

**MINUTES OF THE
LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
February 23, 2009**

Members Present: Chairman Tom Rudolph, Wilbur Petroskey, Matt Matteson, Jack Martinson, Rod Kuczarski, and Gary Baier

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Nancy Hollands (County Conservationist), Jean Hansen (Conservation Specialist), Jennifer Holman (AIS Coordinator), Barb Payne (Secretary), Kim Goerg (Lumberjack RC&D Coordinator), Ruth Sproull (News of the North), Mike Fugle (Corporation Counsel), and Kevin Gauthier (DNR Water Resources Management Specialist). Ben Brusio (TAG Member) was absent.

Call to Order

Chairman Rudolph called the meeting to order at 2:00 a. m. in Committee Room #1 on the second floor at the Oneida County Courthouse. He noted that the meeting of the Land and Water Conservation Committee has been properly noticed in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and meets the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Approve Agenda/Approve Minutes

Motion by Matteson, second by Petroskey to approve the current agenda with the order of agenda items at the discretion of the Chairman. Motion carried, all ayes.

Set date for next meeting

Chairman Rudolph noted the next meeting dates will be, Monday, March 16th at 1:00 p.m. and Wednesday, April 15th at 9:00 a.m.

Public Comments

No public available at this time to comment.

Update on AIS Grant application/Questions – Kevin Gauthier (DNR)

Rudolph introduced Kevin Gauthier to the Committee. Hollands had supplied Gauthier earlier with a bulleted list of questions that had been asked by the Supervisors of the County Board at their last meeting. Rudolph asked everyone present to introduce. Gauthier thanked the Committee for inviting him to speak. Gauthier explained to the Committee that he has worked closely with Oneida County in past and present with grants applications. Gauthier reported he spends most of his time with Oneida and Vilas Counties because they have the most lakes and the active Land & Water Conservation Departments. Gauthier reported he has six counties he works with in total. Gauthier stated he would like to start this meeting off with what the State provides for lake management for our area. Gauthier stated he functions in a technical guidance area. He is there to answer phone calls and attend meetings to provide technical guidance on best management practices or other lake management activities, whatever they might be. Gauthier stated they are also involved with the regulatory management. The State has the grants and that's where you get your work done. Oneida County has done quite a few grants through the grant program. Gauthier explained that is the system and how you get the work done. Gauthier oversees any grant that is submitted in the six county areas. Gauthier gave the Committee several handouts to use in the discussion. Gauthier continued to address the bullet list provided to him and to answer the Committee's questions. Gauthier was excused at 3:30 p.m.

Fire Department Workshops regarding the Dry Hydrant Ordinance (10.55)

Letter to Fire Chiefs Regarding the Workshops

Holman reported she had submitted a letter to all of our fire chiefs and town chairs letting them know she will be hosting three workshops. Holman reminded everyone she was on medical leave for a month and a half and did not have an opportunity to sit in with the fire chiefs before she came back. To go through the training with them. Holman stated she had asked the fire chiefs what they felt was the best approach in getting all the fire departments together? They suggested Holman put together workshops in three different locations. A press release was sent out. Holman passed around one example of all the letters that was sent out to the fire chiefs, the sheriff's department, to emergency management, and to the town chairs. The first workshop is in Three Lakes on February 25th, the second workshop is in Woodruff on February 26th, and the third workshop is in Rhinelander on March 9th. The workshop will start at 6:30 p.m. will and continue until everyone involved is satisfied with the training. Committee discussion followed.

WI Lakes Convention Poster

Holman reported as a follow up to last month's meeting report. Holman had submitted an abstract regarding our Tanker Truck Dry Hydrant Ordinance as the tanker trucks and dry hydrants as possible vectors in the spreading of AIS and our efforts in Oneida County to protect our waterbodies. Holman's abstract was selected as one of the posters to be presented at Wisconsin Lakes Convention later this month. Holman reported the slides that were part of the MRBP presentation in Texas will be used as a template for two signs that will be made to be used for the poster at the Wisconsin Lakes Convention. Holman reported that we are currently waiting for a price quote on having these posters made. Committee discussion followed.

Holman's Presentation for the MRPB Panel & MRBP Boat Survey Grant

Holman reported they were extremely interested in everything we are doing here in the Oneida County to protect our lakes. Holman stated she was extremely honored and she stated the Committee should also feel honored that she was allowed to present on behalf of Oneida County. Holman stated it was a very rare privilege for State and Feds to allow a local government to speak to them about an issue. Holman reported that the Coast Guard is extremely interested in using these protocols in terms of treating their barges. The presentation lasted approximately 30 minutes, but the actual dialog went along with the presentation was about two and half hours. Holman stated they felt at a loss for words that they did not think of this as a potential to spread AIS. They also acknowledged giving tremendous credit to Oneida County for thinking of this as a possible vector in the spreading of AIS. They hope to present this at a National level in the attempt to get the information distributed.

In regards to The Boater's Survey Grant, the State of Wisconsin did not go after this grant. The MRBP puts aside \$10,000 every year for two states to go after a boater's survey. Whereas, the survey relates as to how many boaters are coming into our inland bodies of water from the Great Lakes. The MRBP asked Holman to put together a proposal. Holman stated however, she only had one day to accomplish this proposal. They are going to give Oneida County \$5,000 to do this survey and there is no match required. Holman said one of her greatest concerns is that we can not go after funding in regards to the Great Lakes Basin. Our inland lakes are infected because of the Great Lakes. Holman stated when she presented it to the Federal level they said this survey is the best way to show the documentation. The survey would show that there is a heavy amount of traffic coming from the Great Lakes to Oneida County and fishing here. Secretary Franks, State DNR, stated we are the second destination in the entire country for fishing. So the majority of our boaters are coming at some point from a Great Lake. This is money the Federal Government is funding to obtain the documentation needed. Committee discussion followed.

Update on AIS Grants/Budget/Activities/Dan Meyer Letter

Kevin Gauthier, DNR, covered AIS grants earlier in the meeting. Holman stated Wisconsin Association of Lakes contacted her to submit a letter supporting the "Clean Lakes Bill." Holman stated she had drafted the letter and sent it to Rudolph to review. Rudolph made some minor adjustments. The legislators are voting on this bill on February 24th. This bill is in regards to phosphorus in fertilizers. Holman passed copies of the letter which was sent to Dan Meyer around to the Committee. Holman stated Dan Meyer has been in correspondence with her since she started to work for Oneida County. Meyers wrote a letter in support our grant application for \$200,000. Rudolph stated WLWCA's Executive Director, Julian Zelazny reported this bill is moving right along through the legislative process. Zelazny expects this bill will be approved very early in the legislative sessions.

Holman stated she had a last minute request for a letter from the Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources from Washington DC. His staff was requesting information on Oneida County AIS Transportation Ordinance in a letter format as well as the history. It is going to be discussed in front of Congress. Holman passed out copies of this letter to the Committee. Committee discussion followed.

Holman was excused at 3:45 p.m.

Update on State Aid Program Cuts & Staffing Impact

Rudolph reported he had attended a meeting of the Land & Water Board held in Madison last Friday. This was a special meeting to deal with the allocations for staffing grants and cost share monies for 2009, and also looking ahead to the 2010, and 2011 State Biennial Budget. Rudolph stated at the last meeting he had distributed copies of what he had received from

DATCP by email. Basically the information he had been provided from DATCP is fairly accurate. There were a few changes that apparently have been made. Rudolph stated that it looks like the 2009 monies that are available to us will be about the same. In 2010 and 2011 State Biennial Budget there will be some fairly drastic cuts. Rudolph reported that one of the proposals is to eliminate support funding for the State Land & Water Conservation Board. The proposal is the Board would be replaced by a Council. They feel this would reduce the support needs. Most of the Land & Water Conservation Board members are shocked at this proposal, because the Board has just spent the about a year and a half developing a strategic plan for the future of the Land & Water Board which would strengthen its input as far as the land water resource management in the counties is concerned. Streamlining the process where the LWCB would have a stronger influence in the new proposed Farmland Preservation initiative. The proposed Land & Water Council that would replace the Land & Water Board overall would be reduced from eleven members to nine. In itself is not that critical, but what is important and very detrimental to the counties is that this new council would have only one representative from the counties on that council. The Land & Water Board now has three representatives from the counties that are elected by the State Land & Water Conservation Committees to the Land & Water Board. There will be three members appointed by the Governor for staggered four year terms, one representing an agriculture organization, one representing an environmental organization, one will be appointed by the Governor representing county government, and the one representative for county government would not necessarily come from a Land & Water Conservation Committee. It could be anyone in County Government and they would not necessarily have any association with land and water conservation. The additional people on the new council would be the Secretary of DATCP, the Secretary of DNR, the Dean of UW College of Ag Sciences, and the Director of UWEX, and the non voting members will be State Conservationist for NRCS, and the other non voting member would be Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency. This new council, unlike the present Land & Water Conservation Board would have little or input in the reviewing of the counties Land & Water Resource Management Plans. Rudolph also it is unclear if the Water & Resource Management Plans from the counties would even continue as they are in the State Statutes right now. Rudolph stated that all this is certainly not in the best interest of Land & Water Conservation and at the County level it diminishes the input and representation from the grassroots level from the counties. It relegates our representation to the Madison bureaucracy and their federal bureaucrats. Rudolph doesn't think that is the direction we want to go in Wisconsin's Land & Water Conservation. Rudolph stated the LWCB will be very active with this issue in the upcoming months. Committee discussion followed.

Approval of invoices, purchase orders, and line item transfers

Motion by Petroskey, second by Baier to approve the invoices as presented. Motion carried; all ayes.
A list of the approved bills is attached to the minutes.

Public Comments

Kim Goerg, Lumberjack RC&D Coordinator, reminded the Committee there will be a Lumberjack RC&D meeting in Shawano on April 30th. Goerg reminded everyone Lumberjack RC&D will be hosting the September council meeting here in Rhinelander at the Quality Inn (formerly the Holiday Inn Express). Tours are scheduled to be held to demonstrate on the types of Conservation practices being used in the Northwoods. There will be some very good programs held. There is also a meal served. Goerg stated Holman will be present to give a presentation. Goerg reported the annual audit is currently underway.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m. Motion by Martinson, second by Petroskey. Motion carried, all ayes.

Wilbur Petroskey
Vice Chairman

Nancy Hollands
County Conservationist