

**Walworth County Land Conservation Committee  
And Land and Water Resource Management Plan Public Hearing**

MINUTES

Monday, January 18, 2010 at 1:30 p.m.

Walworth County Board Room 114  
Elkhorn, WI 53121

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Kilkenny at 1:35 p.m.

Roll call - Committee members present included: Supervisors Hawkins, Ingersoll, Kilkenny; Citizen Member Burwell and USDA/FSA Representative Henningfeld. A quorum was declared.

County staff present – David Bretl, County Administrator; Michael Cotter, Director of Land Use & Resource Management (LURM); Louise Olson, Deputy Director, LURM; Fay Amerson, Urban Manager, LURM; and Joeann Douglas, Recording Secretary.

Also in attendance –. Nancy Russell, Walworth County Board Chair

Approval of the Agenda – **Supervisors Hawkins and Ingersoll moved and seconded approval of the agenda. Motion carried 5-0.**

Approval of the Minutes - **Supervisors Hawkins and Ingersoll moved and seconded approval of the November 19, 2009 minutes as presented. Motion carried 5-0.**

Public Comment – There was no public comment. Chair Kilkenny opened the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Walworth County Land and Water Resource Management Plan Public Hearing – Louise Olson said the plan was originated in 1999 and updated in 2004. The plan must be revised every 5 years, but an extension was granted to 2010. A citizen action committee (CAC) was formed and met on March 24 and August 4, 2009 to provide plan input. There were two public hearing notifications in December 2009 and January 2010. Ms Olson pointed out the plan summary's element, *Recognition of the "Working Lands Initiative", including actions to assist Walworth County landowners and elected officials consider these institutional tools aimed at protecting Walworth County's rich agricultural lands*. She said if the county did not adopt the Working Lands Initiative the Land Conservation Division would not implement it. If the county chose to opt out of Farmland Preservation, the Conservation staff would still be required to implement the agricultural performance standards which is now being done in conjunction with Farmland Preservation. Currently, the 7 conservation staff are based on a statutory formula and budgeted/funded at 100% for first, 70% for second, and 30% for third employee. The balance is made up through fees, permits and other state and federal grant programs with the net appropriation as part of the county board budget. Ms Olson also pointed out the implementation of the activities in the multi-year work plan is subject to the availability of federal, state and local funding to support staff and program support costs. The plan has been developed to allow Land Conservation to obtain grants which could be used to pay for elements in the plan. Plan elements address Walworth County's land and water quality needs and carry out statutory conservation state mandates. There is a complete and detailed information and education strategy to help support and achieve the Plan's goals and objectives. Ms Olson further explained we must be accountable for each dollar spent. The staffing dollars in the plan are based on 2009 salaries and fringes for the 7 Land Conservation Division employees. The LWRM plan resolution was reviewed by Nicole Anderson, Deputy County Administrator – Finance. Nancy Russell said she had read the entire plan and commended Ms Olson and staff for their efforts. She referred to page 85 of the summary and asked if all private waste treatment systems in the county would all be inspected within the next 5 years. Chair

Russell felt more credit should be given and more detail for such a very large undertaking. Ms Olson said she would look into that element of the plan and include that activity. Chair Russell further suggested that wherever the appendix is noted throughout the plan, the title of the appendix should also be added rather than just its letter. Fay Amerson said SEWRPC has drafted an amendment to the Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitat Protection Plan. Ms Amerson has added a note (page 54) so that when the plan is adopted by the County Board, the 7 additional natural areas identified in the county, including the Lulu Lake/Pickerel Lake grassland tract that has been identified as an important natural resource, will be in the plan. Chair Russell noted that interestingly, there is more total acreage identified in the SEWRPC draft plan than the previous one. Some were lost and more have been restored. Supervisor Ingersoll asked if the Land and Water plan is now a 10 year plan. Ms Olson explained it is a 10 year plan with a 5 year work plan which is what DATCP wanted. Chair Kilkenny called for public comment. There were none.

**Supervisor Hawkins and Citizen Member Burwell moved and seconded to close the public hearing portion of the meeting. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Supervisor Hawkins and Ingersoll moved and seconded to accept the resolution to adopt the Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Motion carried 5-0.**

Kettle Moraine Land Trust, LTD Press Release – No action was necessary. Citizen Member Burwell noted a lot of time and money was spent to clean up Delavan Lake in the past she was happy to see further preservation efforts. **Supervisor Hawkins and Ingersoll moved and seconded to place the press release on file. Motion carried 5-0.**

Next Meeting/Public Hearing Date – Monday, February 15, 2010, 1:30 p.m. at Health and Human Services Auditorium.

Discussion followed regarding a plan of action for the next meeting. A facilitator was suggested by Citizen Member Burwell. David Bretl said he thought it was important to have a number of meetings on the topic and let people vet all aspects of the proposal, some of which are changing from the last meeting to this one. It was presented as information and now we should receive their comments, whether pro or con. Chair Kilkenny suggested informational handouts at the public hearing. Ms Olson said this will be the third meeting; the Farm Bureau has had a meeting on the subject, sent out information about the meetings and will send out a notice to their members about the February 15 public hearing. She will have handouts available for the public hearing and suggested having a brief overview before public comment. She also suggested possibly making a list of pro's and con's from those speaking and sending it to the legislators which may trigger DATCP to make adjustments. Supervisor Ingersoll asked if LCC would be making the final decision or giving a recommendation to the board. Mr. Cotter said it would be a recommendation to the county board. Chair Kilkenny asked if time were of the essence. Mr. Cotter said it was the LCC's decision if they wanted to vote on it at the time of the public hearing but we wanted to move it along because of the conversion fee and the 2010 tax credits to the farmers. Chair Kilkenny said he wanted to make sure the recommendation was not premature before all the information from DATCP was available. USDA/FSA Representative Henningfeld said he had spoken with several farmers and approximately 2/3 of them said they thought the county should opt out of Farmland Preservation. Their main concern is that the 27 million dollars available would not be enough to allow for \$7.50/acre per year for the entire state. They also were concerned about the conversion fee when wanting to rezone their land and the fee going into the states general fund rather than being used for the intended purpose. Ms Olson pointed out that DATCP

would have figures for the amount of farmland acres in the state of Wisconsin and would have done the mathematics to determine if \$7.50/acre per year was a valid amount. She said perhaps this is another point to send to the legislators. Chair Kilkenny asked if we chose to stay in Farmland Preservation if the county could later opt out of it without penalty. Mr. Cotter said the ordinance could be repealed and he would contact DATCP for clarification of the ramifications. He said when preparing for the next meeting to remember the tax implications and change-over of committees.

**Adjournment – On motion and second by Supervisor Hawkins and Citizen Member Burwell Chair Kilkenny adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:23 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.**

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Submitted by Joeann Douglas, Recording Secretary. Minutes are not considered final until approved by the committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting.