

**Draft**

**Buffalo County Minutes**

**Committee/Board:** Land Conservation Committee

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2021

**Electronic and Hardcopy Filing Date:** May 20, 2021

**Call to order:** Meeting called to order by Dwight Ruff, Chair, at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Dwight Ruff, John Sendelbach, Brad Schmidtknecht. Bill Bruegger and Terry Sobotta excused. Steve Nelson arrived at 6:15 p.m. Quorum present.

**Others present for all or parts of the meeting:** Kristin Foehringer, Tim Wucherer, Joe Krumrie, Dennis Reimers, and Carl Duley. Present virtually - Sonya Hanson, Roxane Weisenbeck, Marie Ritscher, Mary Campbell Wood, and Pat Malone.

**Public comments regarding agenda items:** None

**Review/Discussion/Action- Minutes of the February 2021 Meeting:** Motion by Brad Schmidtknecht to approve previous meeting minutes and seconded by John Sendelbach.

**Review/Discussion/Action: Resolution for Opposition to Changes in WI Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program:** A resolution was passed in Vernon County opposing proposed changes in the Wildlife Damage and Abatement Program. Their resolution reflected Chair Ruff's feelings about the proposed changes, so he brought a similar resolution to this committee. The proposal has DNR taking over the program. Chair Ruff feels it is better to retain local control. Duley shared a brief history of the program. Sundelius believes if the bill passes the DNR would continue to partner with the USDA. Motion by Mr. John Sendelbach, second by Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht to send the resolution to the full board to oppose the proposed changes in the Wildlife Damage Abatement program. CARRIED.

**Review/Discussion/Action: Food Wise County Agreement:** Marie Ritscher presented the annual FoodWise agreement between the county and the state. It expresses the county's continued support of the FoodWise program. Motion by Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht second by Mr. John Sendelbach to continue county support of the FoodWise program. CARRIED.

**Review/Discussion/Action- Proposed Telecommuting Plan - Support Staff:** Kristin Foehringer presented the most updated requirements of the HR committee to approve new telecommuting agreements with employees. Malone presented the proposed telecommuting plan for Roxane Weisenbeck. Motion by Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht second by Mr. John Sendelbach to approve the proposed telecommuting plan for Roxane Weisenbeck. CARRIED. Kristin Foehringer will share the signed and approved form with Brenda to ensure it is put on the HR agenda.

**Educator Report:** Pat Malone shared the monthly educator report. It is on file in the Extension Office. Mary Wood highlighted her work on her special Veterans and Military Families work. She noted that she is seeing an increase in divorcing families. This leads to an increase for the Better Beginnings program. Carl updated the committee on his current and upcoming efforts. His new intern is from Winona State and started this week. Her funding will mostly come from the grant supporting Carl Duley's hemp

research. Most of the crops for his research plots have been planted. He reminded the committee that the Agriculture and Household Clean Sweep will be held June 12 at the Alma County Highway Shop.

Malone shared that the time has come for our annual recommendation to the judge for members for the Sanitary District Board. We need to identify three to four individuals who might serve. If committee members have any suggestions or are willing to contact individuals to serve, they are urged to let Carl Duley know. It will be put on our June meeting agenda.

**Review/Discussion/Action- NRCS Program Update- Dennis Reimers, District Conservationist:** Dennis Reimers shared the annual report and the 2021 funding requests and goals. Briefly discussed programs and funding costs and grants.

**Review/Discussion/Action- Proposed Telecommuting Plan - Support Staff:** Kristin Foehringer presented the telecommuting plan for her position for uninterrupted time at home one day per week to work on the Land and Water Resource Management plan. Motion made to grant telecommuting plan by Brad Schmidtknecht and seconded by Jon Sendelbach. CARRIED

**Review/Discussion/Action- Non-Metallic Mining Update- Milestone Materials:** Kristin gave an update. She explained that they reached out to Milestone and toured sites due for reclamation and to go over the reclamation plans.

**Review/Discussion/Action- Drone Presentation:** Drone technology presentation by Joe Krumrie. Joe discussed drone ability to provide elevation data and aerial imagery that could be used for county programs, Non-Metallic Mine site inspections, and other engineered projects. Kristin discussed that NMM contingency funds could potentially be used to purchase new equipment. Joe will provide follow up presentations and estimated cost at subsequent LCAE meetings.

**Review/Discussion/Action- NRF Driftless Area Conservation Plan:** Kristin Foehringer provided an update on the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin's initiative to create a conservation plan for the Driftless Region of WI. The proposed Plan adoption year is 2022. Falls in line with existing plans that are in place as well as NRCS. More stakeholder meetings will be held going forward to discuss the implementation strategy.

**Review/Discussion/Action- Bluff Prairie Summer Tour:** Kristin Foehringer explained the bluff prairie summer tour will occur in July and will be sponsored by the department, with assistance from DNR and bluff prairie landowners.

**Review/Discussion/Action-Agency Reports-USDA- NRCS/FSA:** Already discussed in Agenda item 9.

**Review/Discussion/Action-Committee Chair Report:** Dwight Ruff talked about second round of interviews for GIS position. Waiting for personality profile on one applicant and 3 good candidates for the position. They are hoping to make an offer soon.

**Review/Discussion/Action- Department Manager Report:** Kristin Foehringer submitted grant to fish and wildlife for trout stream restoration. If accepted she will bring to committee. She explained they completed a cost-shared grassed waterway and will be certified by the DATCP engineer. New DNR healthy watershed initiative aimed at watershed and surface water protection, to keep healthy watersheds in their current condition through 2025.

**Next Meeting Date/Time:** June 7, at 6:00 p.m.

**Public Comments:** There were no public comments.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Dwight Ruff at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted By

Anissa Glaus

Administrative Assistant