

MANITOWOC COUNTY
LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2023
County Office Complex, Rm 300

LCC Chair, Catherine Wagner called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Roll Call: Catherine Wagner, Lee Engelbrecht, Tim Jadowski, and Ted Hoffman were present. Ryan Phipps, Biff Hansen and Michael Slattery were excused.

Also, in attendance were: David Wetenkamp, Steve Hoffman, Greg Gries, and Jake Divine.

Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda was made by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Tim Jadowski. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Minutes: Motion was made by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Ted Hoffman to approve the October 19, 2023 LCC minutes. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Public Comment: None

LCC Presentation (Between-the-Lakes Demonstration Farm Network - BTL): Steve Hoffman - InDepth Agronomy and BTL Manager described how Calumet, Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Fon du Lac Counties cooperate with the demo farm operators involved in the network. The main goals, efforts and activities center around finding new ways to manage crops, manure, fertilizers, chemicals, cover crops and tillage methods to reduce costs, and be more efficient while adding water quality and soil health benefits. Greg Gries, owner of Libertyland Farms, is Manitowoc County's designated Demonstration Farm. Greg described the various ways he has experimented with planting methods, tillage and manure applications while incorporating diverse seed types and mixtures of cover crop seed in timing with his planting practices. Working with Steve, Greg found ways to be more efficient and develop recipes he can share with others making the switch to these beneficial practices, saving new adopters time and money. Both Steve and Greg expressed their appreciation for the support the LCC has given them and left an open invitation to call with any questions in the future on the Demo Farm Network or on-farm activities. LCC Chair thanked guests for attendance and sharing.

Wildlife Damage Program/APHIS: Brian Maedke sent updated information and agreements to the Soil & Water Director to share with the committee on current Manitowoc County landowners enrolled in the wildlife damage program and action items including the 2023 crop pricing, harvest cut-off date, 2024 deer donation program, 2024 Manitowoc WDACP budget, and also entering into a new 5-year agreement with USDA/APHIS for continued support with the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. After review and comments from Ted Hoffman on the crop pricing averages and cut-off date being fair, the LCC voted and approved all (5) action items with signature from the LCC Chair. All funds in the program charged to Manitowoc County for participation are 100% reimbursed by the State with no levy cost to the County budget.

- **Motion** by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Ted Hoffman to approve proposed 2023 WDACP crop prices. **Motion carried** unanimously.
- **Motion** by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Tim Jadowski to approve proposed 2023 December 1, 2023 crop harvest cut-off date. **Motion carried** unanimously.
- **Motion** by Ted Hoffman and seconded by Lee Engelbrecht to approve participation in the 2024 Deer Donation Program. **Motion carried** unanimously.

- **Motion** by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Tim Jadowski to approve proposed 2024 Manitowoc WDACP budget of \$22,832.01. **Motion carried** unanimously.
- **Motion** by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Ted Hoffman to approve proposed Manitowoc 5-year CSA 2024-2028 WDACP Agreement, pending concurrence with Manitowoc County Corporation Counsel. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Glacierland RC&D: Jake Divine, Invasive Species Coordinator, shared an update with the LCC on the major activities he and his colleagues accomplished in 2023 working with the Lake Management Protection Grant program, Clean Boats-Clean Waters activities and Invasive Species work in Manitowoc County. Harpt Lake was targeted this year with many inspections and interviews done with boaters and fishermen. Grants are being pursued to address issues at Long Lake and other lakes. Supervisor Tim Jadowski asked about possible brochures being available on-site at boat launches to help citizens identify and monitor local lakes and provide educational opportunities. Jake shared that much of the information is available from the WDNR on-line resources, is shared with many bait shops and lake associations but agreed a brochure with basic information would be beneficial at sites. Educational outreach activities at many city parks continue, with signs of success being realized with the participation of many volunteers.

Budget Review(s): Reviewed SWCD 2023 budget ending September 30, 2023. Department Director shared with the LCC current status of the operating budget. LCC Chair, Catherine Wagner commented on budget reviews being beneficial and appreciated.

LCC Approval & Chair Signature of December SWCD Contracts: End of year contracts will need to be approved prior to December 31, 2023. LCC will schedule December LCC meeting.

SWCD Department Activities – Discussions

1. **2024 Budget** – The soil & water director shared with the LCC, changes that occurred to the 2024 proposed budget due to the County receiving additional funds to spend in 2024 from a DATCP SEG Grant transfer of \$30,000. Funds will be used for conservation practices in the county.
2. **Producer Led Group Update (PLG)** – Manitowoc County SWCD, UW-Extension and (10) area farm producers have been working on an initiative to form an all-inclusive farm community group called the Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative (SRSC). The farm producers put seed funds together and applied for a DATCP PLG Grant. The grant was selected for funding and the SRSC now has about 10k in funds to start forming by-laws and applying for 501C3 non-profit status.
3. **Cellcom Green Gifts Grant** – In an effort to promote and foster outreach and educational activities with schools, community and farm groups in Manitowoc County, the SWCD Grants and Education Coordinator, Tara Wachowski, submitted a proposal under the Cellcom Green Gifts program. The proposal was accepted and Cellcom staff came and awarded \$500 to the department for educational outreach activities.
4. **Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) Grant** – In an effort to promote and foster outreach and educational activities with schools, community and farm groups in Manitowoc County, the SWCD Grants and Education Coordinator, Tara Wachowski, submitted a proposal under the SARE Grant program for a mobile classroom. Approval is pending.
5. **November LCC Presentation** – The LCC has agreed to have Michael Slattery conduct a presentation and discussion forum on the “Rights-of-Nature” and share his knowledge and views on this topic and ethic.

- 6. Lake Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation Association (LMALWCA) –** The area association met on October 6, 2023 in the City of Oconto. The soil & water director attended the meeting and briefed the LCC on the agenda and minutes. The association had a presentation given from Adam Bechle (Sea Grant) on the status and trends of Lake Michigan water levels and impacts. Sheboygan County shared how their tree sale program is managed. The area association discussed resolutions on foreign ownership of land and sent a list of concerns to Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association (WLWCA) regarding issues relating to farmland drainage and tiling.
- 7. SWCD Events –** SWCD director shared information on the various local field days and community events listed in the agenda.
- 8. Upcoming SWCD Events –** Local events that the SWCD will be conducting to provide education and outreach activities was shared as listed in the agenda.

USDA/NRCS Cost-Share Contracts/Amendments/Agreements – None

SWCD Cost Share Contracts/Amendments/Agreements: SWCD director submitted a detailed document listing (8) contracts for various bmp's for review and approval with signature from LCC Chair, Catherine Wagner. **Motion** by Lee Engelbrecht and seconded by Tim Jadowski to approve contracts. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Animal Waste Ordinance (AWO): SWCD has processed and approved (4) AWO Permits.

Livestock Facility Licensing (LFL): SWCD has approved (1) LFL modification and (2) new LFL applications are complete and are under the public comment period.

Next Meeting Date(s) & Time: December 21, 2023, 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment: **Motion** to adjourn was made by Ted Hoffman and seconded by Tim Jadowski at 5:57 p.m. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
David Wetenkamp
Department Director

Minutes recorded: David Wetenkamp