

Minutes of the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

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

Monday, April 9th, 2012 8:30 am

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 8:35 am.
2. Roll Call
Commission members present included Burlingham, Nass, Rinard, John Molinaro (ex-officio) and Hadler. Poulson was 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 the agenda.
5. Public Comment
Burlingham stated that Senator Kohl will have a representative at the Jefferson FSA office on April 16, from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm in Room 2, to hear from the public about the proposed farm bill.
6. Review & Approval of the March 12, 2012 minutes
Motion made by Rinard, seconded by Hadler to approve the March 12, 2012 minutes. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.
7. Communications
No communications were presented.
8. NRCS/Federal update on Conservation Easements
It was noted that all of Wisconsin's representatives are either a sponsor or co-sponsor of the farm bill, but Burlingham told the Commission that it doesn't hurt to call their representative to support the bill. The proposed farm bill extends the enhanced tax credits for donated easements.
9. Discussion and action on forwarding the Timothy Hunn donated easement resolution to County Board.
Burlingham talked to Hunn on the phone and told him to contact an appraiser. **Motion made** by Rinard, seconded by Nass to send the resolution to the April County Board meeting. **Motion passed** on a voice vote, with no objection.
10. Discussion and possible action on 2011 PACE applications
Dale Neupert, Jeffrey & Monica Gerner and Greg Wilke.

Burlingham reported that all applications have been sent to NRCS. Ron Howard from NRCS has indicated that there is only one other application for the grant.

11. Discussion and possible action on Roger Lehmann 2011 application
Commission discussed that Lehmann applied with the 2011 applications but did not return the application fee of \$750 to indicate that he was interested in the program. Burlingham talked to Lehmann and told him to contact the Town of Oakland to see how many splits were available on the farm.
12. Revise the Commission's Overall Strategy/Work Plan for 2012 and 2013
It was noted that the dairy breakfast in Jefferson is May 19th and Watertown's is June 16th near Lebanon. Nass handed out the new GHA and National Waterway System brochure. Lyon suggested that the Commission make a presentation to the Jefferson County and Watertown Agribusiness Clubs. Burlingham will create a map with the donated and purchased easements. Hadler suggested they have a shirt made to promote the Commission. Molinaro told about his experience using Jefferson County apparel and it did not work. Burlingham suggested name tags as an alternative. Hadler indicated a lot of organizations have them for promotional use. Lyon suggested a promotional tour such as Shawano County had for barn quilts where they have a map showing location of all the barn quilts. Molinaro stated that the Historic Preservation group will be sponsoring a bus tour of the County. It would be a great way to promote the rural area of Jefferson County while promoting farmland preservation.
13. Update on Agricultural Enterprise Zones
No report.
14. Discussion and possible action on proposed brochures
Hadler had a revised brochure that was handed out to the Commission. Discussion ensued between the commission members on changes to the brochure. The Commission would like the brochures to be in color, have a return address area and be printed in-house on an as-needed basis. Hadler will change the photos to Lea's or Burlingham's farms. Hadler will come back with a revision for the next meeting.
15. Discussion on easement applications and criteria
The interest form and application form were handed out to the commission. Staff indicated that the interest form is very basic, whereas the application form was prepared for applications where monies were available. Nass stated that the application references 1999 Urban Service Areas and with the adoption of the new Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, these areas were renamed. There was discussion that since there is no longer the State program and the County is using NRCS monies, they may want to change the criteria to match the NRCS program. It was suggested that the Commission work with Welsh to update the application form.
16. Discuss involvement of Farmland Commission Advisory Committee
Burlingham stated that she invited the Advisory Committee to the meeting. Tom Lyon was present and stated that now that the Commission is up and going, unless there are special issues for which to call them in, he doesn't believe that the Advisory Committee needs to come every meeting. Molinaro stated that he doesn't believe it should be disbanded, but that the Advisory Committee should be present when special issues

arise. Lyon reported that there is a grass roots organization raising monies for purchase of farmland easements and the Commission should look to other sources of funding.

17. Future Meeting Dates

No changes to the dates.

18. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

It was suggested that the Commission discuss accepting easements with no residential development rights on the property and discuss accepting easements within the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan 15-year growth area and urban service area.

19. Adjourn

Motion by Nass, seconded by Rinard, to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 p.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