

County of Buffalo
Alma, Wisconsin
Notice of Public Meeting

Committee: Land Conservation & Ag and Extension Committee
Date: Monday, November 2, 2020
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 3rd Floor County Board Room – Buffalo County Courthouse

AGENDA

This meeting is open to the public. The following matters may be considered and acted upon at the meeting, but deviation from the order shown may occur:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call of Members
3. Public Comment Regarding Posted Agenda Items
4. Review/Discussion/Action ~ Minutes of the Previous Meeting
5. Review/Discussion/Action ~ Recommendation to Appoint Kristin Foehringer as County Land Conservationist to the County Board of Supervisors
6. Review/Discussion/Action ~ Fill Vacant Land Conservation Technician Position, Review Position Justification and Requisition Form
7. Review/Discussion ~ LCC Member Training Materials Provided by WI Land + Water “Trainings for Counties”
Land and Water Training: <http://wislandwatermedia.org/webinars/>
LCC Handbook: https://wisconsinlandwater.org/files/pdf/2020_LCC_Handbook_FINAL.pdf
8. Review/Discussion/Action ~ Review and Approve Proposed Cost-Share Practice Application and Screening Process
9. Review/Discussion/Action ~ Update on PL-566 Program and Schedule Presentation with Scott Mueller, NRCS Assistant State Engineer
10. Review/Discussion ~ Update on Tell Farms
11. Agency Reports ~ USDA-NRCS/FSA
12. Chairperson Report
13. Land Conservationist Report
14. Public Comment Unrelated to Agenda
15. Review/Discussion/Action ~ Next Meeting Date
16. Adjournment.

Date: October 27, 2020

Dwight Ruff, Chair

Roxann Halverson

By: Roxann Halverson, County Clerk

Board Members: If unable to attend, please contact the Committee Chair at 608-323-7372. If unable to reach the Chair, please call the County Clerk’s Office at 608-685-6209. If neither are available, please call the Administration Office at 608-685-6235.

Persons with Disabilities: If you require special accommodations in order to attend this meeting, please contact the County Clerk’s Office at 608-685-6209.

Public Access to the Courthouse: The South Entrance will be the only access to the building after 4:30 p.m.

Draft
Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Land Conservation & Ag and Extension Committee

Date of Meeting: October 16, 2020

Call to order: Meeting called to order by Dwight Ruff, Chair, at 1:06 p.m.

Members present: Dwight Ruff and Steve Nelson. John Sendelbach, Dave Linse, Brad Schmidtkecht and William Bruegger, Sr., excused.

Others present for all or parts of the meeting: Sonya Hansen, Dennis Reimers and Chase Cummings.

Public Comments regarding Agenda Items: None

It was noted that there was not a quorum present. The members present proceeded to interview the slate of qualified candidates for the Land Conservationist position.

Public comments not regarding Agenda items – There were no public comments.

Adjournment: Mr. Ruff adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Submitted by:

Sonya J. Hansen, Recording Secretary

Draft
Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Land Conservation & Ag and Extension Committee

Date of Meeting: October 5, 2020

Call to order: Meeting called to order by Dwight Ruff, Chair, at 6:02 p.m.

Members present: Dwight Ruff, Steve Nelson, John Sendelbach appearing in person. Dave Linse attending via video. Brad Schmidtkecht and William Bruegger, Sr., excused.

Others present for all or parts of the meeting: Sonya Hansen, Carl Duley, Alec Sundelius, Kristin Foehringer and Tim Wucherer.

Attending via video for all or parts of the meeting: Abby Nicewander, Mary Wood, Pat Malone and Annie Lisowski.

Public Comments regarding Agenda Items: None

Review/Discussion/Action – Minutes of the Previous Land Conservation and Ag & Extension Education Committee Meeting: Motion by Mr. Nelson seconded by Mr. Sendelbach to approve minutes of the September meeting as presented. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action – 2021 Wildlife Damage & Abatement Budget by USDA Alec Sundelius: Alec Sundelius from USDA introduced himself and his role with the committee. He oversees the Wildlife Abatement and Damage program. He shared the 2021 budget with the committee. This program doesn't require county dollars. It is pass through money from the DNR. The budget is only slightly increased from 2020. Motion by Mr. Sendelbach seconded by Mr. Nelson to approve the deer damage budget as presented. Carried. A copy of the signed budget should be sent to Sonya Hansen, Administrative Coordinator.

Review/Discussion/Action – Extension 4-H Associate Position: Mr. Duley highlighted our requested support position and its importance for the office. Ms. Hansen shared the document prepared by the Extension Office showing the benefit Extension provides to the County. Motion was made by Mr. Nelson seconded by Mr. Sendelbach to re-affirm the committee's support for hiring the county-funded part-time position for Extension. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action – 136 Contract: Ms. Malone presented the 136 Contract to the committee. No action is needed tonight but wanted the committee to have time to look over the contract. Mr. Ruff directed Ms. Malone to present the 136 Contract to the full board so any questions can be asked and to maintain transparent communication.

Educator Reports: The Extension report was shared with the committee. Mr. Duley highlighted the work he has been doing on industrial hemp. He is very pleased with how the essential oil plot has turned out. Ms. Wood shared an update on her special project for Veterans involved in the criminal justice system. They are interviewing candidates for a position to facilitate the program. Ms. Lisowski shared that this is National 4-H week. She highlighted some of the signs and windows 4-H clubs have put together to recruit and promote 4-H countywide.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Outdoor Recreational Plan Update & Services Provided by Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission by Abbey Nicewander, Senior Planner:

Abbey Nicewander, Senior Planner with the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) informed the Committee that as part of our county contributions for joining this commission, their office can assist Buffalo County in updating their Outdoor Recreational Plan which is due to expire at the end of this year. She indicated that typically they hold an initial meeting with whoever would like to be involved in the plan update to identify our goals and vision for the future. They can provide the updated data. Ms. Nicewander stated that it is important to have a current plan as many grant opportunities require an Outdoor Recreational Plan. Mr. Duley stated that the County had previously had an intern complete a Silent Sport inventory that may be helpful. Ms. Nicewander indicated that this is typically a six-month process. Mr. Nelson volunteered to be a member of the Committee to work on the plan and would have a conversation with Ms. Nicewander.

Ms. Hansen indicated that she would work with Ms. Nicewander and Mr. Nelson to start the process.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Closed Session: The Committee did not go into closed session.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Tell Farms Reimbursement Process for Outstanding Invoices:

Ms. Foehringer updated the Committee on the status of this project. She indicated that this project is not your typical cost-share project and is under the Notice of Discharge Grant with the DNR. She wanted to make the Committee aware that the project work needs to be completed by the end of November and signed off by the engineer. She stated that this is a reimbursement grant and that some of the major contractors are requesting payment before they will do any additional work. She stressed that it is important that the work get completed timely to reduce any risk to the County. A motion was made by Mr. Sendelbach seconded by Mr. Linse to approve paying the outstanding contractor bills and to have Administration, Land Conservation and Corporation Counsel review the file for any additional action to reduce the risk exposure on this project. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ DATCP Funding for the Land Conservation Department:

Ms. Hansen indicated that the 2020 staffing grant is set in the amount of \$115,814. The former Conservationist salary before she left can be covered by this grant. Any other county staff doing conservation work can also be covered. The salary of the benefits of administrative assistants working on conservation work would be eligible to count towards this grant as well, along with the technicians' salaries and benefits. The County would not financially gain from not filling the Land Conservationist position as funding is based on prior costs. She indicated that not filling the position would also have an impact on developing and continuing conservation activities or practices in the County. Ms. Foehringer verified that the first position is paid in full, or \$75,000, whichever is more, the second position is paid at seventy percent and the third position is paid at 50% under the current

structure. She stated that if the position is not filled, funding would be substantially decreased as verified by DATCP. No action is required by the Committee.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Land Conservationist Vacant Position:

A motion was made by Mr. Sendelbach seconded by Mr. Nelson to fill the Land Conservationist position. Motion Carried.

Mr. Ruff, Mr. Sendelbach and Mr. Nelson were interested in serving on the Interview Committee. The Committee has tentatively scheduled interviews on Friday, October 16th. The Administration Office will inform the members of the actual dates and times when set. Mr. Ruff stated that due to the small department size that it would be beneficial for current staff to have the opportunity to meet and ask questions of any final candidate(s) prior to hiring. Ms. Hansen indicated that we could accomplish this with a second interview process. Ms. Foehringer indicated that Ms. Olson had also recommended bringing in outside expertise from NRCS and Pepin County to attend the interviews.

A motion was made by Mr. Ruff seconded by Mr. Sendelbach to approve awarding additional compensation to the two technicians presently covering the duties of the Land Conservationist retroactive to when Ms. Olson departed under the current employee policy until the position is filled. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Land Conservation Project Planning, Authorization and Workload Prioritization:

Ms. Foehringer and Mr. Wucherer indicated that they wanted to develop a ranking system for awarding cost share projects and have been working on a draft. Ms. Foehringer indicated that NRCS has guidance that she felt could be beneficial for the County. She indicated that they will present a draft for consideration at the next meeting.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Land and Water Resource Management Plan: Ms. Foehringer indicated that this plan needs to be reviewed before the end of 2022 and takes at least a year to develop. A motion was made by Mr. Nelson seconded by Mr. Sendelbach to table this item for a future meeting.

Chairperson Report: The Chair had nothing additional to report.

Review/Discussion/Action – Determine Next Committee Meeting: The next meeting date is scheduled for November 2, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Land Conservation will be first on the agenda.

Public comments not regarding Agenda items – There were no public comments.

Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Nelson seconded by Mr. Sendelbach to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Submitted by:

Patricia Malone,
Area Extension Director

Sonya J. Hansen
Administrative Coordinator



Position Justification and Requisition Form

Date: 10/21/20 Position Title: Land Conservation Technician
Department: Land Conservation and Resource Management Position Reports to: Conservationist

Position Information

New Position Replacement Date when vacated: 10/26/2020
Employee Being Replaced:
Reason for vacancy:

Is funding budgeted for this position? Yes, Budgeted No, Unbudgeted

How is the position being funded: General Discretionary Grant Other*

*If source of funding checked above is "other" please explain.

Partial funding through annual DATCP staffing grant

Realignment Activities

1. Why does this work need to be done at all?

This work needs to be performed to achieve the goals of the Buffalo County 10-Year Land and Water Resource Management Plan, to ensure compliance and adherence to state agricultural performance standards and state natural resource administrative statutes, to complete time-sensitive grant-awarded projects in multiple county watersheds, to support and provide resources to county agricultural producers, and to address emergency resource concerns due to flooding or other extreme weather and disturbance events.

2. Can it be absorbed by or redeployed to other employees in your department?

No, it cannot be absorbed by another employee. The unique job duties of this position requires: training/mentorship with area DATCP engineers; acquisition of engineering job approval; attendance of trainings offering engineering PDH credits to maintain and increase job approval status; development of engineered conservation practices following NRCS and state conservation practice standards; proficiency in AutoCAD Civil 3D design software; specialized knowledge to provide technical advice to landowners regarding development and installation of cost-share practices; site reconnaissance and selection for appropriate



Position Justification and Requisition Form

conservation practices; generating maps; delineating watersheds; generating spreadsheets with erosion and nutrient runoff predictions. The other staff members could not absorb these responsibilities while still completing their required position duties and goals. The County would also receive less in state-awarded cost-share grants for conservation practices and for staffing if this position would be eliminated – the less spent on installation of cost-share practices and on staff salaries results in less funding from the state in subsequent funding years.

3. How many similar positions do you have the department?

We have one technician position and one resource management specialist – they have dissimilar but complementary job duties and responsibilities in the department.

4. Can the duties be performed by any of the following choices:

- Y N Consolidate into an existing position? Y N Change to part time (less than 30 hrs per week)
- Y N Convert to 9, 10 Or 11 month position? Y N Redistribute to other positions?

*If not, please indicated why the above reasons are not appropriate.

This department has three total staff positions, all with extremely full work-loads. We are responsible for: Administering more than eight Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection administrative codes; providing training and outreach to staff, producers and collaborators; facilitating local, state and federal conservation standards; promoting youth agricultural and conservation education programs; building partnerships in the community and with other conservation agencies; seeking out grant and funding opportunities to fund county conservation practices; overseeing conservation construction projects; writing nutrient management and grazing plans; administering the Non Metallic Mining Reclamation and PL-566 programs, and addressing resource concerns and producer needs as they arise. In short, with only three staff members to support the required duties of a Land Conservation Department, largely determined by the LCC and State of WI, we need “all hands on deck”.

New Requested - IF ALL #4 above are “N” the following is required for consideration of New Positions

1) Estimate how much position will eliminate costs?

2) How will the position benefit Buffalo County?



Position Justification and Requisition Form

3) What additional tasks or responsibilities will this position cover?

4) How will the position help grow the mission and vision of the County?

5) How do you anticipate the reduction of expenses?

6) How do you anticipate the increase of productivity or efficiencies?

7) How do you anticipate this position increasing revenues?

8) Measureable Goals / Objectives to obtain

- Reduction of overtime costs
- Reduction of staff turnover
- What additional work or tasks will get completed?
- What improvements will be provided by the department?
- Will services be modified or efficiencies generated? (if yes, how?)
- Will you receive less complaints (Citizens /Employees?)
- Reduced unscheduled PTO
- Reduced sick leave
- Reduced incidents

Compensation Review – Attach Job Description

5. Has the job description been revised with the changes highlighted and reviewed by:

- a. Home Committee? Y N Date: _____
- b. Human Resources Committee? Y N Date: _____

Recruitment Specifications

Position Justification and Requisition Form

6. Position Type

Regular employee. Regular employees are assigned to full-time and/or part-time positions that are expected to remain employed by Buffalo County on a regular, ongoing basis as long as work is required or necessary, the employees) perform satisfactorily, and the department supports the continuing existence of the position.

Regular full time _____ (40 hours per week) Regular Part time _____ (hours per week) >30 for benefits

Limited Term Employment. Limited Term Employees (LTE) are assigned by the County to positions that are not expected to remain employed by the County on a regular, ongoing basis.

Must specify end date of appointment: _____

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer/Seasonal | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Op Student/ Intern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project Employee | <input type="checkbox"/> On-call | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant funded |

7. Preferred Start Date: __ November, 16 2020 _____

8. Pay grade/range: \$21.58 _____

Approvals –Committee Date / Original Signatures

Home Committee Approval: _____ (note date) Date: _____

Hiring Manager Approval: _____ Date: _____

Dept. Head Approval: _____ Date: _____

Administrative Coordinator Approval: _____ Date: _____

Please return to Administration once completed - To be completed by HR only

Name of Candidate _____

Proposed Hourly Wage _____

Proposed Start Date _____

Reason for Hire: _____



**Buffalo County Land Conservation Department (LCD)
Conservation Practice Cost-Share Screening and Inventory**

Landowner Name		Inspection Date	
Address	City	State	Zip
Contact Information:			

Practice Location:

Tax Parcel(s)			
Township	T__N	R__W	Section
Coordinates (Lat/Long):			

Applicants must consent to a NR 151 agricultural runoff management screening on the property in which cost sharing is being requested. All NR 151 agricultural performance standards and prohibition violations must be properly addressed prior to receiving voluntary cost sharing for the requested practice.

NR 151 agricultural runoff management status

Yes No **NR 151.02** All cropland and pastures meet tolerable soil erosion ("T") levels.

Yes No **Gully Standard** All areas of concentrated flow, located within the managed crop area, shall be treated or managed to prevent channelized rill and gully erosion. Circle any practices that apply:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Conservation Crop Rotation | Reduced or No-Till | Grazing Plan |
| Contour Farming | Strip Cropping | CRP/CREP |
| Cover Crop | Permanent or Perennial Vegetation | |

Yes No **NR 151.03** Tillage setbacks of 20 feet from the stream bank must be maintained with adequate vegetation to protect stream bank stability & prevent deposition of soil into surface water.

Yes No **NR 151.07** All crop and livestock producers must have a 590 Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) designed to managing the amount, placement, and timing of plant nutrients to obtain optimum rates and minimize the risk of surface and groundwater pollution. Farmers may apply for SEG funds to complete a 590 NMP and soil testing.

Date of 590 NM Plan update: _____

Date of Certified Soil testing: _____ Soil Test Lab: _____

Yes No **NR 151.04** All crop and livestock producers must be in compliance with the Phosphorus Index (PI) for any cropland, pasture, or winter grazing area. An average PI of 6 or less,

LCD Project Procedures for Cost-Share Programs

The purpose of this document is to outline the Buffalo County cost-share project process. Programs may include: Erosion control Conservation Practices, Cropland or Livestock Conservation Practices, Streambank Protection, and Bluff Prairie Restoration projects.

1. Landowner

Landowner interest (voluntary) – **Any Land Conservation Staff**
Notify **County Conservationist (CC)** for project assignment to technician

2. Site Visit

Determine site visit eligibility; add to tracking spreadsheet – **Technician, CC**
Create maps and conservation assistance form for site visit; save in sign-up folder - **Technician**
Document visit on C-S screening form, record coordinates, update tracking spreadsheet – **Technician**
Determine eligibility for technical assistance and cost sharing

3. Eligibility, Estimate & Commitment

Estimate total soil loss with NRCS Erosion Calculator; update tracking spreadsheet – **Technician**
Estimate watershed area - **Technician**
Select highest ranked projects for consideration – **CC**
Determine if cost sharing and/or technical assistance is available – **CC; DATCP Engineer**
LCC approval of cost sharing – **PA or CC**
Start current project file hard copy & computer file- **Technician or CC**
Commitment form must be signed by landowner – **Technician**
Explain LCD policy & procedures to landowner. (i.e., cost containment, etc.) - **Technician**

4. Survey & Design (If applicable)

Calculate hydrology using NRCS spreadsheet – **Technician**
Survey necessary cross sections - **Technician**
Soil boring locations and logs for design - **Technician**
Complete design and Operation & Maintenance plan – **Technician**
Submit cover page for cultural resources review - **Technician**
Job Approval Design Class & Construction Class - **Technician**
Construction deadlines - **Technician**
Review design for completeness, job approvals, and landowner signatures. Review construction deadlines for contractor availability (design, checked, approved, and construction) – **Tech or CC**

5. Cost Share Agreement/Amendment

Cost-Share Agreement Notarized (if necessary) by landowner and LCC Chair – **PA or CC**
Deed Recorded (if necessary) – **PA or CC**

6. Bids and Contractor Selection

Bid Letters and Notices mailed to Newspaper (if necessary), Notice of Award – **PA or CC**

7. Construction

Minimum Inspection requirements completed - **Technician**
Change Orders documented - **Technician**
Redline & Certification with proper construction job approval – **Technician; DATCP Engineer**
File review to ensure all documents completed – **CC**

8. Land Conservation Committee Review for Reimbursement

Paid invoices; two-party reimbursement to landowner – **PA or CC**

Landowner proof of payment, including in-kind – **PA or CC**

9. Reimbursement

Prepare vouchers for payment from appropriate expense account – **PA or CC**

Review vouchers and invoice for reimbursement -- **Financial Advisor**

Make payments and enter into Financial System -- **Financial Advisor**

10. Mail Check - Treasurer's office