

**MINUTES**  
**Land Conservation Committee Meeting**  
**Date: February 09, 2012**

**1. Meeting called to order at: 4:00 pm**

**2. Present:** Bob Bunker, Dave Ladd, Dan Nankee, Roger Dax, and Ron Benish, John Meyers, Bill Grover

**Absent:**

**Others Present:** Carol Anderson, Andy Walsh, Jim McCaulley, Lucas Conmey, Tammy Havlik, Art Whitford, Cal Williams, Mike Peterson, Steve Deal, Matt Allen and Dave Terrall

**Notice of Meeting Certification:**

Motion to accept by: John Meyers  
Seconded by: Bill Grover

**Additions to agenda:** Bill Grover made a report about RC & D

**MEETING NOTES:**

**3. Cal & Victor Williams Recognition**

Cal Williams was present to accept the award and recognition for Conservation Farmer of the year for 2011. Jim thanked him for his efforts and outstanding work.

**4. Art Whitford Recognition**

Art Whitford was in attendance to receive his award and recognition for his years of service on the LCC.

**5. APHIS Items**

Dave Terrill explained how the APHIS program works so that everyone in attendance had an understanding of the process and funding for the program. There were 14 participants and 4 claims for 2011. Some participants did not have enough damage for a claim, while others continue to have a perpetual problem with damage. Deirdre Birmingham fulfilled the requirements to receive a claim. Three participants, Larry Batz, Al Kolb, and Matt Limmex need a harvest waiver. They all shot the required number deer to be eligible for a claim, however, there are some faults in the registration systems for recording the special harvest tags. Dan Nankee asked if

the sand hill crane was going to be added to the list of eligible animals that cause crop damage. Dave explained that it is currently on the list for some areas, but they are looking at expanding to other areas.

Motion to approve all 4 claims including the 3 harvest waivers –  
Ron Benish Second by – John Meyers – Motion carried

## **6. Blackhawk Lake Update**

Jim explained that the BHL Commission took upon itself to better help communication between BHL, Iowa County, and the LCD to get agenda, minutes, and financial statements for review. Carol Anderson explained that the BHL group is working on an improved financial statement layout. They are also looking at an improved computerized registration system. Keith Heilbert is working on helping BHL get a new radio system for the park.

## **7. Birch Lake Grant**

Mike Peterson presented information about a \$30,000 grant being received to clean up the lake which is full of sediment. Engineer work is being considered and plans are to dredge and use the fill to keep runoff from filling back in. The grant will also be used to make some other park improvements such as to the ball diamond. In order to make these improvements, an excess of \$9400 is needed in addition to the \$30,000 grant. Board approval is needed to exceed the spending limit of \$2,000. It was asked if Corp Counsel could come back to a future meeting to further discuss the Birch Lake operation agreement in more detail for the possibility of updates regarding future activities that may occur.

Motion to exceed the spending limit to \$9400 for Birch Lake improvements – Ron Benish Second by – John Meyers  
– Motion carried

Motion to approve the operations agreement be tabled for future discussion with Corp Counsel - Bill Grover Second by Dan Nankee  
–Motion carried

## **8. Blackhawk Lake & Birch Lake Operations Agreement**

Matt Allen explained that currently there is a spending limit of \$2000 in both the BHL and Birch Lake operations agreement which was established in the mid 1980's. There is a suggested borrowing limit of \$10,000 in the BHL agreement. Several ideas were presented from members about what would be acceptable amounts and limits for each agreement. It was agreed that there does not need to be a

spending limit enforced for either the BHL or Birch Lake agreements. It was reaffirmed that the borrowing limit of \$10,000 will remain for BHL. Discussion was brought forth about reviewing the operations agreement for BHL and Birch Lake on a more consistent, timely manner. Thoughts were given as to how the review would be flagged when it was due, and it was decided that maybe the Clerk of Courts could keep record of when the review was due. It was decided that the agreements be reviewed by the LCC every two years.

Motion to accept removal of spending limit for BHL & Birch Lake – Dan Nankee Second by John Meyers –Motion Carried

Motion to keep the borrowing limit of \$10,000 for BHL – John Meyers Second by Ron Benish –Motion Carried

Motion to review BHL & Birch Lake operation agreement every two years – John Meyers Second by Ron Benish –Motion carried

## **9. LWRM Project Approvals/Payments**

A list of projects that needed approval and payments that have been made on projects was presented.

Motion to approve projects totaling \$16,063 and payments made – Ron Benish Second by – John Meyers – Abstain – Bill Grover –Motion carried

## **10. WLI/FPP**

Jim explained that the State came through by paying \$7.50 for all acres claimed in 2010. Total credits back to County landowners was \$1,163,793 with an average credit of \$1521 up from \$759 in 2008 and a participation rate of 70% (total of 765 claims) which has been decreasing over the years, but the goal for 2012 is to hopefully increase by 10% or at least hold steady. Lucas explained that even though there has been a deadline to return the self certification forms, we've accepted them up until the April 15<sup>th</sup> tax deadline, but wanted the LCC to consider the possibility of charging a late filing fee in the future in order to better manage the administrative tracking. Lucas also wanted the LCC to consider what type of action might be done for those who did not return the form such as issue a notice of non-compliance. Lucas also explained that a tax preparers meeting was presented by Iowa, Grant, & Lafayette Counties in January to inform tax preparers about the WLI/FPP tax credit claims. Meeting was successful with about 38 tax preparers in attendance. Jim explained that it's been brought to his attention that Iowa County is

more advanced than other counties in tracking and managing the administrative tracking and implementing of the program. Jim presented an FPP credit spreadsheet that compared Counties statewide. Iowa County is 3<sup>rd</sup> in the State for the amount of credits received as well as the amount of acres claimed. On a CREP update, Lucas explained that there have been a couple of requests by landowners to possibly buy out the rest of their CREP contract. The landowners would be required to payback all of the incentive payments plus the maintenance costs of the contract. There is also an additional payback fee of 25% for contracts less than 5 years old and a 15% payback if more than 5 years old. The LCC may have to consider either waiving those percentage fees or keeping them in place. If the fee is in fact charged, the LCC would need to consider where those funds would be allocated to.

#### **11. USDA/LCD Location**

Jim explained that the USDA has decided not to include the LCD in the space needs when they decide to solicit offers from potential landlords due to the lack of commitment and decision from Iowa County. It's possible that the County will consider co-location when there is more solid information presented such as costs.

#### **12. LCD Staff Update**

Len was introduced to the LCC after item #5. Jim briefly explained Len's history and present position with Iowa County and was glad to have Len on board. Tammy announced that she will be expecting a baby in July and is expected to take maternity leave starting the first part of July.

#### **13. WALCE Conference**

Jim explained that the WALCE conference will be held Feb 29<sup>th</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tammy and Jim will be in attendance while Lucas will not be able to attend due to other commitments. Jim explained that we are being considerate of costs by driving up on Wednesday and returning on Friday.

#### **14. Thursday Notes**

A copy was sent to members for review – No comments

#### **15. Other Business**

Jim noted that Don Winch sent a nice thank you note to him and the LCC thanking them for their nomination for being Tree Farmer of the year for 2011. Andy Walsh presented information about the success of the EQIP sign up period which is over. There were \$653,000 in

funding requests which are being sorted through. Any projects that won't be able to be funded by USDA/NRCS will be sent to the County for the possibility of funding through LWRM. CRP will be having a sign-up period from March 12-April 6. Any new contracts would not go into effect until October 2012. There are 231 CRP contracts expiring on October 1, 2012 for a total of 4,888 acres, nearly 8 sq. miles. Jim expressed concern that it took two people to respond from the Iowa County IT department to look at a printer that has been giving us some issues.

**16. Comments from Committee Members**

Bill Grover explained that him and Dave Ladd are on the RC & D Board and work with Katie Abbott. He explained some of the conservation projects that they do. They have been delinked from NRCS so funding has become an issue. They are currently looking at redeveloping the RC & D Board. Dave Ladd explained that Walnut Hollow will be celebrating 40 years in operation and they are currently hiring, which may be linked to the fact that more consumers are looking at USA made products.

**17. Set Date of Next Meeting and Adjournment**

Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am at LCD office

Motion to accept – Ron Benish seconded by – Bill Grover  
-Motion carried.