/1/09). The summary outlines the individual projects funded through the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund from 1999 – 2009.
2. Report titled: Overview of 2009 Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Current Activities and Project Status, (LCD 8/18/09). The report summarizes the purpose of the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund and outlines the status of current projects and program activities. The core content of the report is as follows:

Background

The Chippewa County Stewardship Fund was created to assist landowners, municipalities, local units of government, and nonprofit organizations to meet land conservation and resource management objectives by purchasing land in fee title or conservation easements.

2009 Program Activity

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| 1/21/09 | LCC evaluated and took action to award a \$50,000 match grant to the Chippewa Valley Chapter of Pheasants Forever for a project titled “Melville Acquisition of the Hallie Marsh Wildlife Area”. |
| 2/19/09 | LCC established the 2009 annual criteria for evaluating and selecting projects submitted to the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Local Match Grant Program. Class II notices of grant availability for 2009 were published in local newspapers. |
| 3/18/09 | LCC authorized staff to participate in a USFWS North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant application, pursuant to a grant project sponsored by the West Wisconsin Land Trust (WWLT) titled: “Lower Chippewa River Wetland Protection Partnership – Phase III”. |
| 5/20/09 | LCC received a staff report on the status of the 2008 McCann Creek Farmland Preservation Pilot Project (WWLT, 9/17/08), and the potential to augment county stewardship funds with 2009 USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program funds. |
| 5/20/09 | LCC evaluated and took action to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Accept a written offer of land donation, submitted by P. Peterlik, for the purpose of establishing a permanent conservation area for public use.2. Authorize the LCD and Corporation Counsel to prepare all necessary legal work, which may include an easement for ingress and egress, warranty deed, real estate transfer return, and execution of these documents by the Co. Administrator and Co. Clerk. |
| 7/15/09 | LCC took action to authorize a full narrative appraisal of the P. Peterlik property to be used as a basis for further evaluation of the management options. |

Project Status

1. Melville Acquisition of the Hallie Marsh Wildlife Area.
 - Closing scheduled for 8/27/09 with anticipated donation by Pheasants Forever's to DNR.
2. USFWS North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant project proposal.
 - Pending.
3. Donation of the "Paul and Lillian Peterlik Wildlife Area".
 - County took ownership on 7/6/09, appraisal to be completed by 10/30/09.
 - Management options under consideration.
4. WWLT McCann Creek Farmland Preservation Pilot Project.
 - Outside match funding secured.
 - Anticipated closing: First quarter of 2010.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. The status of Peterlik land donation.
2. The matching grant component of the County Stewardship Fund.

Item #8- Overview of Storm Water Facility Inventory and Inspections being Conducted to Meet WPDES Permit and Program Requirements.

D. Nashold presented a Power Point report (on file). The report outlines:

1. The procedures being used by the Land Conservation Department to inspect storm water facilities in the Chippewa Falls Urban Area, subject to WPDES program requirements.
2. The projected timeframe for completion (9/1/09).
3. The condition of the storm water facilities that have been inspected.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on:

1. Storm water construction design and facility installation.
2. Post-construction maintenance.

Item #9 – Committee Communication.

The Committee briefly discussed the materials presented at the joint meeting of the Building and Grounds, Highway, Forest & Parks, and Land Conservation Committees regarding possible department consolidation (8/6/09).

The Chair polled the members to determine their interest in holding or postponing a special LCC meeting scheduled for 8/21/09 to discuss consolidation options.

There was agreement by the members that the 8/21/09 LCC meeting be postponed, pending a recommendation from the Forest & Parks Committee.

A special LCC budget meeting was set for 9/1/09 at 1:00 p.m. to consider the 2010 LCC budget and an associated 2010 fee analysis.

The next regularly scheduled LCC meeting is set for 9/16/09 at 8:00 a.m.

Motion to adjourn: Goettl/Rineck. Motion carried.

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