

DOUGLAS COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m.
Government Center, Boardroom 201
1316 N. 14th Street, Superior, Wisconsin

Meeting called to order by Chair Sue Hendrickson.

ROLL CALL: Present – Sue Hendrickson, Wendy Bong, Jim Soyering (remote), Kathryn McKenzie (remote). Absent – Mary Lou Bergman, Larry Luostari. Others present – Karina Heim (remote), Erin Brukett (remote), Megan Hogfeldt (remote), Jane Anklam (remote), Shelley Nelson (remote), Zach Stewart (remote), Shelley Nelson (remote), Ashley Vande Voort, Kaci Lundgren, Committee Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Bong, second Soyering, to approve minutes from the November 17, 2020, meeting. Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS:

Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR), Karina Heim (Coastal Training Program Coordinator, LSNERR): 29 national reserves exist across the nation to do research, provide education and encourage partnerships.

Lake Superior Collaborative, Erin Brukett (Lake Superior Outreach Specialist, UW-Madison, Extension): Based out of Ashland, Wisconsin, the Lake Superior Collaborative promotes networking and projects across a variety of agencies and organizations. Brukett is focused on improving communications, branding the collaborative, and providing training opportunities.

Smart Salting Program, Megan Hogfeldt (Water Resources Specialist, City of Superior): Outreach opportunities at neighborhood events help educate citizens on the importance of salting smart. Chloride levels rise the more salt used, which has a negative impact on the environment and way of life. The Wisconsin Saltwise Program offers free training opportunities.

ACTION ITEMS:

Wildlife Damage and Abatement Program:

Report: Included with agenda; reviewed. State legislation may eliminate county participation in program and will be administered by another agency.

Cooperative Service Agreement: Bear relocation contract cost for 2021 is \$3,028.03; this provides service for bear removal in Douglas County.

ACTION: Motion by McKenzie, second Bong, to approve agreement as presented. Motion carried.

International Dark Skies Initiative Letter of Support: A Solon Springs citizen is seeking dark sky designation for a southern portion of Douglas County. Efforts would be taken to maintain minimum lighting to meet the requirements of the program. It may attract tourists and others who like viewing and photographing the night sky.

ACTION: Motion by Bong, second McKenzie, to approve letter of support. Motion carried.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources:

Surface Water Grant for Bois Brule River Cattail and Yellow Iris Early Detection and Rapid Response Project: Grant will help make AIS a priority and control its spread; \$4,000 in cash has been secured to match funding.

ACTION: Motion by Bong, second McKenzie, to approve grant application. Motion carried.

Invasive Species Project Funding:

Clough Island: Buckthorn control project; funds from DNR with Bayfield County performing the tasks within the scope of work.

Purple Loosestrife: Funds from DNR with DNR employee performing the tasks.

AIS Bridge Funding: Additional funding from DNR may exist to establish a sustainable AIS program.

ACTION: Motion by Bong, second McKenzie, to approve funding projects through DNR sources as presented. Motion carried.

Creation of Full-time Position: Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist at Pay Grade J: Position needed to address AIS concerns throughout county. AIS can cause significant damage to fisheries and ecosystems, which may affect tourism, small businesses, recreation and property value. A position review by McGrath recommended classification to an AIS Specialist at pay grade J. The annual cost including support costs is \$65,157. The proposed funding is \$33,729 base funding from Douglas County; \$31,425 outside funding for remaining costs, annually.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by McKenzie, second Bong, to recommend creation of full-time AIS Specialist position at pay grade J with funding sources as presented and refer to Zoning Committee. Motion carried.

Capital Project Request: \$10,000 Request for Groundwater Program: 2020 funding not yet used due to COVID-19; will be combined for a larger sampling effort. Areas of county where samples have not been collected will be target.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Bong, second McKenzie, to approve request to fund Groundwater Program out of the 2021 capital improvement fund and refer to Administrator and Administration/Executive Committees. Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

DNR Allouez Bay Project: Project will focus on migratory birds and wild rice restoration.

Youth Poster Contest: Both posters selected from Douglas County made it to the state finals.

Nutrient Management Farmer Education Training: Through DATCP funding, a training was held for farmers to learn how to compose a Nutrient Management Plan; a second training will be held this summer.

Polyfluoroalkyl Substances: Including PFAs testing in water well samples is too costly at \$425.

Capital Project Funds: Request made to fund Groundwater Program.

9-Key Element Plan: Grant did not fit overall expense of program. City interested in combining efforts; may consider contracting out program due to time constraints.

Douglas County Comprehensive Plan Draft: Draft available on county website to review.

2021 Youth Camps: Cancelled due to COVID-19.

Environmental Reserve Fund: Summary included with agenda. Monies underspent in 2020 due to cancellation of youth camps. Funds to be used for one-time projects rather than annual needs. May use funds beyond interest accrual, but suggested to not go below \$300,000 balance.

ACTION: Motion by Bong, second McKenzie, to extend meeting beyond two-hour limit. Motion carried.

Staff Report: Envirothon is a virtual high school competition on environmental topics; no Douglas County schools participate. A recent permit request for manure storage piqued enforcement concerns; to consider ordinance amendments. Agricultural plastics used for silage are difficult to recycle or dispose of; local cleansweep efforts may offer opportunity.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Agricultural focused presentation.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Bong, second McKenzie, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Submitted by,

Kaci Lundgren, Committee Clerk