

MANITOWOC COUNTY
LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2025

Manitowoc County Office Complex, Rm 300

LCC Vice Chairman, Lee Engelbrecht called the meeting to order at 4:46 p.m.

Roll Call: Lee Engelbrecht, Tim Jadowski, Larry Bonde, Michael Slattery and Scott Schiesl were present. Ryan Phipps and Ted Hoffman were excused.

Also, in attendance: David Wetenkamp (SWCD)

Agenda: Motion to approve the March 20, 2025 agenda made by Scott Schiesl was seconded by Larry Bonde.
Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: Minutes from the January 16, 2025 LCC meeting were reviewed. **Motion** to approve minutes by Scott Schiesl was seconded by Michael Slattery. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims Program: Manitowoc County is participating in the Deer Donation Program and now has processors willing to take and process wild game for donation. Due to new processor participation, a budget adjustment is needed to amend the 2025 budget from \$25,710.52 to \$28,710.52. Larry Bonde shared that this is a good program and allows hunters to donate excess deer taken to reduce high deer populations and help others with healthy food and opportunity to enjoy wild game. **Motion** by Scott Schiesl to approve the Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims Program Budget Amendment 1, was seconded by Larry Bonde. **Motion carried unanimously.**

SWCD Budget: Soil & Water Director shared the final 2024 operating budget for the department and status of the current 2025 budget. Michael Slattery asked for clarification on the status of DATCP staffing grant numbers, of which was addressed. No budget issues currently exist for last year or for current budget at this time.

Public Comment: None.

2026-2035 LWRMP Local Advisory Committee (LAC): Minutes from the 02/25/25 LAC meeting were shared. Drafts will be shared with the LCC and LAC before forwarding to the state for review. Final draft will be presented to the Land & Water Conservation Board October 7, 2025 and if approved, presented to the County Board for final approvals by end of 2025. Next Local Advisory Committee meeting will be held in June to review drafts of plan.

NWQI Grant & Assessment Plan Resolution: Soil & Water Director updated the LCC members that the draft National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) grant submitted to the NRCS is on hold due to staffing changes and funding appropriations being frozen at the federal level. The SWCD is continuing its efforts working with DNR staff to target community well recharge areas with bmp's to improve water quality in the NW area of the county.

NE TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) Pilot Project: The pilot was approved by EPA and WDNR and will provide up to 135K in cost-share funds over the next 3-4 years for sub-basins S51 & S52 located in Manitowoc County. The project is still in-progress and Stantec has been hired by WDNR to conduct basin modeling.

Lake Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation Association (LMALWCA): SWCD Director attended a Lake Michigan Area County Conservationist meeting in Green Bay on 02/24/25. Agenda was informal and county conservationists discussed various projects and issues of each respective county. Discussions on the NE Area TMDL process, current federal funding issues, emerging contaminants in groundwater, time management, tile drainage and

current efforts to promote the Governor's 2026-2027 budget increases for county staffing grants were discussed. It was agreed this was a beneficial collaboration and will be continued 2-3 times a year or as needed.

Resolution Authorizing Support of Increased Conservation Grant: As promoted by Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association and many counties, an initiative to engage legislators is underway to encourage the state finance committee and legislators to consider approving the budget increases for county conservation staff as proposed in the Governor's 2026-2027 Budget. County conservation staffing is a shared cost as assigned by state mandates and county ordinances of which at least 3 staff are shared with funding through DATCP and County levy. Baseline staffing is much appreciated, but has lagged for the last 20 years and has not been maintained to meet requirements by the state. Manitowoc County SWCD has asked the LCC to consider approving a resolution to submit to the County Board to bolster support for increased state staffing dollars. **Motion** by Michael Slattery to forward, "Resolution authorizing support of increased county conservation base staffing grant," per corporation counsel and submit to the County Board for consideration, was seconded by Larry Bonde. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association Conference: An annual professional improvement conference was attended by Michael Slattery and 4 county staff between March 5-7 in Green Bay at the KI Convention Center. This conference allows staff to attend breakout sessions designed for improving skills, knowledge, networking and attaining continuing education credits. It exposes staff to other county input, private sector technology, sharing success and also brings new ideas for projects, funding options and solutions to help our citizens and agricultural producers improve our soil and water resources.

Between the Lakes Demo Farm Network Expansion: Currently the SWCD participates with NRCS, Calumet, Sheboygan and Fond du Lac Counties in a farm demonstration network including 7 farm operators. Libertyland Farms is Manitowoc County's cooperator. The network has funds to expand and add new farm participants with a 25% match of funds from the county. Several options exist for selecting farm members and we have one farm interested in being a member to promote agriculture, healthy soil, clean water, and demonstrate this in a long-term agreement to hold educational outreach events, advocate for a better environment and teach sustainability. SWCD Director shared costs and commitment goals. Michael Slattery explained the benefits and reasoning of having proactive land stewards be supported to advance methods and education with land management. Larry Bonde shared that given budgetary considerations he has concerns of this ask at the county level. **Motion** by Scott Schiesl to approve adding a farm participant to the BTL Network to include 2 participants and the associated cost of \$7666.00 annually to the SWCD budget as approved through the 2026 budget process, was seconded by Michael Slattery. Upon vote the motion passed 4 ayes and 1 no, supervisor Bonde voted no. **Motion carried**

SWCD Cost Share Contracts/Amendments/Agreements: Contract MDV25-02 for \$20,222.15 was presented to the LCC for a barnyard runoff control project using Multi-Discharge Variance Program (MDV) funds. Project location and components being installed were discussed. Landowners will be required to pay 30% of project costs. Funds being allocated are not County levy funds, but funds distributed to the county to install practices that reduce non-point sources of runoff and phosphorus in meeting NR 151 standards. **Motion** by Larry Bonde to approve contract MDV25-02 was seconded by Scott Schiesl. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Next Meeting Date(s) & Time: April 17, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment: **Motion** to adjourn by Scott Schiesl was seconded by Tim Jadowski at 5:51 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
David Wetenkamp
Department Director

Minutes recorded: David Wetenkamp