

**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee**  
**TUESDAY, October 11, 2022 AMENDED Minutes**  
**Courthouse County Board Room & Virtually by ZOOM**

**Committee members:** Chairman Jim Winkler, Bob Thome, Jr., and Linnaea Newman. Tommy Ryden, Collette Sorgel, and John Engel on Zoom.

**Others Present:** Michele Sadauskas, Karl Jennrich, Tom Jerow, Merry Lehner, and Jonna Jewell. On Zoom: Terri Kolb, Dan Butkus, and Steve Schreier.

**1. Call to order and Chairperson's Announcements:**

Chair Winkler called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was properly posted and handicapped accessible and ADA compliant. The symbol /s/ represents a valid virtual attendee's signature.

**2. Approve Agenda:** A motion by Ryden/Newman to approve the October 11, 2022 Amended Agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

**3. Approve Minutes:** Sorgel/Newman motioned to approve the September 12, 2022 minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

**4. Dates /Location of Future Meetings:**

Monday, November 14, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. Northwoods Center at Nicolet College  
Monday, December 12, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. Northwoods Center at Nicolet College

**5. Public Comment:** None.

**6. 2023 Wildlife Damage Budget Approval/Signature:**

Jim Tharman, Wildlife Services, presented the 2023 Wildlife Damage Budget to Committee for approval. There is a 4% cost of living increase reflected in salaries and also in IT support. The 2022 budget was included for comparison. It is grant money which goes in and then out of the department, and is at no cost to the County. Newman/Winkler motioned to approve the 2023 Wildlife Damage Budget as presented. All ayes, motion approved.

**7. Wakeboat Update:**

Sadauskas spoke with Scott Van Egeren at the DNR about the grant application for lake classification and enhanced wakes. An advisory group is being formed and some people involved are a Town of Newbold representative, Norris Ross, with OCLRA, and a Squash Lake District representative. She is happy to see the response and support. Partners will work out the finer details and see how promotion and education will be presented.

**8. Solar Farm Update:**

Sadauskas followed up on the buffer plantings at the Solar Farm. The shrubs that died last winter have been replaced. Wheat was sowed last week. Baerbel Ehrig will check on the status the last week in October. They will ask if seeding of more pollinator mix will take place. Karl Jennrich said zoning will be scheduling an on-site inspection the last Friday of the month. He will meet with Erik Udelhofen with One Energy to follow up on erosion issue.

## 9. Lake District Updates:

- a. Bear Lake. Report was distributed and presented. Annual meeting was September 3, 2022.
- b. Crescent Lake. Report was distributed and presented.
- c. Squash Lake. No Report
- d. Lake Nokomis. No Report. Newman stated that there were no events to vote on at last meeting. She is included on the agenda to provide an Oneida County update at the Lake District meeting. Invasive species have been addressed at last two meetings and available grants. There will be an update on wakeboats at the next meeting.
- e. PC-505 Tax Levy Appointment Form. The Lake Associations are responsible to file this form and they will be meeting on Friday. Sorgel said they are looking for an identification number from the Lake District. Dan Butkus will supply some information about the number after the meeting.

## 10. Land Water Conservation Board Report – B. Thome.

A short summary of the meeting was distributed. Thome attended and was very impressed with the reports of the Land Water Resource Management Plan for Racine, Dodge, and Fond du Lac counties. There is a link in the report to read those reports. DATCP and DNR proposed their allocation and Oneida County will receive \$168,000 from those funds. The next meeting is in December.

## 11. LWCD Update:

- a. Office Business Card. Winkler requested a business card to hand out to his contacts regarding the Land Water Conservation department. A card was designed and presented to the Committee. It has just basic information and website. It also lists “We can help you with” on the opposite side. An order was placed for the cards.
- b. Grassworks Grant Update. Grassworks received the farmers outreach grant. Lumberjack, Golden Sands, and Glacier Land RC&D organizations will be included. They will hire a new employee will do agricultural outreach to farmers in those service areas. Sadauskas will connect with this new person to hand over information from LWCD. She will work closely with them but this will free up time for Sadauskas.
- c. Healthy Lakes & Rivers Grant Application. At site visits, Sadauskas is often asked for County help. One property owner is interested. The property owner will have to go through the County for help with shoreline plantings. These are small grants of \$1000. The individual property owner cannot apply for the grant directly; they have to go through the County. Newman/Ryden made the motion to move forward the grant application as presented. All ayes, motion approved.

## 12. Consent Agenda Items: LWCD

Consent Item a. Sadauskas presented a reply to question raised at the August monthly summary. Tina Smigielski, Finance Director, presented an email with an explanation. The September Monthly Budget report sent out, per Smigielski, is a “soft close” and a more detailed report will follow. A motion by Newman/Thome to accept the corrected August report and postpone the September report to the November meeting. All Ayes; motion carried.

Note: The Invoices page was updated to include a Wildlife Damage entry in the amount of \$5,961.20. A new updated report was distributed. Motion to approve item b by Thome/Newman. All ayes; motion carried.

## 13. LWCD Items for Next Agenda:

September Monthly Budget Report. Grassworks and Solar Farm updates.

**14. Public Comment:** None.

**15. Area 4 Extension Director Update – Amber Rehberg**

UWEX Status Update

1. CDI Position Update Based on Administration Budget Hearing Decision. At the Budget Hearing, budget reductions were \$1.7 million. Any open department positions were asked to be eliminated. As a result, \$44,900 was removed from the Extension budget for the open Community Development (CDI) position. At the request of the Committee last month, Rehberg presented a more condensed version of the scoping document for the position. Rehberg included a listing of specific duties the former educator accomplished and asked if it could be presented to the County so they could have a better idea of what would be lost. Both Forest and Oneida County have open Community Development positions. Winkler along with Rehberg asked if there is a possibility to ask for a split of the position between the two counties. All the resources available from the State are still available with a 50% position. Winkler asked the Committee if they could make this request at the November Budget Meeting for a 50% position. A half time position is \$22,450 and the full time is around \$60,000, including the federal, state and county allocations. If not utilized, that money will go to other counties, not us. Thome said a half position is better than none and the option should be presented at the next meeting. Newman and Sorgel agreed that having the whole University at their disposal is of great advantage to Oneida County. Grant writing may be another option.

Motion by Newman/Thome to present a resolution at the November Budget hearing to request a half time CDI position, costing \$22,450, asking for consideration in reinstating the position. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Communication Plan. The August and September numbers were off due to the State Planning and Reporting Portal not being accessible for some of the educators to enter their data. The County Report presented represents the numbers that educators had available on their own. We are looking for ways to share the County Report elsewhere such as the libraries, on our website, media releases, and other places to get the programming information out.
3. Nicolet Collaboration. Until the CDI job position is filled, most collaboration will be on hold. Nicolet collaboration has been through leadership courses, and they are looking for business networking and community partnerships. The rest of the staff currently does not have the capacity on this effort.
4. Nicolet FY 2023 Contract Approval Update. The contract sent to Corporation Counsel for approval contained the full time CDI position. It will need to be edited and re-approved.

**16. Programming Report- Oneida County Master Gardener Program and Support**

Merry Lehner presented changes in the Master Gardener Program. On-line classes have replaced the county lead classes statewide, which are required to become a certified Master Gardener. The Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program reorganization offers some benefits to where and how gardeners can do volunteer work. State policy and procedures were reviewed and allow volunteer projects to work through local organizations rather than asking approval through Madison. Volunteers still work under the State guidelines that define volunteer activities and educational opportunities. Accomplishments of Oneida County's local association, Master Gardeners of the North, were shared and informed the Committee of local projects and gardens worked on by Master Gardeners. The Extension office takes inquiries in person, by phone, and email regarding flora, fauna, and insects and uses State resources to provide answers and fact sheets on such inquiries. Many local people rely on this Extension office service free to the public.

**17. Consent Agenda Items: Extension**

A motion by Newman/Thome for the approval of monthly invoices, agenda item a. and b. the Monthly Budget report to be approved next month. All ayes, motion carried.

**18. Extension Items to include on next agenda.**

Present resolution on CDI proposal. Approval of edited Contract, Next CUW Cmte. Mtgs. At Nicolet for Nov/Dec. Staffing, Communication Plan, Nicolet Collaboration.

19. **Public Comment:** Tom Jerow, thanked the Committee for consideration to re-instate a CDI at part-time so the County does not miss out on that money. He noted that the Master Gardeners of the North do have projects all across the County. Examples are the Three Lakes Pollinator Garden and Minocqua Hospice Garden. The Rhinelander Area Food Pantry garden donates 3,000 to 5,000 pounds of produce to the pantry.

20. **Adjournment:** 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Merry Lehner, Recording Secretary

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Jim Winkler, Committee Chair