

**MINUTES OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY  
AGRICULTURE, EXTENSION, LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
August 5, 2024**

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The meeting of the Agriculture, Extension, Land & Water Conservation Committee was called to order by Chair Fischer at 1:04 pm and was certified to be in compliance with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law.

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

**Others Present:** Jeff Hoffman, Sarah Millard, Kurt Calkins, Kelly Maginnis, Aidan Matson, Lisa Zamzow-NRCS, Corp Counsel Jessica Hale, Asst. Corp. Counsel Hayden Knight, Chair Darren Schroeder

1. **Adopt Agenda Including Legally Noticed Changes** - A motion to approve the agenda was made by Brusveen. Second by Bailey. Motion carried.
2. **Approve Minutes of AELWCC July 1, 2024, meeting** – A motion to approve the minutes was made by Cook. Second by Brusveen. Motion carried.
3. **Chair Updates:** No updates.
4. **Citizen/Public Input – Columbia County Extension:** None
5. **Operational Overview: Columbia County Extension**
  - a) Approve Expenditure Report – Motion to approve was made by Cook. Second by Brusveen. Motion carried.
  - b) Department Budgets, Compensatory Time, Out-of-County Travel – committee approval no longer required. Becky Pfile will be attending the AmeriCorps Member Experience in Wausau on August 19, 2024.
6. **Division of Extension Update – Area Director:** Columbia County Fair was last week. Becky supervised the 4-H Food stand. That was a learning experience for her as she also continued to recruit new 4-H members.
7. **Review/Approve Columbia County Extension Department Proposed 2025 Budget:** Jeff reviewed the goals for 2025. Brusveen would like to see measurable goals with numbers. Motion by Brusveen to amend budget item 533160 Training/Conventions back to \$930 and the remaining budget numbers to be left as presented for budget 6700 University Extension Program. Second by Bailey. Motion carried, not unanimously. Motion to approve budget 6711 Fairs and Exhibits by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried.

Columbia County Extension meeting adjourned at 1:34 p.m. Reconvened with Columbia County Land & Water Department at 1:42 p.m.

8. **Citizen/Public Input – Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department -**
9. **Operational Overview: County Land and Water Conservation Department**
  - a) Approve Expenditure Report – Motion to approve was made by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried.
  - b) Department Budgets, Compensatory Time, Out-of-County Travel – none.
  - c) Staff Report, Calkins – Calkins discussed the Wyona Park well project committed through ARPA funds for the project with the highway department taking lead. Our department will be handling this project with the vacancy of the highway commissioner. These funds need to be committed by end of 2024. Our department has coordinated with accounting who posted the bid requests on their website for contractors to bid. Calkins discussed this project- new well/abandonment/new pressure tank. The bids will go to Executive committee for approval. The funds available are \$20,000, if no bids meet this amount, it will come back to the committee. He also states the department vacancy position is posted and we are hoping for

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good applicants. He highlighted the Conservation Night by The Lake event, which goes through the Producer Led grant/group held at the Carncross farm. He states there were 55 attendees, 4 tour spots for the event and evaluation forms were handed out, which gave as good results that he reported on.

**10. Agency Reports – NRCS; FSA; APHIS; DNR –**

**NRCS** -Lisa Zamzow states they received 17 new CSP contracts; 26 new EQIP contracts; FY 25 renewals and 16 new applications-twice as many funds this year for TSP. The Golden Sands grazing specialist position is open and EQIP sign-up is this fall.

Calkins states Supervisor Balsiger, who is the Park Lake representative, contacted him with a concern from a Pardeeville resident about a beaver dam blocking waterflow. He reached out to Zac Venchus with APHIS, who he is looking into it. Calkins states DNR will provide us a project for the Conservation Aide grant, this will take place at the September meeting.

**11. Approval of 2025 Producer Led Grant and Resolution –** Calkins states the project focus is mainly West Point area, along the Lake Wisconsin basin. He gave some statistics for what this grant has accomplished in the last 2 years. The approach for 2025 is the farm systems to meet water quality improvements and soil health goals. He states the current grant was \$24,000, and will apply for up to \$40,000, for the upcoming year. He states the cover crop payments are under this grant. He states with the approved resolution, we can apply for another year. A motion to approve this resolution was made by Cook. Second Bailey. Motion Carried.

**12. Discuss SAA Tour September 11, 2024 –** Calkins states the SAA tour is being hosted by Rock County and deadline is August 30<sup>th</sup> to register if anyone is interested. He states there will not be a business portion meeting at this tour. Calkins plans on attending if no conflict or will send a staff member. Supervisor Bailey expressed interest. A motion for Baily to attend if available was made by Cook. Second by Fischer. Motion carried. Bailey asks for follow-up contact about registering.

**13. Review/Approve Land & Water Conservation Department Proposed 2025 Budget –** Calkins states the budgeting process is similar each year. He read through each goal based on the counties reason for budgeting and funds needed. The Ag Outreach portion is still being worked on at a yearly base so that increased a little, so with the Land & Water budget, he tried to offset the Ag Outreach budget increased costs. He explains the File Director system along with TTech assistance for the LWCD computer software page. Overall, there is a \$160 decrease in LWCD to offset the Ag Outreach increase of \$270. He states our tree program has grown and increased our revenue, so we increased our return to county levee amount from \$3,630 to \$4,950, an increase of \$1,200. Brusveen had questions about the WI Land & Water conference training attendance for Bennett. There was a discussion on the Conference/Training account for Ag Outreach budget. A motion to approve budget 6790 Ag Outreach with reduction to conference training to \$750, was made by Brusveen. Second by Fischer. Cook is not in favor of reduction. Motion carried, not unanimous. LWCD revenue accounts was discussed. Motion to approve LWCD budget 7410 was made by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried. Motion was made on budget 7415-wildlife damage fund, for approval by Cook. Second by Bailey. Motion carried. Motion was made to approve LWCD budget 7421-Conservation Aide Fund, by Brusveen. Second by Fischer. Motion carried. A motion to approve budget 7423 Tree Program, was made by Cook. Second by Bailey. There was discussion on increasing the bank charges line item. Motion carried. A motion to approve account Calkins explains budget 7430-Cost Share Funds, is project work that varies each year which is all state funded. A motion to approve budget 7430, was made by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried. For budget 7444-Targeted Runoff Management Program, Calkins states these are also

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cost sharing funds for direct runoff issues, there was discussion on the one grant still active. A motion to approve the budget 7444 was made by Cook. Second by Bailey. Motion carried. There was a motion to approve budget 6720-Snowmobile Trail grant, by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried. A motion to approve the Capital Outlay request for 2025/2026 was approved by Brusveen. Second by Bailey. Motion carried. A motion to approve budgets for LWCD and Ag outreach was made by Brusveen. Second by Bailey. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Brusveen. Second by Cook. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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

