

LAND COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING
 December 5, 2023
 Oneida County Courthouse, 1 S Oneida Ave
 Second Floor – Committee Room 2
 Rhinelander, Wisconsin 54501

Council Members	Mike Timmons	Ted Cushing
Tara Ostermann	Kyle Franson	Jacob Piasecki
Jake Simkins	Sara Chiamulera	Jeff DeMuth

Call to Order and Chair’s announcements. Chair called the meeting to order in accordance with the Open Meeting Law at 9:00 a.m. and noted that the meeting notice was properly posted and the building and meeting room are handicap accessible. All Council Members were present. Others present: Karl Jennrich (Planning and Zoning), Jason Rhodes (Information Technology), Art Hilgendorf, Randy Boehlert, and Chris Hill (Land Information), and Paul Fiene (Forestry Land and Outdoor Recreation).

Approve Amended agenda for today’s meeting.
Motion/Timmons/Demuth to approve amended agenda. All ayes.

Approve minutes of the Land Council meeting of December 19, 2022.
Motion/Franson/Demuth to approve the minutes from December 19, 2022 meeting. All ayes.

Land Council Members Review.
 All members are current and upholding their position moving forward. Timmons (County Board Representative), Cushing (Realtor & Committee Chair), Piasecki (Real Property Lister), Chiamulera (Land Information Director), DeMuth (Surveyor Representative), Ostermann (Treasurer), Simkins (Emergency Management), and Franson (Register of Deeds).

Land Record department’s 2023 activity report.
 Franson reported Register of Deeds is fully staffed at 4; the half-time position was switched to the Land Information Office. Transfer fees are down about \$50,000 compare to the same time last year. Recorded documents are down approximately 1,700, compared to last year and have been trending downward for the last three years. Statewide document recording is also trending downwards. Tract Index back imaging project is proceeding well; US Imaging has completed about one-third of the projected 85,000 documents. Franson predicts the project will finish in April or May of 2024.

Cushing provided a real estate update about the Oneida County market, and across the state. There are very few properties for sale at \$250,000 and under. Cushing said there is very little supply in the local market and mortgage rates are dictating people’s lack of buying and selling.

Demuth noted the benefit of the Land Information Office’s acceptance of PLSS Land Restoration corners/tie sheets digitally for filing and retention. Demuth gave an update on the pace of local surveying compared to last year, stating the surveying field is keeping busy, and may be starting to show a slow-down as of late.

Fiene updated the Council that the Forestry and Outdoor Recreation Department will be working more closely with the Land Information department in regards to mapping and boundary line surveys, in the near future. Fiene will be retiring in 2024 and therefore, the Forestry Department will be evaluating GIS workloads and shifting responsibilities within the department.

Simkins gave an update on a number of projects. NextGen 911 is up and running. Dispatch Center update project is active and has acquired new equipment thanks to a grant, along with training also supported by the grant. The radio project is ongoing, but is being held back due to a lack of equipment supply.

Ostermann reported the current tax bill process is underway and progressing smoothly. About one-third of the tax bills have made their way to the Treasurer’s office for folding and delivery to the towns. Collections and delinquencies are down for the year. Ostermann discussed the changes in the foreclosure process in regards to new legislation; lien payback, and fund distribution generated from a sale of the tax foreclosure sale.

Jennrich reported Planning and Zoning revenue is ahead of budget, but seeing less when compared to last year. The Ascent Land Records Suite, including the Permit Management Suite, has been running smoothly within the Planning and Zoning office with less hiccups than last year. An Administrative Support position will be retiring and advertising for the position has started.

Piasecki reported that the Real Property department is currently printing the 2023 tax bills, with about ten towns printed so far, with most being done by the end of the week. Chiamulera explained the processes involved with creating tax bills, and distribution to the towns.

Rhodes gave an update on ongoing projects. Guardian software has been installed and is up and running. IT is working on the accounts payable portion of the new finance system. A new EDR (Emergency Detection Response) system is in the works to add additional cyber protection to all connected device on the County network.

Status of 2022-2024 Oneida County Land Information Plan Projects for continued participation in the WI Land Information Program.

Chiamulera gave an update on the status of the Oneida County Wisconsin Land Information Plan; work has begun on updating the plan for 2025-2027. Land Information is currently working on Benchmark 4 for the WI Land Information Plan, which is to use most of the Strategic Initiative monies each year to continue to remonument and/or establish control on PLSS corners to Survey Grade accuracy concentrating on township boundaries then interior sections. Chiamulera gave an update on the status of the PLSS corner progression, along with two recent purchases of a new GPS unit and a new scanner/plotter located in the Land Information Office.

Status of Oneida County WLIP Grants.

Chiamulera updated on the expenditure of 2022 WLIP grant money, which has been exhausted and closed out. 2023 WLIP grant funds are currently being used for Benchmark 4, completion of PLSS Corner Restoration, and are to be used by end 2024.

Wisconsin Land Information Program 2024 Base Budget, Training & Education and Strategic Initiative Grant Application.

Chiamulera is working on the 2024 grant application for the Training and Education grant which is for \$1,000, Strategic Initiative grant for \$10,000, and the base budget grant for \$26,880 for a total \$37,880 to be applied for by the end of the year.

Proposed Document Recording Fee Change.

Franson and Chiamulera presented the proposed Recording Document Fee increase. This proposal was presented at a recent WLIA conference, as well as proposed to many land related organizations. The increase is in response to the decreases in document recordings fees statewide, and the subsequent reduction in grant funding available to the Land Information Offices to maintain the programs used by the land related organizations. Meanwhile software maintenance fees (and other expenses) are increasing yearly, resulting in less grant funds available to Counties to complete benchmarks set in the Wisconsin Land Information Program. To help offset the cost and support of those programs, a proposed change to document recording fees from \$30 per document to \$45 per document has been discussed and is in the process of being presented to State legislation. The committee reviewed the proposal and Jennrich suggested to be proactive and make a motion to support the potential change to increase the document recording fee.

Motion/Timmons/Cushing to draft a resolution to forward to County Board, in support of the potential increase of statewide Document Recording Fees. All ayes.

Public Comment/Communications.

None.

Date of next meeting and items for agenda.

The date for the next meeting is to be determined.

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Ted Cushing, Chair