

MINUTES  
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023  
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM 114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WI

Members Present: Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Jake Hahn, Dave LaFontaine, Laura Valenstein

Members Excused: Carmen Good

Staff Present:

Land & Water Conservation Staff: Barbara Peeters, Lori Ruess

Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg, Victoria Wilson (WebEx)

Extension Staff: Jeremy Solin, Karli Tomsyck

Others Present (for part or all of the meeting): Dist. #11 Supervisor Jeff Penzkover, Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, County Board Chair Lance Pliml (WebEx), Ben Jeffrey (Wood County Health Department – WebEx), Jack Akers, Michael Hobbs

1. **Call meeting to order.** Chairperson Leichtnam called the CEED meeting to order at 9:00am.
2. **Declaration of Quorum.** Chairperson Leichtnam declared a quorum.
3. **Public Comments (*brief comments/statement regarding committee business*)**  
Supervisor Buttke noted there was supposed to be action on the consent agenda on the meeting agenda to move item 8c into item 5. Chair Leichtnam asked for the committee's thoughts. Supervisor Valenstein felt it would be wise to move them up and items can be pulled if need be. This change will be reflected for the May meeting.
4. **Review Correspondence.** None.
5. **Consent Agenda.** The Consent Agenda included the following items: 1) minutes of the March 8, 2023 and March 21, 2023 CEED meetings, 2) bills from Extension, Land & Water Conservation and Planning & Zoning and 3) staff activity reports from Laura Huber, Jasmine Carbajal, Matt Lippert, Kayla Rombalski, Allison Jonjak, Hannah Wendels, Mallory McGivern, Janell Wehr, Jackie Carattini, Anna James, Lori Ruess, Barbara Peeters, Caleb Armstrong, Emily Salvinski, Kyle Andreae, Rod Mayer, Shane Wucherpennig, Jason Grueneberg, Paul Bernard, Jeff Brewbaker and Victoria Wilson.
  - a. **Approve minutes of previous meeting.** No additions or corrections needed.
  - b. **Approve bills.** No additions or corrections needed.
  - c. **Receive staff activity reports.** No additions or corrections needed.

*Motion by Laura Valenstein to approve and accept the March 8, 2023 and March 21, 2023 CEED minutes as presented. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve and accept bills from Extension, Land & Water Conservation and Planning & Zoning, and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Tom Buttke. Motion carried unanimously.*

6. **Review items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda.** None.
7. **Risk and Injury Report.** None.
8. **Land & Water Conservation Department**
  - a. Discuss and possible action on RC&D membership dues  
Chair Leichtnam noted there was a discussion last month on what percentage of RC&D membership dues should be paid. In a statement from RC&D, there are only 5 counties left that haven't paid their voluntary dues. Shane Wucherpennig indicated to Chair Leichtnam that the committee could wait one more month until he returns to discuss, unless the committee has an idea of what they'd like to do.

*Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve payment of 75% of Golden Sands RC&D membership dues for 2023.  
Second by Bill Leichtnam. Discussion followed.*

*Motion by Tom Buttke to table membership dues discussion until the May CEED meeting. Second by Jake Hahn.  
Motion carried unanimously.*

b. Introduction of new Conservation Administrative Specialist

Lori Ruess is retiring on Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> after 37 years with Wood County. Barb Peeters was introduced as the new Conservation Administrative Specialist. Barb has been with Wood County for 2 years, previously in the Human Services department.

The CEED committee welcomed Barb and thanked Lori for her service.

c. Committee Reports

i. **Citizen's Groundwater Committee meeting.**

Chair Leichtnam shared the group is going down on Conservation Lobby Day, April 25<sup>th</sup>, to lobby at the State Capitol. This will be the next meeting.

ii. **Health Committee report.**

Ben Jeffrey shared Environmental Health staff attended a water resource conference in the Wisconsin Dells recently. There was a lot of good groundwater information shared.

Health Department water lab nitrate and bacteria tests will be increasing to \$25.00. This was approved mainly due to increased costs of materials.

The Health Department website is getting some updates over the next month or so.

With moving committee reports to the consent agenda, Ben will submit written reports and attend CEED meetings as he's able.

iii. **Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGWCC) committee report.**

Chair Leichtnam noted a presentation for the gap analysis that will be made in Montello tomorrow evening, April 6<sup>th</sup>.

iv. **Golden Sands RC&D report.**

Chair Leichtnam highlighted that the last 2 RC&D meetings have been held at the River Block building. He also shared language from a 2023 farm bill resolution; the point of this resolution is to move it away from a federal farm bill and bring it back to a more regional level.

**9. Private Sewage.** None.

**10. Land Records.** None.

**11. County Surveyor.** None.

**12. Planning & Zoning**

a. Consider approval of Bollig Estates Preliminary Plat located in Town of Port Edwards

Jason Grueneberg shared a map of the Bollig Estates preliminary plat. It is a wooded parcel just off of G, south of the casino. It is a very flat site with sandy soils. There is one road coming off of G. The developer worked with the Highway Department to redesign this. Most of the lots are 2 acres, which is the town minimum.

Supervisor Valenstein expressed concern that the large lot size works against discussions had about trying to improve the housing situation. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Hahn noted he doesn't want to make it more difficult for housing developments in Wood County.

A question was raised on whether investigation has been done on nitrate levels. Discussion followed. Supervisor Leichtnam suggested the CEED Committee encourage the developers to let those purchasing the lots know about the possibility of high nitrates. Chair Pliml added there is no way to enforce it but it would be nice to inform and let people know or ask the developer to hand out a map talking about eventualities. Nothing would enforce any liability against the county. Discussion followed.

Supervisor LaFontaine asked if a ladder fire truck can get around the square corners. This would be a developer and township issue to consider and be aware of. Jason Grueneberg can speak to the town about it.

*Motion by Jake Hahn to approve Bollig Estates Preliminary Plat in the Town of Port Edwards contingent on town approval. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.*

b. Consider approval of Apsey Acres Preliminary Plat located in Town of Marshfield.

Jason Grueneberg shared a map of the Apsey Acres preliminary plat. It is mostly farm field with one old structure. It has heavier soil which provides some challenges as far as planning goes. In this plat, there are 9 different lots. There will be a road installed and a cul-de-sac that meets town requirements. Lots range from 1.6 acres up to 6.4 acres. Discussion followed.

Supervisor LaFontaine expressed concern with the design for fire truck accessibility.

*Motion by Tom Buttke to approve Apsey Acres Preliminary Plat in the Town of Marshfield contingent on town approval. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried.*

*Ayes – Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Jake Hahn, Laura Valenstein*

*Nay – Dave LaFontaine*

c. Consider approval of Ten Mile Creek Woods Preliminary Plat in the Town of Saratoga.

Jason Grueneberg shared a map of the Ten Mile Creek Woods preliminary plat. There are three 8-acre lots and five 3-acre lots that abut 64<sup>th</sup> street. It is a very wooded property and flat with very sandy soil. There is no flood plain, no wetlands and no shore land zoning. The lots are very large and given the sandy soil, installation of conventional septics shouldn't be a problem. It is zoned by the town as rural preservation. In Jason's conversation with the town, the development is allowed there as long as the lots are over 3 acres. Discussion followed.

*Motion by Tom Buttke to approve Ten Mile Creek Woods Preliminary Plat in the Town of Saratoga contingent on town approval. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **13. Economic Development**

a. Review timeline and process for 2024 Wood County Economic Development grants.

Jason Grueneberg noted they've already received inquiries regarding the grant process for this year. There was one meeting date in 2023 to review applications and it worked out well. Discussion followed regarding outreach and promotion.

Supervisor Hahn felt that last year went very smooth. The meeting will be held the first week of July, if last year's timeline is followed again.

b. Consider City of Pittsville/Pittsville School District request for REDI implementation funding.

Jason Grueneberg introduced Michael Hobbs from Pittsville. Jason noted residential property is up for sale. It is about 1.9 acres on the river. Pittsville High School has some of their athletic fields adjacent. When the property went up for sale, a lot of conversations were had in the City of Pittsville regarding acquiring the property for a variety of reasons. First, given the proximity to adjacent ball fields, it could be used for equipment storage. Also, there is a desire locally in their bicycle and trail planning to put a trail through here to connect residential areas to schools and Riverside Park.

The request to the CEED Committee is \$10,000.00. They don't know what the property is going to sell for; it is listed now for just under \$100,000.00. Discussion followed.

Jason shared there is \$83k remaining in REDI funding for the year.

*Motion by Tom Buttke to approve release of REDI funding to City of Pittsville/Pittsville School District in the amount of \$10,000.00 contingent on purchase of property. Second by Jake Hahn. Discussion followed.*

*Motion by Laura Valenstein to amend original motion to \$20,000.00. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Amended motion carried unanimously.*

c. Discuss possible future REDI Implementation request for the Central Wisconsin State Fair.

Jason Grueneberg shared the Marshfield Central Wisconsin State fairgrounds are in need of repair. They are looking for grant funding to start and plan to bring an application to CEED next month to do a feasibility study for an expo center on the grounds that could meet the needs of the fair but also be used year round. The request will be for \$50,000.00. Jason wanted to give the committee a heads up. Discussion followed.

#### 14. Extension

a. General Office Update

Jeremy Solin provided the following updates:

- In response to Supervisor LaFontaine's request to add an introduction to the Extension staff activity reports, Jeremy wanted to make sure it was suitable. Supervisor LaFontaine confirmed it was.
- Jeremy attended Central Wisconsin Profitability Expo on March 22nd. He shared it was inspiring to see what is happening. The expo was a great event to bring farmers and agency folks together. There are a lot of farmer led watershed planning and projects generally going on in the area.
- Extension has a project working with the Pittsville group to do planning around future economic development. State specialists are working with the City of Pittsville and the school district on planning efforts and it's progressing well.
- The Healthy Communities Coordinator FoodWise position was posted this week.

b. Discuss Renewable & Sustainable Initiatives

Chair Leichtnam shared under the Machon administration, there was a Renewables & Sustainable committee that Supervisor Hahn chaired. They met bi-monthly. There has been consideration over the past 6-9 months that the committee find a home again, potentially with CEED. Reuben Van Tassel, Facilities Director, was an active member of the committee along with Supervisor Hahn and Supervisor Leichtnam.

One of the main projects that came out of the R&S committee was the solar panel array at Nepco Lake. Supervisor Valenstein noted the potential for solar panels on the new jail.

Following discussion, it was determined Renewable & Sustainable initiatives will have a place on the CEED agenda for at least 2-3 months to see what ideas are generated and go from there.

Supervisor LaFontaine raised a question of what department would have time to go forward with a grant request to get solar panels on the jail. Discussion followed.

**15. Requests for per diem for meeting attendants.**

*Motion by Jake Hahn to approve per diem for Supervisor Leichtnam to attend the gap analysis presentation in Montello on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Second by Tom Buttke. Motion carried unanimously.*

**16. Schedule next regular committee meeting.** The next regular CEED meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023 at 9:00am at Wood County Courthouse Room #114.

**17. Agenda items for next meeting.** *Agenda items are due by Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>.*

- REDI Grant Request - Central Wisconsin State Fair
- Discuss Status and Structure of Renewable & Sustainable Initiatives
- Discuss Solar and LEED Certification for the new Jail

**18. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary.** None.

**19. Adjourn.**

*Motion by Tom Buttke to adjourn the meeting at 10:53am. Second by Jake Hahn. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Minutes by Karli Tomsyck, UW-Madison Division of Extension - Wood County*