

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors  
Land Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 15, 2023  
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114  
100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Brian Holt at 1:05 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present: Chair Brian Holt; Vice Chair Sheila Reiff (arrived at 1:06 p.m.); Supervisor Rick Stacey; Citizen Member Richard Kuhnke, Jr.; and Citizen Representative Sharon Travis. 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; Elkhorn Area High School Agricultural Teacher and Future Farmers of America (FFA) Advisor David Kruse; Elkhorn Area High School Seniors Macie Kruse and Mason Markham; LURM Water Quality Specialist Intern Naomi Mullen; Executive Director of Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) Jacob Schmidt.

**On motion by Supervisor Stacey, second by Citizen Representative Travis, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.**

**On motion by Citizen Representative Travis, second by Citizen Member Kuhnke, the minutes of the April 24, 2023, Land Conservation Committee meeting were approved.**

**Public Comment** – There was none.

6. Recognizing Elkhorn High School FFA for their participation and placement in the 2023 Wisconsin Envirothon Deputy Director of LURM/County Conservationist Mandy Bonneville introduced Elkhorn Area High School Agricultural Teacher and Future Farmers of America (FFA) Advisor David Kruse and Elkhorn Area High School Seniors Macie Kruse and Mason Markham who proceeded to give an overview of their experiences at the 2023 Wisconsin Envirothon Event hosted by WI Land & Water. Two team members not present were Ashlyn Cianci and Mariana Axtman. Kruse distributed a flier entitled WI ENVIROTHON-Planning to meet a changing environment. The students participated in hands-on, outdoor field challenges designed by natural resources professionals and educators. There were five categories: 1) Team Presentation; 2) Aquatic Ecology; 3) Soils and Land Use; 4) Wildlife; and 5) Forestry. The Elkhorn students competed against 21 teams from 18 different schools. Kruse noted this competition also serves as the WI phase of the state level competition for the Environmental Science Contest/Career Development Event. The overall high school winners will advance to the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon to compete for over \$100,000 in scholarships and prizes. The Elkhorn team took 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Soils and Land Use category; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place overall in the Envirothon competition; and 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the FFA portion of the State competition. It was teamwork, which contributed to their success.

Cotter put forth a genuine effort to solicit future employment with Walworth County once the students have graduated college.

**7. PUBLIC HEARING: Walworth County Farmland Preservation Plan Certification**

Bonneville provided a brief overview of the Walworth County Farmland Preservation Plan Certification process thus far. She noted a public hearing is required per Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes due to subsequent revisions made to the plan at the request of the State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Should the Land Conservation Committee (LCC) choose to approve the proposed resolution (Pages 9-11), it would then move on to the County Board for their consideration at the June meeting. If the County Board were to approve the proposed resolution without any further changes, it would then go to DATCP for final approval. Once approved by DATCP the plan would be good for another ten years.

**Chair Holt opened the Public Hearing at 1:18 p.m. on motion and second by Vice Chair Reiff and Supervisor Stacey. Motion carried 5-0.** Those present were the same as listed above.

Chair Holt opened the meeting for public comment. There was none.

**Citizen Representative Travis offered a motion, second by Vice Chair Reiff, to close the public hearing. Motion carried 5-0.**

Chair Holt closed the public hearing at 1:19 p.m.

8. Resolution Approving the Walworth County Farmland Preservation Plan Update

Chair Holt clarified the proposed resolution, if approved, will move onto the full County Board for consideration at the June meeting. **Supervisor Stacey offered a motion, second by Citizen Member Kuhnke, to approve Res. No. \*\*-06/23 – Approving the Walworth County Farmland Preservation Plan Update for 2022, Revised January 16, 2023. Motion carried 5-0.** Corporation Counsel/Director-Land Use and Resource Management (LURM) Michael Cotter noted there is a framed Farmland Preservation Citation Notice on the wall in the County Board Room from the State of Wisconsin dated 1978 and commended the Committee for their efforts to help keep the Farmland Preservation Plan moving forward for over 45 years.

9. Aquatic Invasive Species Proposed Ordinance request from Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) Bonneville introduced Naomi Mullen as the newly hired LURM Water Quality Specialist Intern. Mullen is a student at UW-Whitewater and will assist with facilitating the Surface Water Grant Project.

Bonneville briefly summarized the events from the April LCC meeting relative to the Aquatic Invasive Species Proposed Ordinance request from the Executive Director of Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) Jacob Schmidt. Bonneville reached out to nine lake districts and local law enforcement seeking their input relative to Walworth County potentially adopting an ordinance that would grant the power to enforce Chapter 30 at the local level. A summarization was provided relative to the responses received, which included:

- Interests ranging from no motivation for such a resolution to supporting such a resolution.
- Concerns with the lack of work force necessary to enforce such an ordinance.
- An interest in running a pilot test to gather data and the effects on enforcement.
- Walworth County Undersheriff Tom Hausner noted the Sheriff's Office is not prepared to enact such an ordinance and expressed concern with an increase in the deputies' workload relative to enforcement of Chapter 30.

Schmidt explained GLEA's intention for requesting such an ordinance.

Discussion then focused on current processes relative to signage and supplies made available to the public; educating the public; identifying, finding, and taking action against a grievous offender prior to contacting the local law enforcement and/or the conservation warden.

Cotter and Chair Holt suggested the Committee consider waiting to see if any lake district(s) and/or local police department(s) were to adopt a pilot program and perhaps revisit the topic by placing it on the Land Conservation Committee Agenda in May of 2024 to review the pros and cons of said program.

**Confirmation of next meeting** – The next meeting was confirmed for Monday, June 19, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

## **Adjournment**

**On motion and second by Vice Chair Reiff and Citizen Representative Travis, Chair Holt adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.**