

# **Farmland Conservation Easement Commission Minutes**

**Jefferson County Courthouse, Room 202  
320 S. Main St.  
Jefferson, WI 53549**

**Monday March 14, 2011 12:30 pm**

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 12:31 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Commission members present included Burlingham, Rinard, Hadler, Nass, Molinaro (ex-officio) and Poulson. County staff present was Michelle Staff (Zoning Technician, Zoning Department).

**3. Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law Requirements**

Staff verified that the meeting was being held in compliance with open meetings law requirements.

**4. Review of Agenda**

No change to the agenda.

**5. Public Comment**

Molinaro related to the Commission that he attended the DATCP Board meeting in Madison and testified in front of the Board regarding repealing the PACE program and removing funding for the proposed easements. Molinaro stated that it appeared that the DATCP Board was in support of funding the easements but the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of DATCP were not.

**6. Review & Approval of the February 14, 2011 minutes**

**Motion** by Rinard, seconded by Poulson to approve the February 14, 2011 minutes. The motion was passed on a voice vote, with no objection.

**7. Correspondence**

None

**8. Discuss DATCP/Federal Funding, Closing, Survey, Grant Requirements for the Lea and Schultz Conservation Easements**

Burlingham stated that she contacted Caleb Pourchot from the Natural Heritage Land Trust and that the Commission should be hearing from DATCP about the 2010 applications soon. It appears they will not be funded. Molinaro stated that since there was not a contract signed by the State and Jefferson County, the State feels they have no obligation to fund the easements. Pourchot reported to Burlingham that DATCP is not working on any of the 2011 applications at this time. Pourchot also indicated to Burlingham that Peggy James from NRCS has been reassigned and has not been replaced to date. There was discussion between the Commission members on possible options and scenarios if the State does not fund the Lea and Schultz farms. Commission stated that they need to have an official position from DATCP before they can discuss this further.

**9. Discussion, Ranking and possible action on PACE applications**

The Commission agreed not to move forward with any of the appraisals for the 2011 applications. Burlingham will send a letter to all the applicants explaining the situation. Burlingham will also contact Waupaca County to see if possibly the counties can work together on this issue.

**10. Update from the Steering Committee on the 2010 Farmland Preservation Plan and discuss and possibly take action on policies for PACE and donated easements within new land use designations**

Nass, Rinard and Hadler related to the Commission what took place at the March 9<sup>th</sup> Farmland Preservation Plan meeting.

**11. Update on Agricultural Enterprise Zones proposed by DATCP**

None

**12. Discuss and possibly take action on correspondence with state legislators on the Working Lands Initiative PACE program**

Burlingham asked the Commission if they want to write an official letter to state representatives and DATCP on this issue. There was discussion on what type of wording would be included in the letter. Motion by Rinard/Poulson to authorize Burlingham to send a letter to DATCP, copied to all of Jefferson County's Representatives and Legislators and Farm Bureau. Motion passed on a voice vote with no objection. Molinaro stated that the Stewardship Fund is no longer an option for possible funding of the easements. The proposed changes to the program are unworkable.

**13. Future Meeting Dates**

April 11, 2011 at 8:30 am, Room 112

May 9, 2011 at 8:30 am, Room 112

June 13, 2011 at 12:30 pm, Room 202

July 11, 2011 at 8:30 am, Room 202

Commission agreed to keep meeting on the second Monday of the month at 8:30 am. If there is a conflict with the Zoning Committee site inspection date, they will move the time to 12:30 pm of that day.

**14. Work Plan, Outreach and Communications Implementation**

**A) Discussion and development of application for Non-Profits to apply for Grant Monies from Jefferson County and policies**

Burlingham has modified the application and it will be available. Burlingham asked if the Commission would like to add a preliminary environmental questionnaire as required by Dane County. Commission members would like a copy of this and will discuss it next meeting.

**B) Discuss and possibly take action on brochures, signs, and publicity.**

The Commission discussed possibly creating a logo to add to all its promotional materials. Burlingham handed out possible design and wording for signs for properties of easements either donated or purchased. Hadler asked if the Commission would like to go with Holly Hartenstein to design a logo or go with Burlingham's. **Motion was made** by Poulson/Nass to hire Holly

Hartenstein to design a logo for the Commission up to \$400. The motion was passed on a voice vote with no objection. Halder will contact her.

**16. Suggestions for the Next Agenda**

Add to the agenda to discuss upcoming county fair.

**17. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 pm. was made by Nass, seconded by Rinard. Motion carried on a voice vote with no objection.

Minutes transcribed by Michelle Staff, Zoning Department

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Mariah Hadler -- Farmland Conservation Easement Commission Secretary      Date