

Minutes of September 18, 2007 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Chuck Zenner at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Donald Purvis, Wayne Lato, and Charles Zenner, Chairman. Tim Peterson was absent. Others present were Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Program Manager; Deb Esselmann, FSA County Executive Director; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Lato/Dave to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by to Lato/Purvis to approve the August 21, 2007 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

August-September 2007 bills were circulated for review, and the Ki;u-August budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Lato/Purvis to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

2007 Drinking Water Education/Testing Program update: Maps have been completed that reflect testing results from 1985 through this year's testing. Approximately 130 tests were done this year during the special program. This is in addition to another 50-60 done throughout the rest of the year. Overall, the water quality in Taylor County is pretty good, but arsenic is still an issue with about ten percent of wells tested having some arsenic.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, reported:

- Bovine Asset Management, a heifer facility in the Town of Roosevelt, is expected to exceed 1,000 animal units and will be getting a state permit. They are looking at using EQIP funds for runoff control practices.
- A second operation in Taylor County, owned by Paul Augustiine, will probably be exceeding 1,000 animal units in the near future and will also need a permit.
- LCD is working with Chad Webster on a nutrient management plan. There are at least two manure storage facilities on the farm. There is a creek adjacent to the facility with the potential for runoff problems so it is beneficial to address issues before problems occur.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported:

- The EQIP sign-up started September 4 and will run through November 16. The sign-up started about one month earlier than usual. The early sign-up is advantageous for getting surveying completed while the weather is good. There were five applications for manure storage. They will be ranked on a statewide basis. EQIP payments will again be based on a flat rate. Manure storage has a maximum cost-share for most pits of \$80,000 for the pit and liner, \$14,000 for the manure transfer system, \$5,075 for milk house waste, and \$3,000 for the milk house waste transfer pipe for a total of \$102,075. Larger pits may be cost-shared up to \$160,000. Most EQIP applicants are expected to also apply for county cost-share funds. Taylor County will again be using fund pools: 30% of the available funds will be designated for grazing, 10% for waste storage closures, \$1,000 for well decommissioning, \$12,000 for organic

practices, and the remainder for the regular pool. If any pool has unused funds, the remaining funds can be transferred to other pools. Grazing cost-saring has changed this year. The 2007 payment schedule was \$105/acre over 3 years with individual components not eligible for payment. In 2008 the payment will be \$7/acre with individual components also being eligible for payment. Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) payments have been reduced from \$8,500 to \$7,500 for private consultant fees. CNMPs were costing only \$3,500 - \$6,000, but the landowners were getting the full \$8,500.

- The Conservation Security Program (CSP) may go nationwide. Those having a CNMP will be at an advantage.
- Construction is winding down with three projects in the finishing stages. One Wetland Reserve Program project may be delayed until next year.
- The floods in the southern part of the state brought up some questions about design standards, including those for manure storage. Covers designed for odor control may also help to decrease the potential for overflow during large storms.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselmann, County Executive Director, reported:

- The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) is taking application in the flooded areas of southern Wisconsin, although so far there is no funding available. If funding becomes available, practices such as fencing and waterways will be eligible. There are no crop damage payments as part of the program.
- A disaster payment sign-up for 2005 and 2006 losses started last week. The payments are specific to livestock losses resulting from drought in those years. The program applies to pastures, stock over 500 pounds, and has a 139 day limit. There are still no rules for the program.
- October 5 will be the start of sign-up for crop disaster payments for 2005 or 2006. Only those with crop insurance are eligible.
- The final 2007 DCP payments will be out in October.
- There will be no new Farm Bill by the end of September; the Senate has not yet passed its version.
- Wisconsin FSA is restructuring its offices with six proposed for closing. The closures were recommended by the state director and approved by the Washington office. They are scheduled to take effect next year but need approval by the legislature. Wisconsin has a high workload compared to the nation as a whole.
- There are no LDPs due to high corn prices and not MILC payments due to high milk prices.
- There is a proposal on the national level to move facility loans from FSA to the Farm Loan program. If this is done, the county committees will have no voice in the facility loan program.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D –Lanice Szomi, Program Manager, reported:

- Bob Brandt, the Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D grazing specialist, has completed ten new plans totaling 513 acres, six revised plans totaling 557 acres and eleven plans under EQIP totaling 844 acres.
- There is a possibility of a part-time Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D person in Rusk County but right now the budget is up in the air. Funding for the three existing grazing specialist positions is also in question.
- The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) may take proposals before funding is certain so that they will be ready to go as soon as funds become available.

Farmland Preservation Program applications: MOTION by Krug/Purvis to approve Farmland Preservation Agreement applications for Camby and Ginger Berry, 279.29 acres, Sections 33, 35, and 36, Town of Holway and for Robert Heiden, 120 acres, Sections 17 and 18, Town of Rib Lake. **MOTION CARRIED.**

2008 Land Conservation Department Budget: MOTION by Lato/Krug to approve the proposed budget and forward it to the Budget Review Committee. **MOTION CARRIED.**

2007 WLWCA Annual Conference: The annual conference will be held December 5-7. Registration is due by November 15.

Ethiopia Experience: Oberle showed photos and discussed his experience in Ethiopia with the Farmer to Farmer program.

Future meetings/events: MOTION by Lato/Purvis to approve all meetings below. **MOTION CARRIED.**

County Conservationist Meeting (Oberle) (Waupaca) October 4-5, 2007
Next LCC Meeting October 16, 2007

Adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Minutes of August 17, 2007 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Chuck Zenner at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were Donald Purvis, Wayne Lato, Tim Peterson, and Charles Zenner, Chairman. David Krug was absent. Others present were Chris Borden, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Coordinator; Paul Malovrh, NRCS Conservation Technician; Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; Kyle Noonan, LCD Engineering Technician; Benjamin Wojahn, LCD Resource Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Lato/Peterson to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by to Peterson/Lato approve the June 19, 2007 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

June-August 2007 bills were circulated for review, and the July 2007 budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Lato/Peterson to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

2007 Drinking Water Education/Testing Program update: Approximately 150 wells will be tested this year including those who took part in the special testing promotion and those testing during the rest of the year. As in previous years, arsenic was detected in some wells. Maps and final tabulations of results are not yet available.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, reported: Oberle introduced Benjamin Wojahn, the new Resource Conservationist, who gave a brief summary of his background and his activities during his first three months with the department.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Paul Malovrh, Conservation Technician, reported: Malovrh summarized NRCS projects so far this year, including projects involving piggy-backing of funds with the LCD. Practices completed through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) include two animal trails, two grassed waterways, and two barnyard runoff control systems. Two grassed waterways were completed under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Additional upland of 13.1 acres will be enrolled in the CREP program as a permanent easement. Construction on two barnyards is currently underway with one about 95% complete and the other about 25% complete. Another barnyard and a grade stabilization structure were scheduled to start but were delayed due to rain. Additional projects scheduled for construction this year include one animal trail and walkway, two barnyard runoff control systems, one wetland restoration under the Wetlands Reserve Program, and a manure storage facility. In addition, designs have been completed for a leachate control and barnyard control on another farm. Five landowners are interested in manure storage for next year.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS, reported: The venison donation program will be offered again this year. **MOTION** by Peterson/Lato to approve \$50/deer for processing of deer donated to the program. **MOTION CARRIED.** Hickory Nutz and Jump River Slaughterhouse have indicated that they will take part in the program. This may be the last year of the program, which provides meat for food pantries, if funds are not found to replace the loss of federal funding for the program.

About 130 bears have been moved. In addition some have been euthanized. The number of problems caused by bears appears to be increasing. The first corn complaint was filed August 1, which is early. Enough tags have been issued but not enough bears are getting killed to lessen the problems. There will be a youth bear hunt in Price County; Taylor County does not offer such a hunt.

A bear and wolf conference in Minnesota provided valuable information coming out of recent studies.

Zydzik is continuing to take part in the wildlife monitoring program at the Taylor County airport.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D – Chris Borden, Coordinator, or Lanice Szomi, Program Manager, reported:

The House of Representatives passed the Farm Bill. Grazing has been tough this year due to the drought and heat. It is questionable whether or not there will be federal money available for grazing specialists in the near future. Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D is looking for funding to provide free soil DVDs to agencies. The price to the general public is \$30. Borden is meeting with realtors and others to look at other potential uses for the DVDs and at what other products could be generated from the information.

Northwest Land & Water Conservation Association (NWLCA) – Steve Oberle reported:

NWLCA met in Hayward on July 27. Conservation supporters will miss Jim Byrnes, who died earlier this year.

Farmland Preservation Program:

MOTION by Lato/Petersons to approve Farmland Preservation Agreement applications for Peter W. & Margaret J. Skille, 240 acres, Sections 29 and 30, Town of Ford and for Larry and Lori Glebke, 280 acres, Sections 4 and 9, and 78 acres, Section 16, Town of Aurora (W). **MOTION CARRIED.** Reviewed Farmland Preservation Agreement applications for Camby and Ginger Berry, 280.17 acres, Sections 33, 35, and 36, Town of Holway and for Robert Heiden, 120 acres, Sections 17 and 18, Town of Rib Lake. Participants will need a nutrient management plan as well as a conservation plan.

County Conservation Aids Program:

MOTION by Peterson/Purvis to provide additional matching funds of \$945.50 from the existing LCD budget for the 2007 Conservation Aids project at Rib Lake. The funds match an additional \$945.50 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

2008 DATCP/DNR Joint Preliminary Allocation Plan:

The plan increases the staffing portion of the annual grant by \$4210 and the cost-share portion by \$6388 for a total grant of \$200,820.

2008 LCD Budget:

The total county levy in 2007 was \$103,311, dropping to \$101,901 in 2008 under the proposed budget. The county levy for operating expenses for 2007 is \$31,680 and would be \$32,680 in 2008 under the draft LCD budget proposal.

Correspondence: *Thursday Note; Wisconsin RC&D Annual Conference Information*

Future meetings/events:

MOTION by Lato/Purvis to approve all meetings below. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Next LCC MeetingSeptember 18, 2007

MOTION by Peterson/Purvis at 11:50 a.m. to move into closed session [per 19.85(1)(c), Wis. Stats.] for approximately one hour for Oberle evaluation. **MOTION CARRIED.**
MOTION by Lato/Peterson to adjourn at 12:05 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes of June 19, 2007 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Wayne Lato at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were Donald Purvis, Wayne Lato, and Tim Peterson.. Others present were Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Program Manager; Deb Esselmann, FSA County Executive Director; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; Kyle Noonan, LCD Engineering Technician; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant. Charles Zenner and Dave Krug were absent.

MOTION by Peterson/ Purvis to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by to Peterson/Purvis approve the March 2007 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

April-June 2007 bills were circulated for review, and the March-April budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Purvis to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

2007: Conservation Assistance Program update: Noonan reviewed the progress of projects that are part of the cost-share program.

2007 Tree/Shrub Sale program summary: Mauer reported that over 22,000 trees had been sold, including 100 wildlife packages to the Taylor County Sportsman's Club. Leftover trees were donated to 4-H and to the Medford FFA.

2007 Land Stewardship Conference report: About 135 people took part in the conference, which was held April 14 at Rib Lake High School. Evaluations were very favorable.

Farmland Preservation Program: A resolution approving new standards for the program was sent to the County Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, reported: Several projects involving Animal Waste Ordinance permitting are underway. Phil Kubishak has contacted the department concerning construction of a reception pit. Oberle asked the committee for its opinion on the need for a permit. The committee expressed the opinion that a permit was needed. A pit closure is currently underway on the Filipiak property near Gilman. It is part of the Enbridge Pipeline installation. Bovine Asset Management, which is a heifer replacement operation, has at least 850 animal units. Ed Brecke started closing a pit along County Rd A near Stetsonville without a permit.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported: EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) had twenty applications totaling \$231,146.20 approved; work is going forward on these projects. Two applicants cancelled out. Dan Hoffman is waiting for approval from DNR for a WRP (Wetland Reserve Program) project. Other WRP projects greater than fifteen acres will be considered. NRCS is working on a new appraisal system; the appraisal system had been revamped but it was not satisfactory to landowners and there were no takers for new projects. HEL (Highly Erodible Lands) determinations have been completed and notification letters are being sent out. Paul Augustine has hired a private engineering firm for a project that he is considering.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselmann, County Executive Director, reported:

There are no MILC payments through June. The program has been extended for one month, which will make it eligible for inclusion in the new Farm Bill. New maps are being used for crop reports; there is statewide availability of maps with the CLU layer. There will be no 2007 NAIP photos. There is a new disaster program for 2005 and 2006, but producers need to have had insurance to be eligible. DCPs were extended to August 3. Crop reports are due by July 15. Nothing has been decided relative to the new Farm Bill. Six FSA office closures are planned for Wisconsin.; Wisconsin offices have a high workload compared to the national average.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS, reported:

Zydzik is involved with an environmental assessment at the Taylor County airport. The assessment will take approximately twelve months and involves counting wildlife in the area of the airport runways. Twelve to thirteen wolves were euthanized. One farmer shot one without a permit; several have permits but have not shot any wolves. Bear complaints are the worst in many years; one factor may be that fewer hunters appear to be baiting, perhaps due to high fuel costs. Six orphan cubs were sent to rehabilitation facilities. There have been complaints of damage from deer, geese, and cranes. Several landowners in Taylor County have signed up for the damage program. There is a \$100 fee for a goose permit. A few cranes are being killed as part of the Wildlife Damage Program

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D –Lanice Szomi, Program Manager, reported:

Bob Brandt, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D grazing specialist, is working on several grazing plans and is finishing EQIP grazing plans. The soil DVDs now have additional layers, including fishing access easements.

Farmland Preservation Program applications for Peter W. and Margaret J. Skille, 240 acres, Sections 29 and 30, Town of Ford and for Larry and Lori Glebke, 280 acres, Sections 4 and 9, Town of Aurora (W) were reviewed.

Conservation plans: MOTION by Peterson/Purvis to approve nutrient management plans for Bovine Asset Management, LLC; Ray Sackmann, and Allen Kasperek as presented.
MOTION CARRIED.

Future meetings/events: MOTION by Peterson/Purvis to approve all meetings below.
MOTION CARRIED.

NWLCA (Oberle)(Hayward) July 27, 2007
Next LCC MeetingAugust 21, 2007

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Minutes of March 20, 2007 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Chuck Zenner at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Donald Purvis, Tim Peterson, and Charles Zenner, Chairman. Wayne Lato was absent. Others present were Chris Borden, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Coordinator; Brad Ruesch, Taylor County Forest Administrator; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Peterson/Krug to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Krug/Purvis to approve the February 20, 2007 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

February-March 2006 bills were circulated for review. **MOTION** by Peterson/Purvis to approve the bills as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

LCD Resource Conservationist Position: **MOTION** by Peterson/Purvis to repeal the status of the position as a contract position. **MOTION CARRIED.** **MOTION** by Purvis/Krug to fill the position as an LTE position with a maximum salary of \$41,748. **MOTION CARRIED.** Marie Koerner, Taylor County Human Resources Director, will be drafting a pay matrix for forty hour LTE positions that will mirror the regular matrix. The proposed matrix will need the approval of the Personnel Committee and the County Board. There were almost forty applicants for the position, and twelve to fifteen interviews will be conducted.

Groundwater/geology mapping proposal: Agenda item to review and take action on groundwater/geology mapping proposal was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, reported:

County Conservation Aids Program: Brad Ruesch presented information about a second project under the program. A Plotmaster that will be used for renovating and planting log landings and roads will be purchased. The Plotmaster would be part of the county equipment pool and will be available for use by other departments. The County Conservation Aids Program matches county funds with DNR funds for fish and game related projects; usually only one project is funded per year. However, DNR has some additional funds available this year. The Forestry and Recreation Department will provide the match for the Plotmaster purchase. Ruesch also presented a proposal to use 2008 funds for a new aeration system at Miller Dam.

Farm Service Agency – Don Purvis, FSA Representative, reported: There are not MILC payments in March.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D – Chris Borden, Coordinator, reported: Adam Abel, former Grazing Specialist with Pri-Ru-Ta, is doing some contract work for Pri-Ru-Ta. An 8' no-till drill will be available to rent in April. The drill belongs to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. There is a \$50 fee for use. Money for the Grazing Specialist position, now held by Bob Brandt, is not in the Congressional continuing resolution that provides funds until a budget is finalized. The position was an earmark for a specific purpose and all earmarks were removed from the resolution. There is enough money to fund the position through 2007 but funding for some other projects is questionable. The soil DVD is out for Taylor County. The council is

working on ways to make the data more meaningful for forestry applications. Dairyland State Academy is looking for a grazier from Taylor County to serve on its board.

Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Cooperative resolution: **MOTION** by Krug/Peterson to approve a resolution that Taylor County cooperate with the Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Cooperative to provide education about and control of invasive species. **MOTION CARRIED.** The resolution will be forwarded to the Forestry and Recreation Committee for approval and, if approved by that committee, to the County Board for approval.

Farmland Preservation Program: **MOTION** by Krug/Peterson to approve the Farmland Preservation Agreement application for Wilfred and Darlene Strack, 189.01 acres in Sections 19, 20, and 30 in the Town of Goodrich. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Correspondence: *NPM Field Notes Annual Report 2006*

Future meetings/events: **MOTION** by Peterson/Purvis to approve all meetings below. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Nutrient Management "Intensive" Workshop (Kopecky/Oberle).(Phillips) March 26, 2007

Nutrient Management "Intensive" Workshop (Oberle/Kopecky) (Medford) April 4, 2007

Spring 2007 County Conservationist Meeting (Oberle)(Waupaca) April 12-13, 2007

Land Stewardship Conference (Rib Lake) April 14, 2007

Next LCC MeetingApril 17, 2007

MOTION by Krug/Peterson to approve Oberle taking a two-week personal leave of absence to take part in a USAID AMEREW Project in Ethiopia in May. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Peterson/Krug to adjourn at 11:45 a.m. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes of February 20, 2007 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Chuck Zenner at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Donald Purvis, Wayne Lato, Tim Peterson, and Charles Zenner, Chairman. Others present were Marie Koerner, Taylor County Human Resources Manager; Caitlin Henderson, student, and Mrs. Henderson; Chris Borden, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Coordinator; Bob Brandt, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Grazing Specialist; Deb Esselmann, FSA County Executive Director; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Ed Zyzdik, USDA-APHIS; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; Kyle Noonan, LCD Engineering Technician; Matt Zoschke, LCD Resource Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Lato/Peterson to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Lato/Purvis to approve the January 16, 2007 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The December 2006 – January 2007 bills were circulated for review, and the November-December 2006 budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Lato/Purvis to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Conservation Speech: Caitlin Henderson gave a speech about emerald ash borer that she had used for the Conservation Speech contest. Caitlin had placed first in the County contest and second at the area level.

Taylor-Price County LCD merger: Price County is no longer interested in the merger that had been discussed.

2007 Tree Sale Program: Taylor County LCD is conducting the tree sale for both Taylor and Price Counties. Over 20,000 trees have been sold so far.

2007 Conservation Assistance Program update: Noonan distributed a spreadsheet of applications and reviewed the project ranking and what projects are likely to be approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

LCD Resource Conservationist Position: Zoschke is taking a position in Clark County. Oberle reviewed the history of the staffing grants that provide partial funding for LCD staff. The Taylor County Personnel Committee met last week and gave permission to refill the position; the committee also discussed benefits, salary, matrix placement, and whether the position should be a regular position rather than an LTE position. **MOTION** by Krug/Peterson to refill the Resource Conservationist position. **MOTION CARRIED.** [This motion was later rescinded.] Koerner reviewed options for filling the position and discussed the pros and cons of a regular position versus an LTE position. Either type of position will not be filled if grant money is not available to support it. A regular position would have more flexibility in filling the position, and the LCD would be more likely to keep someone in the position if there were benefits. Lato pointed out that the position was sold to the County as an LTE position and question if the Finance and Personnel Committees would support a change to a regular position. The status of the position would have to go back to the Personnel Committee if it were to be changed. According to Koerner, if the position were to remain an LTE position, it may be appropriate to put it in a pay matrix of its own that mirrors the current forty-hour non-represented matrix, which does not appear to apply to LTE positions. A change to the county code would be necessary to allow initial hiring at the maximum step. Zoschke questioned if grant funds could be used for benefits. Zoschke raised the possibility of establishing the position as a contract position rather than an

employee position. The question was raised as to whether contracts for services are covered by the staffing grant. Krug questioned if a contractor would still be under supervision of the LCC. **MOTION** by Krug/Peterson to rescind the previous motion to refill the Resource Conservationist position. **MOTION CARRIED.** **MOTION** by Krug/Lato to refill the Resource Conservationist position as a contracted position subject to state staffing grant funding being available. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported:

- Twenty-one applications were received for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) totaling \$221,767. Twelve are being approved now. If additional funds become available, there will be additional approvals. Applications and approvals were: twelve for grazing, five funded; one for organic, funded; two for barnyards, both funded; six regular, none funded at this time; five for comprehensive nutrient management (CNMP), four funded. The unfunded applications totaled \$13,641 for the seven grazing applications and \$44,192 for the CNMP application, totaling \$57,833 for the eight unfunded applications. The area has a reserve of \$250,000. Plawski does not yet know how much of this will be available for funding the currently unfunded applications in Taylor County.
- The state NRCS has asked for an additional \$3 million statewide, which would include funding for manure storage. There were ninety-five applications for manure storage; fifty-six were funded. Some alternative manure handling facilities were also funded.
- The EQIP cost-share funding still needs to be coordinated with the LCD cost-share funding. New EQIP contracts are based on a flat rate rather than a percentage as in the past. LCD/DATCP cost-sharing is also percentage based.
- The NRCS office here underwent a program review last week.
- Under the current Federal joint budget NRCS is losing about \$75 million for 2007, and there is no money available to fill vacant positions.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zyzdik, USDA-APHIS, reported:

- Due to very good participation in the deer donation program, there is a need for additional funds. **MOTION** by Lato/Purvis to appropriate an additional \$2550 to the deer donation program. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- Zyzdik presented a copy of the wildlife damage claims for 2006. **MOTION** by Purvis/Peterson to approve the claims for Dan Hoffman, Joe Zenner, Darren Kohls (the damage did not exceed the deductible so no payment is due), Keith Skabroud, Mike Brandner, Vern Pernsteiner and Carl Weihrouch as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.** Carl Weihrouch, who was listed as a claimee, is deceased; his son Curt will be farming and will be receiving any damage benefits.
- The delisting of the wolf will be official March 12. USDA-APHIS will be able to remove up to ninety-nine wolves on a pro-active basis if they are in a problem area. Landowners may be able to get a shooting permit with APHIS approval. There is no approval for trapping by private individuals at this time. Trapping may be allowed in the future with appropriate training. A lawsuit on the delisting is expected.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselmann, County Executive Director, reported:

- FSA is working on DCPs. A new signature authority is being required, and lease forms, if renting, need to be on an approved form. So far only a form developed

by the UW-Extension is approved. There have been some issues involving signatures, e.g. who needs to sign if an LLC.

- FSA continues to be plagued by computer problems. Pearl Huber retired and the position cannot be refilled. As a result of such issues, FSA is now about two months behind in many areas.
- MILC payments were available in January and February; March is not known at this time. Due to the current high prices, there are no LDPs.
- The 2008 Farm Bill will take time to resolve. Commodity programs are unlikely to have major changes. Fruits and vegetables are likely to have more changes. The outlook for conservation programs is unknown.
- Esselmann is going to Washington, D.C. in March.
- New maps have been certified for Taylor and Price Counties but are still being finalized with landowners.
- FSA is operating under a federal continuing resolution rather than an actual federal budget.
- Landowners can have their records transferred from one county to another if okayed by both counties.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D – Chris Borden, Coordinator reported:

- Borden discussed the current status of the soils data products and introduced Bob Brandt, the new Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D specialist.

County Conservation Aids Program: Changes have been made in the proposed 2007 project. The project as originally proposed by the Rib Lake Area Fish and Game Association could not be approved due to cultural resources concerns and the application needed to be revised and resubmitted. The project will now include a pier renovation and fishing access near the boat ramp on Highway 102. **MOTION** by Lato/Peterson to approve County Conservation Aids Program funding for the project as revised. **MOTION CARRIED.**

USDA Mutual Agreement and Operational Agreement: Plawski reviewed the two agreements that govern the cooperative efforts between the LCD and the USDA.

Taylor County Land Use Plan – Draft of the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Cultural Resources Chapter: Oberle pointed out that the LCC will need to update the Farmland Preservation Program Agriculture Plan and that there will be an issue of integrating/coordinating the that plan with the Land Use Plan. Peterson, who sits on the Land Use Advisory Committee, mentioned that the Land Use Plan is a wish list and has no teeth without zoning.

2008 Joint DATCP/DNR Grant Application: Oberle presented the application, which includes a request for \$179,539 for staffing for four positions and for \$500,000 for cost-share projects. **MOTION** by Peterson/Purvis to approve the application as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Farmland Preservation Program Application: The committed reviewed the FPP application for Darlene and Wilfred Strack located in sections 19, 20, and 30 in the Town of Goodrich. There was a question about the total acreage involved.

LCD Resource Conservationist Position (additional comments): The application period for the position will closed March 9.

Groundwater/geologic Mapping Proposal: Oberle proposed using some of the transmission line money for the mapping project. Depending on the product desired, estimated costs range from \$20,000 to \$200,000. If done regionally, the costs would be less. Oberle was instructed by the committee to put the proposal on the March LCC meeting agenda.

Conservation plans: Zoschke showed the committee a template he created for doing Nutrient Management Plans and presented NMP plans for Camby Berry, Betty Blumenstein, Tom Dubiak, Jim Everson, Tom Goebel, Duane Goodnoe, Glenn Harder, Gerald Matyka, Dale Oldenburg, Jim Schley, Beverly Thompson, and Joe Tomandl for approval. **MOTION** by Lato/Krug to approve the Nutrient Management plans as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Correspondence: *High Risk Period for Manure Runoff*

Future meetings/events: **MOTION** by Lato/Peterson to approve all meetings below. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D (Oberle) (Hayward) February 23, 2007
Next LCC MeetingMarch 20, 2007

A request by Oberle to travel to Ethiopia for a USAID AMAREW Project on county time was not approved at this time.

MOTION by Peterson/Purvis to adjourn at 12:45 p.m..

Minutes of January 16, 2007 Special Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Chuck Zenner at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Donald Purvis, Tim Peterson, and Charles Zenner, Chairman. Others present were Jim Metz, Taylor County Board Chairman; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Peterson/Purvis to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes from previous regular meeting were not presented.

RESOURCE CONSERVATIONIST POSITION: Oberle reviewed the Land Conservation Department (LCD) staffing grants from the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and, based on increases in the grant over the past several years, requested an increase in salary for the Resource Conservationist position. This is an LTE position that does not currently include fringe benefits. After an employee has been in the position for a specified time period (thought to be 600 hours) in one year, the county is required to pay 10.6% of the employee's salary into the state retirement fund, which the county is now doing for this position. Discussion followed concerning what other state requirements may pertain to this position, where the position fits into the county pay matrix, and how the salary paid compares to similar positions in other counties. **MOTION** by Peterson/Krug to increase the Resource Conservationist salary to \$42,000 contingent on the staffing grant being available and on state requirements relative to payment of additional fringe benefits. **MOTION CARRIED.**

PROPOSED FOR MERGER OF TAYLOR COUNTY LCD WITH PRICE COUNTY LCD: Jim Metz, Chuck Zenner, and Steve Oberle were invited to meet with Dan Racette (Price County Board Chairman) and Jim Robb (Price County LCC Chairman) on Wednesday, January 10, 2007 to discuss a proposal for a merger of the Price and Taylor County Land Conservation Departments. The Price County Conservationist position was vacated in December. There are currently two employees, a full time Environmental Technician and a half-time Administrative Assistant in the Price County LCD. The Price County representatives indicated that Price County would pay a fair share if a merger takes place.

Oberle took part in a telephone conference with Marie Koerner (Taylor County Human Resources Manager) and the Price County Human Resources Coordinator. Rather than a complete merger of the departments, a contract for services was discussed.

Metz questioned if it was feasible for Oberle and the Taylor County staff to cover both counties. Racette would expect Oberle to be in Price County half time.

In order to pursue the proposed merger, Oberle will need to visit Price County several times. The Price County LCC will meet February 12. Price County hopes to have any agreement in place by June.

MOTION by Krug/Peterson to give Oberle permission to spend some time with Price County staff and to start developing a merger proposal. **MOTION CARRIED.**

STAFFING GRANT REIMBURSEMENT FORM: Oberle obtained Zenner's signature on the request for reimbursement under the LCD staffing grant.

MOTION by Krug/Purvis to adjourn at 11:05 a.m.