

RESOLUTION NO 2015-_____**Resolution to institute a new Farmland Conservation funding method**

WHEREAS, agriculture is a pillar of the Jefferson County economy, and

WHEREAS, the protection of farmland is supported by the County Board and County residents, and

WHEREAS, the county board, with adoption of the 1999 Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, recommended the establishment of a PDR (Purchase of Development Rights) program, and renewed this commitment with the approval of the 2012 amended Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2006-86 established the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission which designated \$20,000 to develop a PDR program and established that, from time to time, future funding mechanisms would be determined by the county board, and

WHEREAS, recent changes to Wisconsin state law have eliminated a funding source for the PDR program, and

WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission has ongoing contract discussions with landowners wishing to preserve agricultural land, and

WHEREAS, funds from Jefferson County are required to provide the necessary incentive for land owners to enter into farmland conservation easements,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that for the purpose of continuing the Purchase of Development Rights program in Jefferson County, proceeds from the sale of all farmland or land which is capable of being farmed, not to exceed the agricultural value of such land, shall be allocated to the Purchase of Development Rights program and applied toward the purchase of farmland conservation easements as administered by the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission.

Fiscal note: This resolution will not require the use of tax levy funds.

Requested by:
The Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

RESOLUTION NO. 2015- _____

Resolution recommending future allocation of funds to the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements.

WHEREAS, the county board with adoption of the 1999 Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan recommended the establishment of a PDR (Purchase of Development Rights) program, and renewed this commitment with the approval of the 2012 amended Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2006-86 established the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission and said resolution initially provided \$20,000 to develop a PDR program, and established that, from time to time, future funding mechanisms would be determined by the county board, and

WHEARAS, The county board approved Resolutions No. 2008-15 and No. 2008-55, per the Finance Committee's recommendation, directing that a portion of proceeds from the sale of county owned farmland be allocated (\$260,000) to the Farmland Conservation Easement Program, and

WHEARAS, the Commission has judiciously committed nearly all these funds to the purchase of conservation easements leveraging matching, private, state and federal funds, and said easement contracts were approved by the county board, and

WHEARAS, the new Highway Shop has required the removal of ~~ed of~~ more acreage of county owned farmland from agricultural use, and

WHEREAS, precedent has been set for the allocation of funds equivalent to the county farm acreage's agricultural value to be set aside for the Commission's conservation easement program when county farmland converted from it's agricultural status,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that if and when the former highway shop property is sold, a portion of these sale funds equivalent to the agricultural value of the former county farm property (consider including a specific dollar amount) now converted to Highway Department use be allocated to the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission to continue the county's agricultural easement program.

Requested by
The Farmland Conservation Easement Commission