



Winnebago County

The Wave of the Future

**LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE (LCC) MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2025**

A. Call to Order

Convene:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Farrey at 9:01am

Present:

- **LCC Members:** Bruce Bohn, Chuck Farrey, Kristl Laux, Timothy Macho, Doug Nelson, Dan Stokes & Doug Zellmer
- **LWCD Staff:** Chad Casper, Jody Bezio
- **Other(s) present:** Jesse Haen, NRCS
- **Absent:** None

B. Confirm meeting/agenda has been properly public noticed in accordance with County policy.

Chairman Farrey confirmed with Director Casper that the meeting had been properly public noticed.

C. Approval of Minutes

1. November 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes
A ZELLMER / NELSON motion to approve the minutes passed 7-0

D. Public Comments on Agenda Items

None.

E. Agency Reports

Jesse Haen, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) introduced himself as the new Resource Conservationist, replacing Merrie Schamberger. He started in the Winnebago County office in November and but has 15 years of NRCS experience. Haen reported that the NRCS office was closed for 43 days during the federal shutdown and staff are working through a backlog of field checks and program payments. Haen noted that the EQIP application deadline that happened at the end of October remains firm, but applicants who began discussions with NRCS in October (prior to the government shutdown) may still be able to complete their applications.

F. Director's Report

1. Samer's Bay off-shore breakwall update

Director Casper reported that the LWCD received new contractor proposals for the Samer's Bay offshore breakwall project near Terrell's Island. The project was originally priced three years ago for ice construction, but poor ice conditions prevented work from occurring. The project was sent out for new proposals with options for either on-ice construction or in-water

construction with a barge. Three contractors submitted proposals for on-ice construction and one for in-water construction.

Casper noted that some grant funds for the project expire this year and the project is currently short approximately \$350,000. The department is reviewing design modifications to reduce costs and is contacting funders to request additional support; the LWCD Spirit Fund Program funds may also be considered.

Casper reported that they are finalizing permits for construction. A sturgeon biologist with the DNR has expressed concern about on-ice construction occurring during the sturgeon spearing season. Casper stated that there have been no issues in the past 30 years, and restricting this timing could jeopardize winter projects, as the workable ice window is already very limited.

2. Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant

Casper reported that the LWCD's application to DATCP for a Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant on behalf of the Muddy Bottom Farmers group was successful, securing approximately \$11,000 to continue their work.

G. Committee Chair's Report

None.

H. Business Items

Action may be taken on any business items.

1. Discussion on the approved LCC amendment to the Strategic Impact — FY2026 Land & Water Budget Document

Casper shared the amendment made to the Strategic Impact document (discussed at the last LCC meeting). Chairman Farrey asked if there were any concerns with the revised wording updated to use the word "managed"; none were noted.

2. Review and Approve the 2026 Land Conservation Committee Meeting Schedule

Director Casper presented a draft of the LCC meeting schedule for 2026. Director Farrey noted that his last meeting as committee chair will be April 6. After a brief discussion about the Labor Day date change in September, a **Zellmer/Nelson motion** to approve the schedule as presented was approved 7-0.

3. Authorize the Land & Water Conservation Department Director to Execute Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program (WCWQIP) & Spirit Fund Program (SFP) cost-share agreements exceeding \$5,000 for the remainder of 2025

A **NELSON/ZELLMER motion** to authorize Director Casper to execute Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program (WCWQIP) & Spirit Fund Program (SFP) cost-share agreements exceeding \$5,000 for the remainder of 2025 **passed 7-0**.

4. Discuss and Approve the Land & Water Conservation Department's participation in the Statewide Phosphorus Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV) Program

Director Casper reviewed the DNR MDV program with the LCC. The LWCD did not apply for 2025 funding, but is considering whether to apply for 2026. Casper requested approval to move forward with an application if an appropriate project is identified. Casper noted that the DNR is very specific about eligible project locations and allowable activities, creating challenges in matching projects to funding. The program requires significant administrative time, and if awarded more funding than requested, capacity becomes an issue. The grant runs for two years with a one-year rollover; reporting and administration are time-intensive.

A **NELSON/LAUX motion** to grant the LWCD Director the flexibility to apply for the DNR MDV program if a suitable project opportunity arises **passed 7-0.**

5. Presentation on the completed Van Dyke off-shore breakwall project
Director Casper presented an overview of the Van Dyke breakwall project completed in November. The presentation included photos of each construction phase and highlighted project benefits, including habitat restoration and pollutant reductions that will contribute to water quality improvements annually.
6. Action Item - Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program (CSAs) – 25-10, Breezewood Farms, LLC Wetland Restoration Project
*Following a review of the CSAs, a **BOHN / STOKES motion** to approve CSA 25-10, Breezewood Farms LLC, Wetland Restoration **passed 7-0.***
7. Action Item - LWCD Spirit Fund Program Cost-Share Agreements (CSAs) – SFP-BMP-25-22, Breezewood Farms, LLC Wetland Restoration Project
*Following a review of the CSAs, a **BOHN / STOKES motion** to approve CSA SFP-BMP-25-22, Breezewood Farms LLC, Wetland Restoration **passed 7-0.***
8. Review Land & Water Conservation Department Project Lists
The LCC reviewed and acknowledged the new projects on the lists.

I. **Adjourn**

A **ZELLMER / LAUX motion** made to adjourn the meeting at 10:05am **passed 7-0.**

[MIN FOOT]