## Land Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014

The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Paul Kinney. Those present were Paul Kinney, Larry Sebranek, Richard Rasmussen, Randy Heims, Kent Marshall, Cathy Cooper, Gary Peters, Don Seep and Tammy Cannoy-Bender. Carlton Peterson arrived to give the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) report.

Motion made by Richard Rasmussen to approve the agenda & proof of publication; second by Larry Sebranek. Motion carried.

Larry Sebranek made motion to approve the March 10th, 2014 minutes, seconded by Gary Peters. Motion carried.

Cathy gave the Ash Creek Community Forest report. Don Wanless contacted the office to let us know that he would do the mowing of the trails for the same price that he did for 2013. Questions on whether it would have to go out for bid or not. Since the dollar amount will not change from last year there is no need to put it out for bid this year. Motion made by Don Seep to have Don Wanless do the mowing at Ash Creek Community Forest for the same rate as the 2013 season; second made by Randy Heims. Motion carried.

Cathy presented the Mill Creek Watershed. Ken and Mike Dreischmeier inspected the dams. The Huth dam will need to have the concrete cradle replaced as it is crumbling. The Brindley dam has cracks in the concrete on the sides and it will need to be caulked to fill in the cracks. Questions were asked regarding the cradle...what is it? Ken said it is a support for the pipe on the downstream side of the dam. The Ewers dam was caulked last year and will need repair in the near future. What needs to be done is cutting the concrete back to where there is good concrete and pouring new concrete. A couple of the other dams need some maintenance done that the office staff can do. The new concrete will need to be designed by a state engineer, once we have a plan and an estimated cost we can apply for a grant thru the DNR. We will also need to go to the County Board as this will be a capital expense. Since there has been budget cuts to individual departments the maintenance monies that were once placed for repairs are no longer available. This repair will need to be done within the next few years. Until we know what the cost will be we are unable to apply for any grants. Mike Dreischmeier informed Ken that a long as the county keeps maintaining the dams they will be eligible to apply for grants, unlike Vernon County that took over a dam and it needs repairs now that they will not be able to apply for any grants to assist in the repair. Mike will turn in a report into the DNR and a copy of the report to Cathy.

Cathy/Kent reported that they have a voluntary notice of non-compliance for Gary, Grace, Lee & Judy Clark property in Marshall Township. The Clarks' are requesting to be removed from the Farmland Preservation list as they do not claim any tax credits on the property. Durst-Larse are operating the crop land and the Clarks' would be eligible for the credit they just don't feel it is worth the hassle. Don asked about the report that Kent usually give regarding the number of claims of Farmland Preservation with in the county and state, Kent stated that as soon as he knows he will report back to the committee. Don made a motion to request having the report made available to the committee and to also send the report to Paul and Richard as they will no longer be on the committee, second made by Randy Heims. Motion carried. At this point Cathy reminded the committee that a motion was stilled needed for the issuance of the voluntary non-compliance for the Clark property. Motion made by Randy to approve the request of non-compliance, second make by Richard Rasmussen. Motion carried. The notice of non-compliance will then be sent on the Department of Revenue for filing. Don asked Kent about a report that was give last year about the number of claims that were taken thru out the state by county, Kent said that once the taxes are done there will be a report made available.

Ken gave the Conservation Technician report. Finishing up on few plans that were extended from last year, the owners are getting bids. Cathy won't have any contracts signed until 2014 cost sharing money allocation has been finalized. There are a lot of dam projects this year. Larry Sebranek as this time asked what is happening with the Japanese Knotweed in the county. Cathy will get in touch with Don Barrett to get things moving forward. We will need to put the spraying out for bid again the year.

The county truck will be back with the Land Conservation Department on May 1<sup>st</sup> this year. Everything seems to be working with sharing the truck with Pine Valley.

Cathy gave the County Conservationist Report. Cathy has the 2015 staffing/cost sharing allocation application from the state. Discussion followed on the monies that may be available. The discussion then went to a rumor of combining zoning and land conservation again. Should this happen the money that is received from the state will be reduced considerable. This would not be user friendly for the property owners of the County. Being co-located with the NRCS, FSA and the DNR works very well for a land owner that has to meet with the Land Conservation Department and then also with one or more of the other offices. When the land owner has to travel between offices they usually don't follow thru. Cathy has spoken with her counterparts in other counties that are combined and it doesn't work. The Land Conservation Department is put to the side. The Zoning issues take precedent over the Land Conservation issues. The two departments don't really work on the same things. After further discussion Cathy asked the committee about the allocation application. Motion made by Larry Sebranek to move forward with the application, second made by Don Seep. Motion carried.

Larry asked Cathy about the Little Willow cost sharing that Carlton had applied for. Cathy reported that she had put in for a Targeted Resource Management (TRM) grant on the Little Willow and it was won. Carlton had put in for a grant for the Middle Little Willow; he was not successful at this point. The TRIM grant will make landowners eligible for projects that they would not have done without the cost sharing made available thru this TRIM grant.

There was no one present to give the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) report. Cathy reported that there will be a conservation congress meeting at the courthouse. The foresters have been busy with forest fires.

JoAnn Cooley is in disaster training so Cathy gave the Farm Service Agency (FSA) report. Not much to report on. The Farm Bill has been signed. The rules are being written and until they are completed there isn't any new news to report. Hopefully at the May meeting she will have a little more to report.

Carlton Peterson gave the Natural Resource's Conservation Services (NRCS) report. All of the costs sharing programs are on hold until the rules of the farm bill have been completed. Compliance reviews in Richland County will be done by the District Conservationist in Crawford County. Carlton will be doing the compliance reviews in Grant County. The new state conservationist Jimmy Bramblett has changed a few things around. The local work group this year will include Sauk, Richland, Vernon and Crawford counties. The resource concerns are similar in these four counties and it should work. Gary Peters spoke about the pollinator initiative and to let Carlton know that there may be more people coming into the office asking about this program.

The April bills were presented as follows; CK Norman Development, \$949.00; Greg Cerven, \$995.83; Woodstock Nursery, \$932.50; Richland Center Shopping News, \$54.30; Ken Anderson, \$270.48. Motion made by Don Seep to approve the April Bills as presented, second by Larry Sebranek. Motion carried.

The next meeting is set for Monday May12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

Cathy thanked Richard Rasmussen and Paul Kinney for being on the committee.

Motion made by Richard Rasmussen to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Larry Sebranek. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Littly Cooper
Cathy Cooper
CC/tch