

**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee
Public Hearing - Wednesday, January 5, 2022 Minutes
Courthouse Committee Room & Virtually by ZOOM**

Committee members present: Chairman Bob Mott, Jim Winkler, Bob Thome, Jr., Mitch Ives, and John Engle, Mike Roach arrived late.

Others Present: Michele Sadauskas, Karl Jennrich, Stephanie Boismenu, Mike Fugle, Scott Holewinski, Bob Martini, and Merry Lehner.

Public Present in Person and on Zoom: Scott Woodfold, John Sweeney, John Taylor, Alan Janssen, K. Belin, Sharon Kremsrieter, Deputy Michael Horwath, Lauren Sowinski, Leo Trivicus, Dan Butkus, Tom Jerow, Joe Steinhage, and Eric Rempala.

Call to order: Chairman Mott called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and the meeting was posted properly and handicapped accessible.

Approve Agenda: A motion by Winkler/Thome to approve the Wednesday, January 5, 2022 Agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

Overview of the Process of Developing a Manure Storage Ordinance:

Bob Mott Chair of Conservation UW Extension Committee (CUW). The mission of the Land Water Conservation department and the intent of the Manure Storage Ordinance (MSO) is to protect the surface and ground waters of Oneida County from polluted runoff. The taxes paid by the lakeshore property owners, account for 70% of the property taxes collected in Oneida County. Vilas and Oneida Counties have one of the greatest concentrations of lakes with over 2,500 of them along with pristine rivers and streams. Local leaders, citizens, and lakeshore owners want to protect and preserve these waters and rivers both now and in the future. The MSO is to give clear direction to protecting the waters from runoff. Mott spoke with local beef farmer, John Sweeney who gave a good testament to responsible ownership. Sweeney assured Mott that the majority of small farmers in Oneida County avoid manure runoff that might pollute our lakes. Any careless mishandling of manure by farmers, would be promptly be notified by their neighbors who practice good conservation. He thanked Tom Jerow and Dan Butkus, citizen advocates for clean water for their contributions to studying the framework of the ordinance. Thank you to Michele Sadauskas, County Conservationist, and Karl Jennrich, Planning and Zoning Director for the hours spent on this ordinance. Thanks to the Land and Water Conservation Committee for their input. Remember the purpose is for clean water protection and we all need to be concerned with that goal. Staff and Committee introductions took place. All were welcomed to the Hearing. Answers are not provided to questions today as it is a listening session for opinions and suggestions.

Mike Fugle: This hearing is to receive feedback for the MSO. The State administrative code requires that any such public hearing regarding a county-wide ordinance related to water, coming from the Conservation Committee, ultimately be heard as a public hearing before the entire Board of County Supervisors. A question on whether today is a public hearing or listening session and if that affects the agenda. Fugle said that discussion today is for the purpose of what it forwards to the County Board including any comments today that could be recorded to present to the Board.

Karl Jennrich: The CUW Committee completed work on MSO for the stated Public Hearing Notice. The MSO is a primary policy document setting forth how Oneida County intends to manage manure storage. Complete information can be obtained at the Land and Water Conservation office and on their website. <https://www.oclw.org/manure-storage.html> The hearing was published in the Northwoods River News. It was posted on the bulletin board at the Oneida County Courthouse. There were 270 letters with information mailed out to all property owners classified as G-4 Agriculture assessment. Additionally, communication was shared with County Board Supervisors and the LWC mail list, all in the month of December.

There was correspondence received:

Note: All correspondence below will list person's name and their vote. Public comments can be heard at the website listed above.

Robert and Sylvia Hebners: No vote.

David Schneider: No vote.

Norris Ross: Yes vote.

Dan Butkus: Yes Vote

Tom Jerow: Yes Vote, with photos.

Michele Sadauskas: For the last 27 months the LWC department, CUW Committee, FSA representation, and citizens have worked to create the MSO, that will help protect Oneida County surface and groundwater. It was reviewed by the Wisconsin DNR and by

DATCP. It was designed to control direct runoff from livestock feeding areas for manure management facilities into the waters of the county. It regulates how and where manure can be stored. The LWC Committee worked diligently to allow for situations where there would be no permits needed. The CUW Committee will work to protect and promote the County's agricultural industry, prevent pollution of surface and ground water, to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the people and communities. It will preserve the health of livestock, wildlife, and advance the appropriate use of the land, water, and conservation resources of our area. It will protect the property tax base of the county. Sadauskas announced it was time for the public to voice their support or concerns regarding the ordinance. Guidelines were reviewed; time limits and public commenters to provide their name and address.

Public Hearing on the Manure Storage Ordinance:

Mott opened the Public Hearing. He asked if there were any comments from the following groups:

Representatives of governmental agencies. None

Representatives of non-governmental agencies.

Bob Martini: Yes Vote.

Comments from the public in Board Room-Left side of Room:

Alan Janssen: Yes Vote.

Leo Travikus: (No Vote.

John Belin: No Vote.

John Hein: No Vote.

Comments from the public in Board Room-Left side of Room:

John Sweeney: No Vote.

Tom Jerow: Yes Vote.

Lauren Sowinski: No Vote.

Comments from Zoom Attendees:

None by telephone number.

Eric Rempala: Yes Vote.

Joe Steinhage: Yes Vote.

Public Comment:

Scott Holewinski: Speaking as the Chair of Sugar Camp. As a listening session of the ordinance, he noted that most of the concern is over Mega Farms and he suggested that they change the ordinance to address farms with 500 or more animals. Then fine accordingly. The small farmers are working well under the DNR and DATCP.

Mott asked if there were any other comments, three times. There were no further comments. He closed the Public Hearing.

Comments from the CUW Committee.

John Engel: Fundamentally, we should not have an ordinance beyond State Law. He worked with Butkus and Jerow and if they have to have one, he wants the best MSO for the Oneida County. Engel liked the idea of an annual review suggested by Mr. Martini. He said he would be in favor of it, but if our goal is to oppose CAFOs, Engels said that he does not oppose CAFOs as a small farmer. He wishes we had a dozen of them, but the land does not support that. We are in a tough place to farm up here. He hates to see any type of regulation that makes it even tougher to farm up here. For most of his farming needs, he has to go to Antigo for fertilizer and feed. He said most of the farms here are hobby farms. Engel is in opposition to anything (laws or ordinances) that go beyond the State. If it goes through, he is in favor of the changes mentioned today.

Mott stated that written comments would be accepted until Friday, January 7, 2022. The CUW Committee will review the Public Hearing on Monday, January 10, 2022.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Winkler/Thome. All ayes; motion carried. Mott adjourned the meeting 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Merry Lehner, Recording Secretary

Bob Mott, Committee Chair