

**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee**  
**Monday, December 11, 2023 Minutes**  
**Oneida County**  
**Courthouse, County Board Room and Virtually by ZOOM**

**Committee Members:** Chairman Jim Winkler, Robb Jensen, Tommy Ryden, and Linnaea Newman. Collette Sorgel on Zoom.

**Others Present:** Michele Sadauskas, Karl Jennrich, Amber Rehberg, and Jessica Young. Jonna Jewell on Zoom.

**1. Call to order and Chairperson's Announcements:**

Chairman Winkler called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. The meeting was properly posted and handicapped accessible and ADA compliant. The symbol /s/ represents a valid virtual attendee's signature.

**2. Approve Agenda:** A motion by Jensen/Newman to approve the December 11, 2023 Agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

**3. Approve Minutes:** A motion by Newman/Ryden to approve the minutes of November 13, 2023 as presented. All ayes; motion carried.

**4. Dates/Location of Future Meetings:**

Monday, January 8, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. Oneida County Courthouse; County Board Room.

Monday, February 12, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. Oneida County Courthouse; County Board Room.

**5. Public Comment:** None.

**6. "Ag Use" Representative Appointment to Committee:**

Engel is the official Farm Service Agency (FSA) representative for Oneida County; however, he attends CUW Committee meetings strictly as a volunteer. Engel's tenure as the volunteer farmer representative for the CUW Committee will come to an end December 31, 2023. Starting in 2024, a new State statute broadens the definition of 'agricultural use' and allows counties to choose a farmer representative from a wider pool of individuals. There is a new individual running unopposed for the FSA representative position who owns agricultural land. Engel will consider being the FSA representative for 2024 if this individual is not interested.

Chair Winkler recommended to the Committee that they postpone the conversation until Sadauskas can contact the individual running and see if they would be interested in being the new FSA Representative.

Sadauskas mentioned that the start date for the position is unknown, which means there may not be a farmer representative present for the January CUW Committee meeting, and that may affect the ability to have a quorum.

Jensen/Ryden made a motion to postpone agenda item 6 until a future meeting date. All ayes; motion carried.

### **7. Update on Lakes Classification Portion of High Quality Waters Protection Project:**

Sadauskas attached a summary of the meeting in an email to the members of the CUW Committee and will answer any questions presented. The first advisory group meeting was held where the focus was on project goals; what was needed, what was in the works, direction, and focus on putting lakes in certain categories. The next meeting will be after the holidays. An email will be sent out to poll for the next meeting date. The meeting went well, many people attended. It was a diverse group and engagement was high.

### **8. Wakeboat Update:**

#### a. Letters of Recommendation:

Sadauskas has prepared two letters that are ready to be mailed to the Committee of Financial Institution and the Committee of Forestry, Parks, and Outdoor Recreation. The letters include the four recommendations discussed by the Committee in a previous meeting. Revisions can be made, if necessary.

Wisconsin Lakes Association is having a meeting to discern the accuracy of the specifications already laid out to find out if the information is real and trustworthy. Wisconsin Lakes Association is keeping track of the situation at this time.

Dan Butkus, the President of the Wisconsin Lakes Association, stated in a letter that there should be at least 25 to 30 feet depth. Ryden stated that number is accurate; however, it is difficult to ascertain the depth while wakeboating.

Jensen would like the Legislature to adopt a standard that is specific enough for all lakes to follow. Local control tends to be stricter than state control, and every lake operates differently. If one lake adopted stricter controls than another lake in the same area, it would be difficult for wakeboat operators to keep track of the different specifications for each lake. It would be beneficial for the Legislature to come up with standards that would be effective for all lakes, since every lake is different with unique ecosystems.

When a number of these issues have gone to local control, each locality sets standards on their own that differ from others. Jensen would prefer to recommend things to the Legislature that will be successful. When one lake is split down the middle between two localities, and each locality has different controls for wakeboarding, it confuses things and makes following those controls for each locality impossible. Newman mentioned that there are Lake Districts to help create solutions to the issue of differing local controls. Jensen stated that not all townships have a Lake District though.

Chair Winkler stated that Representative Swearingen and Senator Felzkowski are looking towards local controls, but the constituency was against it, preferring it to be

controlled by the state. With the number of lakes that cross boundaries, local control may create more issues.

Sadauskas stated the 1500 acreage stipulation is not realistic.

Ryden mentioned that the 500 feet is not an issue; being able to police those controls is where the problem stems. Enforcement will be difficult; by the time the call is taken, and someone arrives at the lake, the individual will be gone with the boat.

Chair Winkler asked members of the Committee if any changes needed to be made to the letters, or if there were any suggestions. None were presented.

Jensen/Newman made a motion to approve the letters to Representative Mursau and Senator Stafsholt as presented. All ayes; motion carried.

Sorgel would like a copy of the letters without the draft watermark on them, with Chair Winkler's signature on them, to be sent out to Representative Mursau and Senator Stafsholt.

b. Resolution:

Advisory is encouraging the Legislature to take into consideration the suggestions made in the resolution.

No changes or suggestions were made to the resolution.

Jensen/Ryden made a motion to approve the resolution as presented to be sent to the County Board for approval. All ayes; motion carried.

Sadauskas mentioned that the resolution has been sent to Corporation Counsel for review.

**9. Lake District Reports:**

No reports were submitted.

**10. LWCD Office Reports:**

- a. Budget Actual – (*November*)
- b. Invoices Paid

LWCD is expecting an inflow of revenue for end of year.

Committee acknowledged and received items 10a and 10b.

**11. LWCD items to include on next agenda:**

Update on wakeboard issue and update on the lake classifications. If the meeting is not held in January, an update will be given during the February CUW Committee meeting.

**12. Public Comment:** None.

**13. Area 4 Extension Director Update – A. Rehberg**

a. UWEX Status Update:

- Oneida County FY2024 136 Contract; there are no changes, it just needs signatures. The county budget was approved, and Corporation Counsel approved the contract as well.

Sorgel/Ryden made a motion to accept the FY2024 136 Contract. All ayes; motion carried.

b. Staffing & Communication Plan:

Oneida County Extension is fully staffed. The new Health and Well Being Educator, Laurel Parins, is building and developing partnerships and will be attending StrongBodies Training this month. Parins is working with the Minocqua Library and the ADRC. She will be writing some articles for the ADRC publication.

Oneida County Extension is currently working to build up communications; working on new publications, sending out press releases, and planning to attend community events throughout the year. The first community event will be the 2024 Northwoods Expo held in Rhinelander. Staff is consistent in sharing with the community the different types of programming offered, and the impact those programs have had. Staff is also looking to broaden the areas of connection, and plan to increase communication with Three Lakes to spread the availability of services offered to towns within Oneida County. Rehberg requested that Sorgel share information about any large events in Three Lakes with Extension so that the community there can benefit from programming.

Four events per year will be attended with full staff, and various other events will be attended by specific educators depending on the scope of the event. For example, Healthy Kids Day would be attended by FoodWise.

c. Nicolet and Other Collaborations:

- Nicolet Lease for 2024:  
No changes were made to the lease from 2023; it is for one year and has been approved as a part of the 2024 budget. Nicolet did not get any of the grants for rebuilding, so no major changes will occur.

**14. Update on Oneida County Youth in Governance Program:**

Diana Harris, a member of the County Board, was a member of the Youth in Governance program as a youth. Chair Winkler and Diana are interested in exploring options for a Youth in Governance Program recognizing the time commitment if it is truly going to be a growth

experience. Sharon Krause, the Positive Youth Development Educator, who provides leadership and educational programming for Teen Court and Raise Your Voice (Youth Mental Health Clubs in Rhinelander and at Lakeland Union High) will serve as the main Extension Educator supporting the development of the Youth in Governance Program. The goal is to have youth start serving in the 2024-2025 academic school year. Extension is looking at different models currently being led throughout the state. One model of interest has three youths representing one school district with another student working as an alternate/apprentice for future years. The goal is to have a written proposal composed and ready for review by February. The plan is to have three County Board members serve as mentors for the youth and invite them to serve on one Committee and engage in County Board meetings for additional experiences.

Jensen stated that youth representatives were on the County Board before, but it had faded away. One issue that came up was the amount of school missed due to the County Board meetings being held in the morning on a school day, and the length of the meetings themselves. The issues discussed at the meetings can be complex and hard for youth to follow and understand, which could make it time intensive for the mentors and youth. The number of resolutions passed on the County Board, and youth may not have the depth of understanding to be able to vote effectively.

Rehberg shared that several models are being reviewed and evaluated for effectiveness to see which would be the best fit. There are cautions on the table moving forward, and they will be addressed as planning continues.

Another option for Youth in Governance and engaging county board members, could be County Government Day where youth meet County Board Members and shadow board members and other elected officials and/or county board members could go into classrooms to share their experiences and the roles and responsibilities of county government.

**15. UWEX Office Reports:**

- a. Budget Actual
- b. Invoices Paid

Committee acknowledged and received agenda items 15a & 15b, as presented.

**18. UWEX Items to include on next agenda:**

Anne Williams, Oneida County 4-H, will share programming highlights from the LEGO Robotics Program and the Learn to Sew! Program.

**19. Public Comment:** None

**20. Adjournment:** Chairman Winkler adjourned meeting at 2:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jessica Young, Recording Secretary