

**MINUTES OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY  
AGRICULTURE, EXTENSION, LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 6, 2024**

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The meeting of the Agriculture, Extension, Land & Water Conservation Committee was called to order by Chair Weyh at 1:02 pm and was certified to be in compliance with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law.

**Roll Call:** Rich Bailey, Denise Brusveen, Brad Cook, Andrew Fischer, John Stevenson

**Others Present:** Kurt Calkins, Kelly Maginnis, Dana Qualy-NRCS, Savannah Hartman- DNR, Assistant Corp Counsel-Nathaniel Cullen, County Board Vice-Chairman Douglas Richmond

1. **Adopt Agenda Including Legally Noticed Changes.** A motion to approve the agenda was made by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried.
2. **Approve Minutes of AELWCC April 1 2024 and April 16, 2024 meetings** – A motion to approve both meeting minutes was made by Cook. Second by Bailey. Motion carried.
3. **Chair Updates:** Fischer had the committee members and attendees introduce themselves.
4. **Citizen/Public Input** – Columbia County LWCD – Briana Enger asked for permission to take a photo of the new committee for our department page on the county website and social media page.
5. **Operational Overview: Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department**
  - a) Approve Expenditure Report –Calkins highlighted the USDA payment, Rhyme’s bill  
There was a motion to approve the expenditure report made by Brusveen. Second by Stevenson. Motion carried.
  - b) Department Budgets, Compensatory Time, Out-of-County Travel – Calkins reviews the comp time status, and budget process on target for the year with trainings, nothing out of the ordinary.
  - c) Staff Report: Kurt R. Calkins, Director – none
6. **Agency Reports – NRCS; FSA; APHIS; DNR –**

**NRCS** – Dana Qualy, program assistant reports for the department. She states the EQIP obligation sign-ups are ending May 17<sup>th</sup>, also they are ranking CSP applications, which had a record high of 65 applications and they will determine the funding by the end of the month. They have been working with women into conservation groups. We are gearing up for food security acts in June through USDA programs. Brusveen asked about WIWIC, you can RSVP there, goaling for 30 to attend, 24 signed up.

**DNR** – Savannah Hartman gives an update on the habitat grant. She states the Conservation Aide Paradise Marsh project was completed the end of April, all went well, this project was 45 acres in prairie species. She states spring time is burning season, they have had 8 or 9 burns that covered over 1,000 acres in the county. There are a couple wetland infrastructures coming up, including French Creek wildlife area, which is getting replaced and another in June. The CDAC meeting in April covered for deer harvest recommendations and those are passed onto the DNR board. She listed the recommendations and states the quotas are higher than past years. There was discussion from Fischer and Calkins. Calkins also spoke on the conservation aid program, explaining how the program works for funding through our department towards public land projects. Calkins also states he serves on the CDAC committee and explained the history of the program. Brusveen asked about duplicate tags for COD positive deer.
7. **Overview of Committee Roles and Responsibilities** – Calkins reports that the statewide vision is to capture more committee member engagement. He references soil conservation districts that were created statewide on a watershed basis. This is like our current Producer Led watershed grant. In 1980’s, they broke away from that model and went to a county government model. He mentions the resources we have access too, and in the 1980’s, there was realization that soil

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conservation districts struggled with attaining funds. The tie to county government was a positive move and reassurance along with accountability. He states we incorporate NRCS standards for projects. He spoke about the Land and Water Association merger a few years back from WLWCA to WI Land and Water, and provided that history. They discussed the upcoming Southern Area Association meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, as well as the annual conference and summer tour. Supervisor Richmond encourages a member on the committee to attend any of these upcoming meetings. Fischer states we should recommend someone to attend, he asks for an email of the details sent out to committee members and will attend if no other interest.

8. **Review of 2024 Committee Meeting Dates** – Calkins reviews the dates as presented. Cook inquired is there was a fall tour this year. There was discussion on attendance from the committee. He gave history of sites we highlight for this tour, and the committee agreed the Fall Tour would be beneficial for them to attend.
9. **Lake District County Appointment Recommendations** – The committee reviewed and recommended the lake district appointees: Harmony Grove-citizen member Herbert Hansen and Supervisor Tom Dunn; Lazy Lake- Supervisor Keith Miller; Pardeeville Lakes- Supervisor Steven Balsiger; and Wyona Lake- Supervisor Andrew Fischer. A motion to approve the Lake District County Appointment recommendations was made by Cook. Second by Brusveen. Motion carried. Richmond states this topic can be worked out at the upcoming Executive committee meeting.
10. **Review of 2023-2024 Tree Day**. – Maginnis reported on the trees and supplies sold and reports on new student volunteers and gave details on the tree program week. Calkins also spoke on the history of the student volunteers.
11. **Discuss SAA May 23, 2024 Meeting** – we will email agenda and coordinate to the members

LWCD meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm, resumed with Columbia County Extension at 2:49 pm.

12. Citizen/Public Input – Columbia County Extension – none.
13. Operational Overview: Columbia County Extension
  - a) Supervisor Introductions: All county supervisors introduced themselves and which area of the county they represent.
  - b) Area Director, Educator & Support Staff Introductions: Jeff Hoffman introduced himself and provided a brief overview of the partnership between the UW and Columbia County, he also gave a description of Olivia Novak's position and areas of focus; Becky Pfile provided a handout & briefly described her position and efforts, indicating the increase in the number of Columbia County youth participating in the upcoming summer camp; Caitlin Richardson described the populations she is required to focus on due to her funding source and the different nutrition topics she provides education for; Sarah Millard introduced herself as the Extension Administrative Assistant.
  - c) Approve Expenditure Report – Motion to approve was made by Stevenson. Second by Brusveen. Motion carried.
  - d) Department Budgets, Compensatory Time, Out-of-County Travel – committee requested the out-of-county travel report to be included on SharePoint only, no hardcopy.
14. Division of Extension Update – Area Director: A copy of the Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program Annual Summary 2023 was shared with the committee showing the volunteers' impact for the whole state and Columbia County

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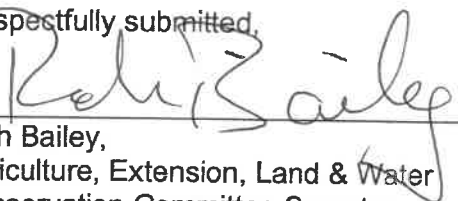
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15. Programming Update – FoodWise – Caitlin Richardson: Shared how she instructs Strong Bodies and provides nutrition education and healthier eating options to populations with limited income as the targeted audience at schools, elderly nutrition sites, Northwoods and River Haven. She provides nutrition guidance to the ADRC nutrition advisory council and is involved with the Summer Lunch Program.

The Committee requested all future meeting agendas and handouts no longer be mailed by USPS. All agenda and handouts can be put on the county SharePoint site. Have a few agenda hard copies available on meeting days.

A motion to adjourn was made by Brusveen. Seconded by Cook. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Rich Bailey,  
Agriculture, Extension, Land & Water  
Conservation Committee Secretary

