

**Land Conservation Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 8th, 2014**

The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Larry Sebranek. Present were, Larry Sebranek, Gary Peters, Virginia Wiedenfeld, Cathy Cooper, Kent Marshall, Ken Anderson, Randy Heims, Marty Brewer, Marilyn Marshall and Tammy Cannoy-Bender. JoAnn Cooley, FSA and Carlton Peterson, NRCS arrived later in the meeting. The DNR Foresters were absent.

Motion made by Virginia Wiedenfeld to approve the agenda & proof of publication; second made by Randy Heims. Motion carried.

Motion made by Gary Peters to approve the November 10th, 2014 meeting minutes; second made by Virginia Wiedenfeld. Motion carried.

Cathy gave the Ash Creek Community Forest report. Bid for the 2015 mowing season was published and 2 were sent out and only one was received back. No else expressed interest in the mowing. The one bid was opened from Don Wanless. His bid was for the same 2014. Motion made by Randy Heims to approve the Wanless bid with the reminder that the mowing is to be done in June, July & September with the option of August depending on the weather, second made by Virginia Wiedenfeld. Motion carried. Ken reported that some burning needs to be done on the prairie area of the property; this should be done in the spring. The trails are not open for any motorized vehicles.

Mill Creek Watershed Report: Cathy informed the committee that Ken went out to do inspection on the dams. Ken reported that the Ewers Dam, off of Highway 171 has some brush coming up around the area that needs to be sprayed and mowed. Larry suggested that the mowing and spraying should be done in July or August as that may kill the scrub brush and trees. Discussion followed about this suggestion. This is something that will be tried this coming year. The Durst Dam, off of County Hwy Z past Joe Triggs' property; this was mowed and sprayed a few years ago and still looks pretty good with a few sumac around the outlet pipe that will need to be cut. The Huth dam is the dam that is in need of repair. The concrete cradle that supports the pipe needs to be replaced in the near future.

Kent gave the WLI (Working Lands Initiative) Farmland Preservation report. He has received a couple complaints that he needs to check out and now that the crops are off the fields he can do this.

Ken gave the Conservation Technician report. There are no new contracts at this point. There is one more contract to be finished and should have the bills for that one at the January meeting. There will be some contract including Nutrient Management contracts that will need to be carried over to 2015; Larry will need to come in before the end of the year to sign the extension form for approximately 13 total contracts.

At this point Gary talked about the bees. There was a meeting of local bee keepers and there are some conflicting reports about some of the sprays that are being used. Tammy stated that she will direct any callers to Carlton Peterson, NRCS.

Cathy gave the County Conservationist report. She finally received the correct paperwork for the Little Willow Grant; she signed it and returned it to the state. Cathy will be checking with NRCS to see if there is anything that they will be able "piggy back" cost sharing. She also wants to check in with other areas of cost sharing to help the property owners with the 30% that they would be required to cover.

Wildlife Damage – motion made by Randy Heims to set the 80% Harvest date as January 1, 2015 second made by Gary Peters. Motion carried.

Virginia Wiedenfeld went to the Southwest Badger RC&D meeting that was held on December 5th, 2014. She gave a brief report of what the surrounding counties are doing to help generate funding.

There was no DNR report -

Joann Cooley gave the FSA report. The "Dairy Margin Protection Program" had been extended to December 19th. There will be a general CRP sign up in the spring of 2015 this should be announced in April. ARCPLC, the new commodity program, with the base reallocation update will need to be done by the end of February with the program being completed by the end of March. The LFP (Livestock Forage Program) payments should be going out by the end of the week. The county committee election ballots were counted last week and Randy Heims has been reelected. December 18th will be the winter potluck for the office; the committee is invited to attend the lunch. There will be a "white Elephant" gift exchange after the luncheon. JoAnn will be in Grant County for the 19th and possible the 18th, reviewing applications for the County Executive position that had been vacated.

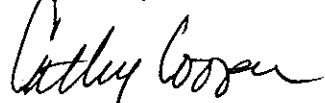
Carlton gave the NRCS report. The EQIP program sign up ended October 3rd, 2014 for the upcoming season. Ranking will be on a priority level. Those that are shovel ready will get high priority, those with most of the paperwork done will get a medium priority and those that came in just under the deadline will receive low priority and will not be funded for this program year. The High priority applications will be ranked by December 19th, the medium priority applications will be ranked by January 16th. At this point the amount of funding still is unknown however; the amount will be divided among 4 counties (Sauk, Richland, Crawford and Vernon). Out of the 46 applications received 3 were of high priority, 7 for medium priority and the balance were of low priority. The Honey Bee Initiative program deadline for sign up is December 19th. The CSP "Conservation Stewardship Program" contracts from 2010 expire this year with the participants having the option to renew the contracts for an additional 5 years or let them expire and then reapply later this Spring. He does have 7 contracts that will renewing their existing contracts and will be maintaining the original plan. There was some good news, the HEL determinations can once again be done by the local County Conservationist not by a different County's County Conservationist. Gary Peters let Carlton know that should there be any calls coming in about the Honey Bee initiative, there was a meeting in Gays Mills last week that suggested people contact the field office.

The following bills were presented; Greg Cerven, \$1,254.55; Tom Shields, \$1,021.36; Woodstock Nursery, \$126.00; Ken Anderson, \$190.40; Richland County Highway Department, \$91.28; Richland Observer, \$42.00; Bindl Tire & Auto Ltd, \$402.00; Scott Hoffman \$6,286.25.. Motion made by Randy Heims to approve the December Bills as presented second made by Gary Peters. Motion Carried.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

Motion made by Randy Heims to adjourn the meeting; second made by Virginia Wiedenfeld. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Cathy Cooper
Secretary Pro Temp
CC/tcb