

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors
Land Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 24, 2023
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114
100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brian Holt at 1:00 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present: Chair Brian Holt; Supervisor Rick Stacey (Remote); Citizen Member Richard Kuhnke, Jr.; and Citizen Representative Sharon Travis. Vice Chair Sheila Reiff was absent. A quorum was declared.

Others in Attendance either in person or remotely:

County Staff: Corporation Counsel/Director-Land Use and Resource Management (LURM) Michael Cotter; Deputy Director of LURM/County Conservationist Mandy Bonneville; Walworth County Administrator Mark W. Luberda; and Executive Director of Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) Jacob Schmidt.

On motion by Citizen Representative Travis, second by Citizen Member Kuhnke, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.

On motion by Supervisor Stacey, second by Citizen Member Kuhnke, the minutes of the March 20, 2023, Land Conservation Committee meeting were approved.

Public Comment – There was none.

6. Introduction of Katelyn Miner – Sr. Planner

Deputy Director of LURM/County Conservationist Mandy Bonneville introduced Katelyn Miner as the new Sr. Planner. Miner will be replacing Matt Weidensee who will be retiring May 5th. Miner addressed the Committee and provided a brief overview of her educational and work related achievements.

7. Farmland Preservation Plan Certification and Authorization of Public Hearing

Bonneville noted the State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has certified the Walworth County Farmland Preservation Plan. Certification is valid through December 31, 2033. The County Board previously approved the Farmland Preservation Plan Update with Res. No. 80-11/22. Bonneville stated subsequent revisions were made to the plan to address DATCP requested additions and a public hearing is required per Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The Land Conservation Committee was asked to authorize a public hearing to be held on May 15, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. in conjunction with its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. During this meeting, the final revised plan update will be reviewed along with a proposed resolution. The resolution, if approved, would then move on to the full County Board for review at their June meeting. **Citizen Representative Travis offered a motion, second by Citizen Member Kuhnke, granting authorization of a public hearing. Motion carried 4-0.**

8. Aquatic Invasive Species Proposed Ordinance request from Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA)

Executive Director of Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) Jacob Schmidt provided an overview of his Memorandum of March 28, 2023 (Pages 11-13) regarding Chapter 30 Aquatic Invasive Species Ordinances. He stated the proposed ordinance aims to prevent the further spread of aquatic invasive species by giving each local municipality the power to enforce Chapter 30 through its municipal court system. It also allows each municipality to be a part of the solution to stopping the further introduction of aquatic hitchhikers and protecting our waterways and preserving the environment for future generations. He noted if such an ordinance were to pass, the enforcing agency would retain the violation fees collected rather than the fees going to the State of Wisconsin. Discussion then focused on how the proposed ordinance would affect the various municipalities and local police force, boat

enforcement agencies, and the Walworth County Sheriff's Office. Cotter explained the options available for either action or no action to the Committee. Walworth County would be second to Burnett County to adopt such an ordinance. Schmidt reported other counties have been hesitant to enforce a county ordinance due to the complications with the number of lakes they possess. He stated the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) is in favor of such an ordinance and is currently working on four lake management plans. The Committee expressed their desire to have the Walworth County Sheriff's Office and various lake districts weigh in on their thoughts relative to enforcement. Cotter stated a new Water Quality Specialist intern, funded by the Surface Water Grant Program, will be starting May 1st in the Land Use and Resource Management (LURM) Department and expressed that this position is not to be expected to report violations. Chair Holt suggested placing this matter on both the LCC and Executive Committee meeting agendas for May. Walworth County Administrator Mark W. Luberdia stated he could suggest to the Executive Committee that any motion they may make be subject to confirmation by LCC. **Citizen Member Kuhnke offered a motion, second by Citizen Representative Travis, to place the Aquatic Invasive Species Proposed Ordinance request from Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) on the May Land Conservation Committee Agenda. Motion carried 4-0.**

9. FSA Committee Member Representation Update: 2023 Assembly Bill 131

Bonneville provided an overview of the current controversy relative to Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee Members and their participation in the Land Conservation Committee (LCC) and/or equivalent boards. Wisconsin Land and Water, as a lobbying group, put together language to be included in Assembly Bill 131 removing specific FSA language from state statute. Walworth County spoke at the hearing relative to the Bill. Assembly Bill 131 has moved past the Assembly and is moving forward. Collaboratively Cotter, Bonneville, and Travis expressed the importance of having individuals with an agricultural background seated on the various committees making important conservation decisions. Cotter noted Walworth County has been invited to the signing should Assembly Bill 131 pass.

Confirmation of next meeting – The next meeting was confirmed for Monday, May 15, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion and second by Citizen Representative Travis and Citizen Member Kuhnke, Chair Holt adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.