

Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee
February 8, 2016
Minutes

Committee members present: Chairman Tom Rudolph, Bob Mott, Robb Jensen, and Scott Holewinski, and Kim Simac. Jim Intrepidi excused.

Others present: Lynn Feldman, Michele Sadauskas, Matt Peplinski, Karl Jennrich, and Merry Lehner.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rudolph at 1:30 p.m. noting the meeting has been properly posted and the facility is handicap accessible.

Approve Agenda: Motion by Mott/Jensen to approve today's agenda with the order of the items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

Approve Minutes: Motion by Mott/Holewinski to approve the amended 1/11/16 Meeting minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

Approve Minutes: Motion by Holewinski/Jensen to approve the amended CNRED Meeting Minutes of 1/20/16. A chart listing employees in each county will be emailed to Committee. All ayes; motion carried.

Date(s) of future meetings:

March 14, 2016	1:30 p.m.	UWEX Conference room
April 11, 2016	1:30 p.m.	UWEX Conference room

DATCP Update:

Sadauskas did not have any updates and things are going smoothly. One permit has been completed. Another permit will be held until Spring due to the DNR having to check on certain items.

Speaking and Poster Contest – Michele Sadauskas

Last week judging was completed on both the Conservation and Environmental Awareness Poster and Speaking contests. The poster contest was open to all Oneida County public, private and home schooled students in kindergarten through twelfth grade and the speaking contest to grades five through twelve. Two speakers are traveling to the North Central Land and Water Conservation Association, Area Speaking Contest on February 12, 2016. They are Ellie Lurvey, Sugar Camp School and Grace Hoger, Rhinelander High School. The area contest will be in conjunction with the North Central Land and Water Conference, in Stevens Point. Robb Jensen will represent Oneida County and Kim Simac, Vilas County. The winners from that contest will move on to the State contest, in Elkhart Lake, WI on March 2. Oneida County had three divisions for posters, where a first place contestant and two speakers from Sugar Camp will go down to the Area competition. The participation of students increased for the poster contest. More promotion in the speaking contest would be great to see in the future.

LWCD and P & Z Department Merger Update:

Jennrich will be meeting with Land and Water this week. Vacancy review paperwork has been completed and submitted to LRES. It will be discussed with LRES on Wednesday February 10, for the County Conservationist position and job description.

Oneida County Land & Water Resource Management Plan

Jennrich received a memo from Lisa Trumble with DATCP on the County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2012-2016. The Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan will expire on December 31, 2016. The County has an option to file an extension or update the full plan. Two options exist. A five-year extension or a three-year extension; the staff are opting for the three year extension. The staff believes that due to future staffing changes and the department merge, it would be beneficial to develop a new plan when changes are complete. A review of the county's current plan goals and future goals will be spelled out. The Committee will need to recommend an authorization of this option. The department can then reply by phone or via a power point presentation. No formal presentation is necessary. A motion made by Jensen/Holewinski to recommend three year extension. All ayes; motion approved.

Staff Report – What's New on Our Website:

Sadauskas reviewed the two department websites for Land and Water: <http://www.oclw.org/> landing page and the main webpage www.oneidacountyais.com. The department put a lot of work into the website this summer when Ben Jeffries was in the office. The first one, www.oclw.org, is the What's Buzzing page where information can be found about the poster contest, a link to the pollinator grant, the Cost Share Program, and the speaking contest. This is also where one can access aquatic and terrestrial invasive species information. Other points of interest direct one to the home page, youth programs, equipment rentals, well abandonment. The second website is the AIS site for the county which has been up and running for several years at www.oneidacountyais.com. AIS updates are found here and reach about 300 people. There is information on aquatic invasive species with links to specific species for more detailed information. It is where one can access Clean Boats-Clean Water information. Another popular link is "What is in My Lake" and lists all the lakes in Oneida County. This can be expanded to every county in the state. The AIS websites lists all the monitoring reports on county lakes. It lists the specific species that have been found in the lakes monitored from last summer, complete with mapping links with very detailed information. The lake groups in the county have the advantage of accessing this for detailed information about their own lake, if it has been monitored, for water clarity and invasives.

Consent Agenda Items-Land and Water:

The Consent Agenda Items were presented to the Committee. The DNR no longer lends out rake handles used for lake monitoring so the department will have to purchase a rake handle from the DNR. Line item transfers were for the Pollinator grant and the Farmland Preservation approved through Finance. A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda items a, b, c, and d by Jensen/Mott for Land and Water. All Ayes; motion carried.

Agency Reports:

NCLWCA: The area poster and speaking contest and business meeting will take place on Friday, February 12, 2016 in Stevens Point. Robb Jensen will attend as a Committee member and Karl Jennrich will attend from the department; attendance is a good educational investment.

Lake Districts: Mid Lake will have a meeting Wednesday night, Bear Lake has a meeting on February 27, an April meeting is scheduled for Horse Head Lake, and Thunder Lake has no current meeting scheduled.

FSA: Peplinski gave an update on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) where enrollment continues through the end February. They have completed all their producer meetings in our area. The new commodity program, the (ARCPLC), still has open enrollment, which started last June. Producers are able to choose coverage from the safety net programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. They can visit FSA county offices to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016. The enrollment period deadline is August 1.

Oneida County producers who have signed up are at 80% and Peplinski plans to have it completed by the end of March. Farm ownership microloans are a new program being offered. This creates a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. Microloans will be especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking to farm, and for small and mid-sized farming operations. As of January the loans up to \$50,000 can be used for small real-estate purchases or as a down payment on larger land tracts. Peplinski was excused at 2:00 p.m.

WLWCA: Rudolph was in Reno, NV last week representing the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association at the NACD annual meeting. Between board and committee meetings, he was only able to attend the general session meetings. The highlight was the Pollinator Decline Resolution, which was previously approved in Indianapolis, and now was also approved at the annual meeting. He testified at the Natural Resources hearing committee regarding that resolution and received much appreciated support. Rudolph said that by someone removing the word "agricultural" from the management practices verbiage, it broadened the scope of natural resources to include forestry. The resolution was passed unanimously by the committee. Pollinators now will apply to the national policy once approved by the board.

RC&D: A state meeting was held on January 27 and three people from Lumberjack attended. On January 28, the Lumberjack Council meeting was held in Shawano, where all the grant applications were reviewed. They awarded \$75,000 in grants in total, for eight different projects, which included our Land and Water Conservation Pollinator Project applied for by Jean Hansen. It will be carried out in Three Lakes. Revenue comes in from the forest service money which is funneled through the DNR and enables Lumberjack to offer these grants.

WACEC: There was a board conference call on January 29 for an update on the UW-Extension Re-Organization. The plan is moving forward. The state association meeting is planned for April 1.

Consent Agenda Items - UW-Extension:

Agenda items were presented to the Committee. Feldman addressed the question again from last month about the \$19,430 amount regarding the contract money. It is related to how state and county fiscal calendars dates are not synchronized so a line item transfer has to be sent through in April to offset this outstanding amount. A motion was made by Mott/Simac to approve the UW-Extension Consent agenda items a, b, c, and d. All ayes; motion approved.

Sadauskas and Jennrich were excused at 2:45 p.m.

Broadband:

The Broadband Committee meeting was held on Monday. Northwoods Connect reported that they have 85 customers on the three towers and 20 people using the tower here. They just added new technology onto the Nokomis tower where it will penetrate better through the forest. They will use that tower site to microwave up to Squirrel Hill. They are in the process of ordering a tower for the town of Newbold. A project in Pine Lake is planned to develop broadband service and to raise matching dollars with an interest group. Northwoods Connect is hiring another installation person and an office person to keep up with the demand. They will not be doing the project in Three Lakes. Their committee is working on the next round of grants in the amount of six to ten million dollars this year, for broadband. Federal money for current private providers is upgrading the middle mile instead of the final mile of development. They plan to use copper wire instead of fiber optic, as they do not see it profitable to go the final mile for the northern third of the state. The OCDEC did approve a revolving loan fund from the sale of ABX to move on with more projects.

Air Quality:

Daniel Karamanski with the State will be here tomorrow at noon until Friday to take 20 air samples in three areas of the office. There will also be a baseline test taken. Only 20 tests will be conducted due to budget issues and staff availability where only six state hygienists are able to analyze the tests. Until the results of the tests are back no further action will be taken. The tests will take place at peak times, not throughout the day. It will coincide with when the flights are present at the airport. These new tests are supposed to pick up nitrogen dioxide. The results will be back by March 15. Based on what the report shows we will be able to determine where to go from here. Irritants and allergens are the two factors that affect people. State employees have the approval and support to work from home due to the office environment. Richie, therefore, has opted to work from home, except on occasions where she must be in office, due to air quality. Alexander leaves the office to work at home when affected by the fumes. The support staff has left the office several times when conditions have been uncomfortable. Workers Compensation forms have been completed by the two County employees and submitted to LRES. They have the option to work on the county computers at the courthouse, when fume are present. Feldman will keep Committee posted.

Is it any better than last year? The new wall constructed has prevented fumes from coming through the back storage rooms into the office area, but now fumes are more prevalent elsewhere. An agent, who is sensitive chemicals he was exposed to earlier in his career, is using a special air filtering system in his office. Feldman may look into these filtering systems for the other staff to use. The negative pressure fan is now operating but it is not known if it has helped the situation.

Fair Update:

The Fair Coordinator, Gehrig, signed her contract and will now require recommendation for approval by the Committee and signatures. The first contract had generic language where there was a clause about paying workers compensation and it should not have been included in the verbiage. Gehrig's insurance agent advised her that she did not have to pay workers compensation, and Brian Desmond agreed. This language was deleted. Gehrig paid for this coverage for the past two past years, out of pocket, and Intrepid is looking into possible reimbursement for her. Gehrig does pay for liability insurance. The carry-over from 2014 to last year was \$5,400.17. We received the final figure from Finance showing a balance is \$122.18. This includes \$349.00 that came off of 2015 books to pay for the set up crew from McNaughton Correctional. The books run on an accrual system so this correct figure was not reflected until the January report. The carryover amount of \$5,448.17 is listed at the top of the County report and does not show up in the actual balances. It is treated more like a "savings account" and it does not show as part of the running balance on the reports. The \$122.18 will be carried over to next year. This year county will put in \$13,600.00, where last year the county contribution was \$14,372.00. The fair is not self-supporting; there still are tax dollars going towards it. This year the carnival contract will be different and we will not pay \$10,000 up front and the wristband sales will be handled differently. In lieu of advertising, the Fair will be looking for entertainment sponsors this year. In the past advertising was sponsored. There are more expenses due to our county not having a fairground, like Vilas County, who owns their park. Rudolph felt it was great idea to get sponsors for specific events. It works well with other area events and should help the Fair. The bottom line: \$5,448.00 was available from the County for the Fair, but it was not used. The Fair Treasurer and Extension Secretary show the same balances, but the Finance department reports balances on the County books in a different way. This, again, is due to the county contribution figure being treated like a "savings account" listed at the top of the report and is not reflected in the balance shown on the report generated by the Fair Treasurer.

UW Extension Reorganization Update:

Feldman reviewed the re-organization update since the webinar last week. A question was asked last week in the webinar about how staff will be reduced without layoffs. There will be layoffs. A total of 80 people are thought to be eliminated, but 40 have already been reduced through attrition.

Public Comment: None

Items to include on next agenda:

Fair Planning Update, Cost Share, Air Quality, LWC/P&Z, and Broadband.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn by Mott/Holewinski was made at 3:45 p.m. All ayes; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,


Merry J. Lehner, Recording Secretary


Bob Mott, Committee Vice Chairman