

Minutes of the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

**Jefferson County Courthouse, Room 112
320 S. Main St.
Jefferson, WI 53549**

Monday, February 6th, 2012 12:30 p.m

Members: Margaret Burlingham (Chairperson), Amy Rinard (Vice-Chairperson), Mariah Hadler (Secretary), Steve Nass and Blane Poulson.

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Burlingham at 8:32 a.m.
2. Roll Call
Commission members present included Burlingham, Nass, Poulson and Hadler. Rinard and John Molinaro (ex-officio) were absent. County staff present was Michelle Staff.
3. Certification of Compliance With Open Meetings Law Requirements
Burlingham and Staff verified that the meeting was being held in compliance with open meetings law requirements.
4. Review of Agenda
No changes to agenda.
5. Public Comment
None
6. Review & Approval of the January 9th, 2012 minutes
Minutes will be approved next agenda due to the fact Nass and Poulson were absent in January and Rinard is absent from this meeting.
7. Correspondence
Staff stated that the Commission article on the purchase of Lea's farm was in the Rock River Reflections newspaper and Daily Jefferson County Union. Burlingham stated that she distributed the article to all the newspapers.
8. NRCS/Federal update on Conservation Easements
Caleb Pourchot from the Natural Heritage Land Trust stated that the federal enhanced tax credits for donated easements has expired. Nass suggested the Commission write a letter to the US Representatives. In addition, Pourchot stated that at this time it is not known how much monies Wisconsin will receive for the Farm and Ranch Protection grant. No deadline has been announced for applications from NRCS but Pourchot stated that in the past it has been at the end of April.
9. Discussion and possible action on 2011 PACE applications
Dale Neupert, Jeffrey & Monica Gerner and Greg Wilke.
The Commission will be visiting each site at the end of the meeting. Gerner has been in contact with the Town of Oakland to verify the number of lot splits he has with the Town. Burlingham stated that she asked Gerner to submit a letter from the Town verifying the number of lot splits.

10. Discussion and possible action with consulting with Natural Heritage Land Trust of Applying to NRCS for Grant to purchase conservation easements (Neupert, Gerner and Wilke). Burlingham stated that she talked to Jim Welsh and they are willing to keep the same hourly rate as previously agreed upon. **Motion** made by Nass, seconded by Hadler to continue to consult with the Natural Heritage Land Trust with a yearly limit of \$10,000. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.
11. Discuss with Mark Watkins (Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department) about Baseline Reports and Monitoring of Conservation Easements Watkins was not present due to a conflict with a meeting that was scheduled unexpectedly.
12. Revise the Commission's Overall Strategy/Work Plan for 2012 and 2013 Steve Grabow e-mailed a revised Commission Overall Strategy/Work Plan for 2012/2013 and Staff handed it out to the Commission. The Commission briefly discussed the article that was submitted to the newspapers and other publications. Hadler contacted a couple of consultants and the average for them to design a brochure is \$150 to \$200. Discussion amongst Commission members on the benefits of a brochure. **Motion** made by Nass, seconded by Poulson to move forward with the brochure and hire a consultant with the cost not going above \$200. There was discussion that the brochure should be general, with photos of the Lea and Burlingham farms, the Commission's logo and it should be the type that could be mailed. The two consultants that were discussed to do the work are Wendy Haagesen and Holly Hartenstein. **Motion** passed on a voice vote with no objection.
13. Update on Agricultural Enterprise Zones
The meeting last month was held during a blizzard so no one went. DATCP has maps on their web site and they are currently accepting new applications.
14. Discuss involvement of Farmland Commission Advisory Committee
Motion made by Nass, seconded by Poulson to add Rod Lea to the Advisory Committee. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection. Burlingham stated that the Commission will try to get them more involved with events such as the dairy breakfast, etc.
15. Future Meeting Dates
There was no objection to the meeting dates.
16. Suggestions for the Next Agenda
None
17. Site Inspections for the Gerner, Wilke and Neupert properties.
18. Adjourn
Motion by Nass, seconded by Burlingham to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 a.m. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.

Minutes by Michelle Staff, Zoning Technician, Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Department

Secretary Signature

Date