

**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee**  
**JUNE 15, 2020 at County Board Room**  
**Minutes**

**Committee members present:** Chairman Bob Mott, Jim Winkler, and Mitch Ives, Bob Thome, Jr. and Stephanie Sowatzka via Zoom.

**Others Present:** Art Lersch, Myles Alexander, Michele Sadauskas, Karl Jennrich, JoAnne Lund, Fred Andrist, Jeff Verdoorn, and Merry Lehner. The following attend via Zoom: Anne Williams, Terri Kolb, Carrie Kubacki, Karly Harrison, Mary Stys, and Baerbel Ehrig.

**Call to order:** Chairman Mott called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was posted properly and the facility is handicapped accessible.

**Approve Agenda:** A motion by Winkler/Ives to approve the agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

**Approve Minutes:**

Winkler/Ives made a motion to approve 3/9/20 CUW Committee meeting minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

**Future Meetings:**

Monday, July 13 2020	1:00 p.m.	Location pending
Monday, August 10, 2020	1:00 p.m.	Location pending

**Introduction of new FSA Representative:**

The Oneida-Florence-Forest-Vilas (OFFV) County Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee (COC) has a new member, Jason Neilitz, who will represent FSA on the Oneida County Land Conservation Committee, as his schedule allows. He will replace former FSA member, Kim Simac.

**Introduction of New Committee Members:**

The established Committee members introduced themselves, followed by the new members.

Bob Mott has been on the CUW Committee since 2012 and has chaired since 2016.

Jim Winkler is in his fifth year as member and a former Extension 4-H Youth Development educator of 35 years.

Mitch Ives is a District 12 Supervisor, a lifetime resident of Rhinelander and is in his third term with CUW.

Robert Thome, Jr. represents District 11 and it is his first time on the County Board.

Stephanie Sowatzka served on the Lake Tomahawk Board for two terms and she is happy to be here for the first time.

**Health Department letter to Town of Stella:**

Bob Mott received a phone call from the town of Stella, who he had contacted regarding the spreading of septage on frozen, snow-covered ground, which is only permitted in emergency situations. Mott has attended numerous seminars regarding nitrates in wells, stemming from septage and farm runoff. There are adverse health conditions from nitrates in water such as shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome, and some cancers. The town of Stella has invited him to attend a meeting in July, 2020. There were some previous legal actions on file, but nothing became of them. There could be some action taken this time.

**LTE Staffing Requests:**

Sadauskas stated that the Limited Term Employees (LTEs) for the department, at the moment, need some additional work on the hours. Due to COVID-19, LRES allowed verbal approval by Committee Chairs for the staffing requests. There are a total of 3103 hours available for Limited Term Employees. There are two AIS LTEs at 800 & 600 hours, respectively. Another LTE position is for Baerbel Ehrig at 1200 hours. Jonna Jewell also holds an LTE staff position. The final numbers will be finished in a few days and Sadauskas will have it sent to Mott. Mott asked the Committee for their verbal approval to the Committee and will pass it onto Labor Relations Employee Services, (LRES).

## **Appointments:**

- Nomination of Vice Chair: Jim Winkler was nominated by Bob Thome for the position of Vice Chair for the Committee. Mott asked if there were any other nominations for Vice Chair and none were placed. It was moved that the nomination would be closed. It was unanimous and Jim Winkler was voted in. All Ayes; motion carried.
- Selection of North Central Land and Water Conservation Assoc. (NCLWCA) Representative and Alternate Mott was elected as president last week. Mott will be the new representative. Nomination and the Eight grants a year with seven counties. Nomination for representative and alternate. Bob Thome nominated Jim Winkler. No other nominations and was a unanimous ballot. Motion carried; all ayes. Mitch moved to be an alternate, no other nominations. Closed, unanimous. All ayes; motion carried.
- Selection of Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Representative and Alternate Lumberjack serves Florence, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano and Vilas Counties in Northeast Wisconsin. They had eight grants a year within the seven counties in the past. Bob Thome nominated Jim Winkler. No other nominations were placed and it was a unanimous ballot. Motion carried; all ayes. Mitch moved to be an alternate with no other nominations placed. Closed, as unanimous. All ayes; motion carried.

## **LWCD Update – LTE Introductions and Grant Update:**

Stephanie Boismenu introduced the AIS limited term employees for this summer.

Aubrey Nycz, from Lake Nokomis, where she is a first grade teacher, is returning for her fifth year as an AIS LTE Lead Project Assistant.

Rachel Cook, a new AIS employee, will be the AIS Project Assistant. She is a new graduate from UW Stevens Point where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Biology, Biochemistry, and French. The AIS team will be busy this summer with outreach programs, Clean Boats Clean Waters, lake monitoring, and AIS management.

Joanne Lund was introduced as the new LTE specialist who will be involved with the River Grant Project that was awarded last year. She received her BA at UW Madison in Zoology and a Masters in insect ecology from Texas State University. She returned to Wisconsin and worked with the Forest Service for 20 years involved in wildlife conservation and climate change work. Sadauskas stated that the river crossing and stream grants work will be extended September through October due to the limitations of the past few months.

Baerbel Ehrig has been an LTE with Oneida County Land and Water Conservation team as a Pollinator Project Coordinator since 2016 and has helped to increase habitat for pollinator species. Ehrig now will work with the two-year Lakes Grant, which may be extended to three years due the delays caused by COVID. Her emphasis will be on lakeshore restoration. She will work with associations and landowners. The Lakes Grant will assess County lakes and classify them for shoreline improvement, promote the Healthy Lakes Initiative, and County Cost Share Program. Land and Water and its partners will work to improve water quality, create wildlife habitat, and reduce erosion on shoreline properties.

## **Cost Share Update:**

Charest Reimbursement Approval \$3,306.77. Charest project was just completed. They are asking for approval from Committee for the little bit of funding that is left. Asking for an ok on the \$1,000 deposit to be refunded. Sadauskas was on site last week and everything looks pretty good. The original project was for \$8,000 and an additional \$4,000 was left over. Total cost share monies to project were \$12,000. A motion was made by Ives/Winkler to approve the remaining funding and refund the deposit as stated. All ayes; motion carried.

## **2020 Projects/Site Visits**

Project updates: Sadauskas stated that they have had an uptick in requests. There are 15 people who have requested site visits. The Star Journal recently had an article in their Living on the Lake series that had a nice article on working with private landowners to protect the lake and shoreline improvements. L&W has cost share funding of \$50,850 available. There are three projects lined up that qualify. The projects are on the Wisconsin River, Diamond Lake, and Two Sisters Lake. Many site visit requests came from Pelican Lake after the storms.. Some of visits did not have that much wrong with the shorelines and needed minimal improvements. The status of the Blue Lakes condo project was queried and Sadauskas replied that they forfeited the money.

### **Oneida County LWCD 2020 Work Plan:**

Sadauskas stated that this 2020 report is more for information and for their annual DATCP application. The five-year work plan passed last year and has more detailed information. Mott asked about water quality, ground water and mining. Sadauskas will report mining updates on their website, once Planning and Zoning has final versions to post. Jennrich is making site visits. Mott wants to be sure ground water is protected. He asked where things are related to mosquito patrol signage and wanted to ensure that their work on protecting pollinators is not compromised send out the 5-year Work Plan to new Committee members.

### **Consent Agenda Items: (Land and Water Conservation)**

Sadauskas explained to new Committee members that their monthly reports show money going in and money going out, so there are negative and positive numbers on the monthly report. Grants will overlap year to year so this is why the numbers look odd. For the June financials, Dave Hintz approved monthly budget reports and invoices/purchases.

### **Report on Fair Committee – Jim Winkler and Fred Andrist**

Winkler announced that since the Fair had to be cancelled they are planning a “virtual fair” for 2020. More information on this will be presented at the next meeting. The Fair continues to persue obtaining a 501(c)(3) status for the Fair to be a nonprofit organization. Bill Freudenberg has been in communication with Brian Bennett, Attorney at Law. By the end of August, the Fair would like to become an LLC, limited liability corporation. Fred Andrist said that the process has begun and they started to have conversations with County to become an independent organization. They are working on an exit agreement and discussion. Tom Weinsch had some questions that Andrist will need to address and has follow up before more can be discussed. The Exit Agreement would be effective January, 2021.

There are two Staffing Requests for LTE positions of Secretary and Treasurer to be approved the same as last year. These will be presented to LRES for approval for 2021 and if their status changes, they can be amended.

This Thursday night, June 18, the Fair will meet for their business plan and economic plan. The Strategic Plan was completed for pre-covid normality, per Myles Alexander. They will have to look at it again with the current environment. The Fair will be back for 2021. The new carnival vendor has committed to Rhinelander and one day in Minocqua in 2021.

### **Consent Agenda Items Fair:**

No new Fair members have been added to the Fair Committee. Dave Hintz approved June monthly budget reports and invoices/purchases. Mott asked the Committee to verbally accept the two LRES positions for 2021 Fair Secretary and Treasurer. Mott moved to approve the LTE positions as described, and move onto LRES. Winker seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

### **Education Introductions & Highlights:**

Myles Alexander presented and introduced the Committee to the Extension Staff. Each educator presented on their program area and what they have been doing as their normal course of work. A second page covered what they have been doing during the COVID-19 Pandemic and how programs transitioned to on-line and virtual classes in place of meeting face-to-face.

Karly Harrison: FoodWise Coordinator for Florence, Forest, Vilas, and Oneida Counties. The program has two Nutrition Educators: Mary Stys who is new to Oneida County at 20% and was added due to Oneida County having the most SNAP-Ed eligible individuals. Terri Lindner has been with the County for nearly 20 years and works at 50%. FoodWise is held within the Division of Extension but they are a federally funded program 100% through the SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Education Program) or Food Share. Those funds cover their salaries, benefits, any direct education programing costs, mileage, and program supplies. Oneida County provides office space and supplies, and IT assistance. The Division of Extension, FoodWise Program is providing nearly \$38,000 for the 2020 Agreement.

Highlights include their provision of nutrition education to a total of 416 elementary students at Central, Pelican, and Crescent Elementary schools. They survey fifth graders to report better food choice changes. Those numbers are down due to COVID-19 shortening the school year. They anticipate providing services to Three Lakes and Minocqua next year, given the current economic conditions. They will begin providing on-line education, pending approval. Food Safety information was shared with partners such as Social Services and WIC, to offer more education to the community.

Professional development will be their focus for the future. They engage with the County Farmers' Markets to promote the EBT program to increase healthy food access for individuals on a limited income. They will begin a cross state FoodWise initiative to exchange information and see how the COVID-19 response was best handled. Mott asked how much money the SNAP-Ed Food Share bring to Oneida County federally. Harrison will report back to Mott.

Myles Alexander: Community Development - Communities Senior Outreach Specialist at 100% with the County. Alexander said that most of his programming is about capacity building with non-profits and other organizations within the County. He is currently working on how to position the Northwoods to recover from the effects of COVID-19 pandemic. Mott asked about the Design Team for Three Lakes. Alexander provided an update and plans for on-line alternatives will replace the September, 2020 Wisconsin Design Team event. They are in the process of developing that and coming back with a presentation to the community several weeks later. Alexander will assist with the implementation and follow up.

Terri Kolb: Health & Well Being Educator serving Oneida, Forest, and Vilas Counties. Kolb started in January, 2020. She has been preparing program planning and professional development in her new position. With COVID-19 limitations, it has helped her to focus on meeting with people individually and attending partnership and coalition meetings. She has learned where the strengths are in programs and where there are needs. She will move forward to provide leadership, educational outreach, promote good mental health, and continue to prioritize working with the County AODA Coalition. She is working with Heidi Rideout in Social Services to address family planning as it relates to substance/opioid abuse where 86% of women end up with unplanned pregnancies. Kolb completed trainings for "Raise Your Voice" which promotes building mental health resources and "Taking Care of You" to develop mental health and wellness by reducing stress. She is training at Lakeland Union High School for the CAST program, Coping and Support Training, offering small group training to students to build resilience and skills for high-risk teens. Kolb plans to offer CAST to Rhinelander High School. Mott asked about upcoming school year and that is pending.

Carrie Kubacki: Health and Wellness educator in Langlade County, Positive Youth Development, Oneida County. Kubacki is the Coordinator of the Oneida County Teen Court, where most of her time was devoted for the past year and a half. In the five months of the 2019-2020 school year, Teen Court had 25 volunteer youth panelists participate in cases. There were 10 panelists from Lakeland High School, 14 from Rhinelander, and 1 home-schooled panelist. Surveys from the youth panelists show they are benefiting from the program. Families surveyed, that went through the system, gained increased awareness about how the juvenile justice system works. Juvenile intake was cancelled for April, May and June. Per Patti Finlan, the County plans to start meeting in July. Depending on whether the Dean from UW Madison Extension allows them to meet with youth, Kubacki plans on meeting with Teen Court in July, or at the beginning of the school year. Kubacki has created and revised policies for the Teen Court program. Using guidelines established by the WI Teen Court Association, she created position descriptions for herself, Tillmann, and panelists. This way, a structure is in place with sustainability for the future. She reviewed the COVID-19 efforts in her positions with both counties and composed information for the public and resources for the schools. It will help teens cope with stress-management ideas, through videos, virtual meetings, newspaper articles, and school newsletters. Kubacki is hosting a virtual Taking Care of You class.

Alexander introduced Williams summarizing her involvement in 4-H as a youth, and her education background. She has been involved in youth development, community outreach, program development, environmental education, and journalism, working as a newspaper reporter. She formerly was the 4-H program coordinator in northern Minnesota and she worked in program support for the Oneida County UW-Extension office.

Anne Williams: 4-H Program Coordinator-Oneida County. Williams started with Extension in May, 2020. She stated that 4-H is not just for farm children but a youth development program for all youth K-5 through one year after high school. It helps youth develop the knowledge, attitude, and skills needed in today's world. Oneida County has adapted its programming in response to COVID-19. The 4-H Leaders Association has adapted their meetings via zoom. Volunteer training has been offered on-line as well. Many youth looked forward to attending 4-H camp this summer which was canceled. Williams collaborated with Extension educators from Oneida, Clark, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Shawano, and Wood Counties to design Camp in a Box for youth and families. Households will be provided with camp activities they can do at home. They had a good response with 400 families signed up to receive Camp in a Box. She is excited about new delivery methods to reach families. Lakeland After-School Advisory Group is another project Williams is working on to provide quality childcare and after school needs. A third area of focus will be on STEM Science Technology

Education Math opportunities for youth. She is working with a certified volunteer to offer computer science and internet skills to youth. She is offering a horticulture education and a program on raising poultry. Families have new interest in these fields with being at home. Williams is excited to be a part of promoting the benefits of 4-H to the youth of Oneida County.

Merry Lehner and Bonnie Tillmann: Oneida County Extension Support Staff. Lehner serves as Office Coordinator, managing the office and serves the Oversight Committee. Lehner is the Master Gardener Coordinator for Oneida County, reporting county volunteer hours for the State Report. She facilitates of the Level 1 class and adapted to COVID-19 response by completing the rest of the class via Zoom. She also assisted with record keeping for Strong Bodies program volunteers, and is a trained leader. She is partnering with ADRC for the upcoming PALS program to keep seniors physically fit. Tillmann creates and manages the Fair Exhibit Book and coordinates the volunteers for the Fair Exhibit tent. She is Program Assistant to the 4-H and Teen Court Educators. She manages plat book sales for the 4-H Leaders Association. She maintains the Extension County Website. She processes Soil/Water test kits for the public and proctors PAT exams.

**LTE Staffing Request:**

The 2021 staffing request for .53 limited term employee is combined for Bonnie Tillmann and Ashley Croner. Mott asked for verbal approval from the Committee to accept and to forward onto LRES. Mott signed paperwork for LRES. Winkler/Ives made motion to approve and pass on to LRES. All ayes; motion carried.

**Extension Report:**

Art Lersch, is the interim Area Four Extension Director for Steve Nelson, who retired in on May 12. Lersch is the Area Director for Area 3, which covers Langlade, Lincoln, Price and Taylor Counties. He is helping out along with Nancy Crevier in a team effort to support Oneida County and the rest of Area 4.

**Office Air Environment:** No reports due to limited occupation of the office during COVID-19.

**Progress Report on Extension/Nicolet Move:**

Lersch reported he has been in touch with Catherine Neiswender who was checking with Nicolet College for a date when we can move in. The college is still closed right now. The Furniture is set up and IT will be moving equipment next. Extension will report back on a date at the next meeting. A question about when new signage would be set up at Nicolet was posed. Lersch replied that all Extension offices are currently changing over signs to the new Extension logo. No signs are available yet and it is quite a process to provide all the new signs. We will be working with Nicolet maintenance to complete that task. The Committee would like meet at Nicolet when after the move.

**Consent Agenda Items – Extension:** Dave Hintz will signed off on budgetary items for the month of June.

**Public Comment:** Jeff Verdoorn, Interim Director of OCEDC Oneida County Economic Development Corp. was introduced.

**Items to Include on next Agenda:**

Meeting frequency of the two departments. Lake District Reports as needed and project approvals. County Fair Report/Discussion. Update Fair/City Contract, Business plan, and 501(c)(3) conversation. Extension/Nicolet move, Educator Reports. Mott added Extension being addressed at next Administration meeting and he will report back.

**Adjournment:** Mott adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Merry Lehner, Recording Secretary

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Bob Mott, Committee Chair