EXTENSION-LCC COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 3, 2026, 10:30 a.m.
Room 2151

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Members present: Kirsten Huth, Jim Gores, Randy Cook, Fran Langman, Carsten Ellison, Gary Nelson and Audrey Kusilek.
Staff present: Tyler Gruetzmacher, Justin Everson, Jeff French, Lori Baltrusis, Becky Melton and Ben Cole.
Present: David Ruid, USDA

Cook called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and Melton confirmed proper posting of the meeting. No public comment was received.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes
Motion: (Langman/Kusilek) to approve the agenda; carried.
Motion: (Gores/Ellison) to approve the minutes of 09/01/2026 meeting; carried.

Announcements: Gruetzmacher announced his retirement in late 2027.
Edit list: No questions

Wildlife Damage
David Ruid reviewed the crop pricing and recommended $4.11/bu for corn, $11.41/bu for soybeans and $448.00/cwt for feeder calves. Ruid reviewed the bear harvest and crop damage. After committee questions, **Motion:** (Kusilek/Nelson) to approve corn price of $4.11/bu, $11.41/bu soybeans and $448.00/cwt for feeder calves; carried.

Land and Water Conservation Board Election
Gruetzmacher presented the 2027-2028 election process for the State Land and Water Conservation Board and reviewed the seven candidates. Following committee discussion, **Motion:** (Kusilek/Nelson) to select Terry White, John Skoug and Travis Bassett as our candidates for the election; carried.

Wisconsin Land + Water
Gruetzmacher and Cook shared highlights and provided a recap of the WI Land + Water County Conservation Meeting they both attended in October.

Red Cedar Total Maximum Daily Load Update
Gruetzmacher gave a presentation on the Red Cedar River Watershed plan, reporting a reduction in phosphorus levels in the Red Cedar River and attributing this progress to successful work by local farmers to reduce runoff and improvements at waste water treatment facilities. Additionally, key practices to minimize agricultural runoff were reviewed, including barnyard controls, rotational grazing and cover crops.

Nestle Lower Chippewa River Water Quality Project
Gruetzmacher gave a presentation on the Nestle Water Quality Project. Nestle has contributed $450,000 to WI Land + Water, partnering with conservation efforts to decrease runoff and erosion in the Chippewa basin. WI Land + Water plans to disperse approximately $25,000 to counties in the basin. Gruetzmacher proposed using the funds to increase the incentive rate for headland buffers- an extension

of the Multi-Discharge Variance (MDV) program from $750 to $1,000 per acre with a 5 - year commitment.
Motion: (Langman/Ellison) to accept the funding to the MDV program; carried.
Motion: (Gores/Ellison) to increase headland buffer rate to $1,000 per acre with a 5 year commitment; carried.

2025 Nutrient Management Plan Report
Everson unpacked the 2025 DATCP Nutrient Management Program report and highlighted the conservation efforts for Barron County, with 71,521 acres - 42% of total cropland - operating under an active Nutrient Management Plan.

Cover Crop Update
Gruetzmacher's update highlights growing success with the cover crop program. There were 1232 acres successfully planted in cover crops across Barron County this season through the program. Many more acres are being done by dairy farms after silage.

Soil Water Resources Management update
Gruetzmacher provided an update on the UWSP Ground water program. He recapped the progress this year including 5 manure pit closures and 6 waterway projects. Everson presented the soil test results from the multiple cover crops that were planted in the demo plot. Soil testing verified that specific cover crop species in the demo plot successfully provided nitrates and essential nutrients back into the soil. Press release of the findings to follow in the near future.

Staff & Committee Reports

- **UWEX:** Baltrusis recapped the quarterly report and highlighted 2 of the staff members for their achievements in receiving national awards:
    - Sara Waldron – National 4-H Communicator Award for Outstanding Education Piece (Clover Quest Breakout) and Outstanding Periodical Cloverbud Connection (Newsletter)
    - Missy Bablick for the NEAFCS Distinguished Service Award.
- **NRCS:** No report.
- **FSA:** Huth gave an update for November recapping the programs and the County Committee Elections through December 1, 2026.
- **Executive Committee:** No report.
- **Fair Board:** French provided the updates as he received them.

Next Meeting Date
The next tentative meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.

Adjournment
Motion: By unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 12:09 p.m.; carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Melton
Administrative Secretary, Land Services