

GREEN COUNTY LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

USDA Service Center
1627 4th Avenue West
Monroe, Wisconsin

Thursday, April 5, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM. Those present were Oscar Olson, Jeff Williams, Kristi Leonard, Dudley Timm, Russ Torkelson, Ken Hodgson, Chris Newberry, Tonya Gratz, Teresa Zimmer, Jason Thomas, Todd Jenson, and members of the public.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved on a motion by Torkelson, second by Williams. Motion carried.

The March bills were audited in the amount of \$10,166.55. A motion was made by Leonard, second by Williams approve the bills. Motion carried.

Jenson gave an update on the new position. Applications are being received. It is planned to have first interviews with staff by the end of this month, with final interviews at the next committee meeting.

Newberry requested a time schedule change for this summer, working from 7:00AM to 3:00PM. A motion was made by Torkelson, second by Hodgson to approve the request. Motion carried.

Jenson gave updates on the Livestock Study Group. A presentation of their recommendations will be made at the May 8 County Board meeting.

The 2017 Annual Report was presented to the committee. A motion was made by Leonard, second by Timm to approve the report. Motion carried.

The 2019 joint DATCP/DNR grant application was presented to the committee. A motion was made by Torkelson, second by Williams to approve the application. Motion carried.

There was no educational demonstration.

In committee concerns, it was asked how the milk program was going. Torkelson informed the committee he will be requesting to be removed from the committee to devote time to other endeavors.

Gratz informed the committee of the upcoming cover crop field day. Jamie Patton of UW-NMP will be the featured speaker. She has been working with the producer led Farmers of the Sugar River and has secured another \$5000. There will be a field day in August in standing corn to examine root development.

Thomas informed the committee of implementing EQIP. Eight payments have been done recently. Two WRP contracts have been completed. There are two new WRP applications that will probably get funded next year.

Newberry informed the committee of the upcoming tree distribution. He has been working with Peggy Compton on recruiting water action volunteers for sampling sites on the Little Sugar River, Ward Creek, and possibly Legler School Branch.

Zimmer informed the committee the MPP (Margin Protection Program) has announced changes to the program and they were having their training that afternoon. They have tentatively set informational meetings for mid-April at the Green County Justice Center. 2018 ARCPLC signup is starting the last big push with the end in sight. They have been re-scheduling missed appointments and are trying to have the majority completed by April 25. They do have many contracts (about 37 %) that are initiated but need additional signatures, rental statements or contracts signed by other operators or owners. Altogether they are about 90% completed and initiated. Farm record changes are now finally starting to wind down as well. However, they are still very busy with updates of land sold and purchased, new operator changes along with the regular creation of new entities. Market Assistance Loans (MAL's) have some additional repayments with the ever-changing markets. The interest rate has been steadily increasing. The rate for commodity loans for the month of April is at 3.0 percent. This is an increase of 0.125 (1/8th) percent. The interest rate for the Farm Stored Facility Loans (FSFL) for the month of April 2018 has also increased with ranges from 2.375 percent for a 3-year loan; 2.625 percent for a 5-year loan; 2.750 percent for a 7-year loan and 2.875 percent for a 10-year loan. The first cost-share for CRP bills are starting to come in from those that had to do mid-management burn practices. Their office is working with Blackhawk Tech College and have a student volunteer completing an internship. Joe Parr is here with them for a few weeks.

In public comments and questions, it was announced of a meeting hosted by Farmers Union on farm profitability.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 3, 2018, beginning at 9:30 AM at the USDA Service Center.

A motion was made by Hodgson, second by Williams to convene into closed session under S.S.19.85(1)(c) for the purpose of considering performance data on a public employee for the annual performance evaluation of the County Conservationist. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Hodgson, second by Timm to reconvene into open session. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Leonard, second by Torkelson to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.