



**PORTAGE COUNTY
GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE ROOM 5, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2010 - 7:00 P.M.**

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rita Walkowicz, Town of Belmont; David Shantz, Town of Buena Vista; Dennis Meis, Town of Dewey; Mary Kiedrowski, Town of Grant; Richard Berndt, Town of Linwood; Mike Hinrichs, Village of Amherst; Peter Mallek, Village of Junction City; Paul McGinley, Village of Park Ridge; and Joel Lemke, City of Stevens Point.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Fred Copes, Town of Carson; Bill McKee, Town of Lanark; Sally Ellingboe, Town of New Hope; Richard Filtz, Town of Stockton; and James Walker, Village of Nelsonville.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Delbert Anderson, Town of Alban; Dave Dombrowski, Town of Amherst; Tim Zimmerman, Town of Hull; Fritz Aschauer, Town of Plover; and Sarah Gilbert, Village of Whiting.

STAFF PRESENT: Ray Schmidt and Jamie Phillis.

OTHERS PRESENT: Cindy Mews, Kelly Scharbarth, and Justin Hoerter - Leadership Portage County (LPC); and Ken Schroeder - University Extension (UWEX).

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Berndt.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER(S): None.

GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GCAC) MEMBERS LISTING:

MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME
TOWNS:		TOWNS:	
Alban	Delbert Anderson	Plover	Fritz Aschauer
Almond	VACANT	Sharon	VACANT
Amherst	Dave Dombrowski	Stockton	Richard Filtz
Belmont	Rita Walkowicz	Stockton Alternate	VACANT
Buena Vista	David Shantz	VILLAGES:	
Carson	Fred Copes	Almond	VACANT
Dewey	Dennis Meis	Amherst	Mike Hinrichs
Eau Pleine	VACANT	Amherst Junction	VACANT
Grant	Mary Kiedrowski	Junction City	Peter Mallek
Grant Alternate	Scott Provost	Nelsonville	James Walker
Hull	Tim Zimmerman	Park Ridge	Paul McGinley
Lanark	Bill McKee	Park Ridge Alternate	Christine Neidlein
Linwood	Richard Berndt	Plover	VACANT
New Hope	Sally Ellingboe	Rosholt	VACANT
New Hope Alternate	Cathy Derezinski	Whiting	Sarah Gilbert
Pine Grove	VACANT	CITY OF STEVENS POINT	Joel Lemke

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 5, 2009: Motion by Hinrichs to approve the minutes, seconded by McGinley. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

BERNDT READ THE PUBLIC NOTICE: Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Update: Leadership Portage County (LPC) Water Sampling Attitudes Survey

Schmidt stated he has compiled all of the test results that have been returned. Justin Hoerter and Kelly Sharbarth have brought in water tests and attitude surveys. Schmidt went through the survey to give the Committee an idea of how people feel. They seem to be aware that contamination is in the groundwater, but are not concerned. The surveys seem to be consistent and show there is a need to educate the public on groundwater. The latest batch of water samples did not have any results above the health standard for nitrate.

Sharbarth asked if those people participating will get the results of the tests. Schmidt replied yes.

McGinley asked if the LPC members go through the survey with the people. Hoerter replied yes. Most people have no idea how to answer the questions and sometimes make up an answer. The people he met with were not aware he would be coming. He presents information and offers the free water sample first, and then asks if he may go through the survey with them. Schmidt stated this is a pilot project to gain knowledge and perspective for going countywide.

Resolution: Support for High Capacity Well Legislation

Berndt stated the normal procedure for passing a resolution is the Committee will draft the resolution, pass it on to the Planning and Zoning Committee, who then passes it on to the County Board for approval. Berndt read through the resolution.

Berndt suggested adding the Friends of the Little Plover River (LPR) to the sixth "Whereas" paragraph.

Schmidt stated the last few paragraphs of the resolution state High Capacity Wells (HCW) need to operate in a sustainable manner, whether municipal, agricultural, or industrial. This would be to prevent groundwater depletion, unless additional supplemental recharge was brought in from outside the basin. Del Monte is providing some supplemental recharge into the LPR basin.

Schmidt stated for many years municipalities have taken as much water as they needed, as well as growers and industries, all for the cost of pumping and delivering. Whatever water was leftover is what went to the public and the environment. Major users have not been paying any of the cost of depletion. Lemke stated he believes the public would fit into the first group as well. Schmidt stated the resolution was written generally enough to apply to the LPR basin, but also other areas of groundwater depletion in the County. He is hoping when the Legislature receives the resolution, they will be provided with the idea to look at the groundwater budget in all counties.

Lemke stated there seems to be something missing in the seventh paragraph. He asked if there have been any measurable benefits to the steps taken to prevent depletion. If the actions taken to make the situation better have no measurable effect, should the resolution say withdrawals are continuing to make the situation worse? Is it a guess to say withdrawals are still making it worse when we have tried to reverse it with additional pumping up stream? Schmidt replied our tools to measure are not fine enough to figure out exactly what is happening. We do know if the pumping was not there, the stream would be recovering even in the natural drought situation. It would establish a new level that is not as drastically affected as it is now. We know voluntary conservation and reuse had some positive benefits, such as water being left in the basin. The situation is not as bad as it would have been without those voluntary efforts. The first time the LPR dried up in the summer, it did not dry up the following winter. The following summer it dried up earlier, and dried up in the winter too. It has had that pattern ever since, even though those voluntary conservation efforts have been made. Lemke feels that by saying there are all these significant voluntary conservation efforts; we are projected to make some measurable difference. The fact there are voluntary conservation efforts taking place, does not mean they are making the situation worse.

Schmidt suggested splitting the paragraph so it is clear that voluntary efforts have been made. Lemke agreed and stated they are significant efforts, which involve the growers, Del Monte, and some municipalities. They need to be recognized for the efforts they have made. Berndt stated these conservation efforts have been made and do have some effect. Another effect is that the Village of Plover and the farmers, because of the drought, are drawing more water than before. We increased putting more water into the basin, but have also increased more water being taken out. There needs to be a way to decrease the taking of water, but most people are against putting any limitations on their use of water.

Walkowicz asked why the LPR is drying up in the fall and winter, if farmers and Del Monte are using little or no water. Schmidt replied because the groundwater is not high enough to sustain the flow. At certain times of the year, the groundwater level is below the bottom of the LPR. It does not matter what time of year, but mostly happens in the summer because it is the driest; there is little rainfall and water is being pumped out of the ground. It is not right to blame the farmers or the Village. Walkowicz stated it seems like the farmers are often getting the blame, even when they are irrigating at night to prevent evaporation. Schmidt stated maybe 20 years ago, before problems were recognized, farmers were not practicing conservation. Now they are making efforts, but it is not enough.

Kiedrowski asked if all the development in Plover is also drawing. Berndt replied yes. Shantz stated the two years the LPR went dry, it was preceded by the dewatering projects for the Crossroad Commons and the water park that never happened (Fritsch clarified this statement at the March 4, 2010 meeting, by stating there were no dewatering projects for the Crossroad Commons project. There were dewatering projects for sewer and water for the County Road R project.). Del Monte pumps 70 million gallons per summer, and the dewatering projects pumped 770 million gallons one year and 600 million the next year. Schmidt stated the groundwater is probably still recovering from those projects. Lemke stated there was a lot of oversight in those dewatering projects with reports of daily pumping. Dewatering permits are pretty specific.

Schmidt suggested 'Whereas, significant voluntary conservation and water reuse efforts have been made by water users in the LPR basin; and Whereas, withdrawals of groundwater from the LPR basin have continued to intensify the effects of the natural drought resulting in cessation of flow in the LPR in each of the four successive summers.' That splits the paragraph up and explains even though voluntary efforts have been made, the use may have increased. Lemke asked if this Committee could be refreshed on what the LPR Workgroup is doing. Schmidt stated yes, a report will be on the next agenda.

Kiedrowski suggested using the words 'contributing to cessation' instead of 'resulting in'. It sounds like the withdrawals of groundwater caused the cessation of flow. Schmidt stated 'contributing to' sounds fine. The paragraph will be split to read as follows: Whereas, significant voluntary conservation and water reuse efforts have been made by water users in the LPR basin; and Whereas, withdrawals of groundwater from the LPR basin have continued to intensify the effects of natural drought, contributing to cessation of flow in the LPR in each of the four successive summers.

McGinley asked if the paragraph regarding the distribution of precipitation changing to portend more droughts in the future is a true statement. Schmidt replied it seems to be. He put that paragraph together with the help of the State climatologist because we are not getting the precipitation regularly through the summer; instead it is coming earlier in the spring or dropping off. McGinley asked if it was some sort of cycle and if there is evidence that suggests some reason for this. Schmidt replied no, it is just the distribution resulting in drier summers. Actually, even though it resulted in drier summers over the past 15 years, does not mean it is going to in the future. We should change the paragraph to be more accurate.

Hinrichs suggested adding a paragraph for dewatering, such as dewatering should be placed upgradient. Lemke stated that if you take water to the headwaters of the LPR versus putting it elsewhere, it will have different effects. He feels dewatering is very heavily regulated. Berndt asked who regulates. Lemke replied the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Hinrichs asked how these dewatering projects water use compares to a daily or weekly well water use. Lemke replied the City of Stevens Point average water pumpage is approximately six million gallons per day. Stevens Point pumps twice as much as a community the same size because of industry. Schmidt stated an average agricultural irrigation well pumps about 25 million gallons a summer, per growing season, which is based on the latest reporting of the HCW.

McGinley referred to the first paragraph on the second page where it states no additional HCW will be allowed to be installed where the groundwater has been depleted and asked if the language might be in the Legislation. It seems like, if you got there first, you can keep your well in, but the people who come later cannot. Schmidt replied he does not know what the Legislature is going to do, but he wanted to limit any further deterioration by not allowing any additional wells. Lemke stated there is some draft Legislation where they determine what is sustainable and limit the pumping, but they probably will not do much about existing wells. McGinley stated an alternative approach would be to say that all existing wells need to pump less. Schmidt stated the LPR Workgroup thought if all these voluntary conservation efforts are done to keep water in the basin, then DNR would not exercise authority to prevent another well from going in that area. Right now there is nothing preventing another well from being installed there, so the language needs to be a part of the resolution. Kiedrowski asked if a permit could be denied. Schmidt replied DNR cannot do that as long as all requirements are met, such as locating the well far enough from the river. Lemke stated some of the proposed Legislation brings up as many questions as it answers. It is frustrating. To retroactively limit pumping from a well risks the chance of some industry relocating. Sustainable withdrawal is the most difficult issue to manage.

Schmidt stated once the Committee is comfortable, this resolution will go to the Planning and Zoning Committee, and then on to County Board for action.

Preliminary Report: State of Portage County Groundwater

McGinley stated the report is not quite ready, so he will bring it to the next meeting.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- a. **Public Involvement/Education Sub-Committee (PIES):** Berndt stated a request was made that the Committee receive a report on which municipalities have not held their groundwater meeting. Schmidt stated he can put a report together. Berndt stated, in the past, municipalities used to be grouped together, but then it was decided that each municipality has a different groundwater issue and should hold their own meeting.
- b. **Continuous Assessment Subcommittee (CAS):** McGinley stated they met in November and are hoping to wrap up the report for the next meeting.
- c. **Groundwater Management Plan and Implementation Subcommittee (GMPIS):** No report.

DISCUSSION: UNLIMITED TOPICS

None.

MEMBER REPORTS:

No reports.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date is Thursday, March 4, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 5 of the County Annex.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mallek; seconded by Kiedrowski to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Jamie Phillis, Recording Secretary

Richard Berndt, Chair

Date



**PORTAGE COUNTY
GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE ROOM 5, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2010 - 7:00 P.M.**

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rita Walkowicz, Town of Belmont; Mary Kiedrowski, Town of Grant; Tim Zimmerman, Town of Hull; Bill McKee, Town of Lanark; Richard Berndt, Town of Linwood; Sally Ellingboe, Town of New Hope; Fritz Aschauer, Town of Plover; Mike Hinrichs, Village of Amherst; James Walker, Village of Nelsonville; Christine Neidlein, Village of Park Ridge Alt.; Dave Fritsch, Village of Plover; and Joel Lemke, City of Stevens Point.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Richard Filtz, Town of Stockton; Peter Mallek, Village of Junction City; and Paul McGinley, Village of Park Ridge

MEMBERS ABSENT: Delbert Anderson, Town of Alban; David Shantz, Town of Buena Vista; Fred Copes, Town of Carson; Dennis Meis, Town of Dewey; Sarah Gilbert, Village of Whiting.

STAFF PRESENT: Ray Schmidt and Jamie Phillis.

OTHERS PRESENT: Cindy Mews, Kelly Scharbarth, Sharon Jakusz, and Justin Hoerter - Leadership Portage County (LPC); Gary Barten, - Wysocki Produce Farm; Richard Mansheim – Possible Town of Alban GCAC Member; Nick Somers – Plover River Farms, Inc.; Duane Maatz – Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA).

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Berndt.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER(S): Dave Fritsch, Village of Plover, has officially been appointed. He is the Village of Plover Water System Manager and is very active in the Little Plover River Workgroup. This will be Sally Ellingboe’s last meeting. Berndt thanked Ellingboe for her participation and dedication with the Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee (GCAC).

GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GCAC) MEMBERS LISTING:

MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME
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REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 7, 2010: Fritsch referred to page 3, paragraph 3, for clarification by stating there were no dewatering projects for the Crossroad Commons project in the Village. There were dewatering projects for sewer and water for the County Road R project. Motion by Walker to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by McKee. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Schmidt stated a memo was received from the Village of Plover appointing Fritsch to the GCAC. Also, an email was received from Louis Molepske on an update for the High Capacity Well Legislation. The Bill is in drafting, there may be hearings on the Bill in March, and a Bill will be introduced this session, which is all the information Molepske had for GCAC.

Report: Little Plover River Workgroup

Schmidt provided the Committee with a graph showing measurements of flow in the Little Plover River (LPR) at three different points, Hoover Avenue, Eisenhower Avenue (County Road R), and Kennedy Avenue. It also shows average flow rates from 1959-1987 and the minimum public rights stage set by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In the past, the LPR has dried up in the summer and winter, but there is water flowing in the river today.

Fritsch stated the flow of the river does not dry up; only a section will dry up. He was at the LPR today and there was water flowing. From the Village of Plover standpoint, since about June 2009, they shifted 85% of pumping to Well 3, south of Lake Pacawa. This means only 15% of pumping is coming from Wells 1 and 2 near the LPR. Obviously, agriculture is not pumping now and Del Monte is pumping very little, and the same results are seen. Everyone is making an effort to help the LPR.

Schmidt stated the map shows the area around the LPR, including private wells and high capacity wells (HCWs). Del Monte is in the process of purchasing a piece of property within the area to use for spreading wastewater. Currently, Del Monte spreads their wastewater south of County Road B. The new area is ½ mile closer to the LPR, which will provide a significant amount of recharge. Also, the irrigation wells will be taken out of service, which will save several million gallons of water per year and gain approximately 60 million gallons of wastewater spreading.

Schmidt stated there is another well north of Village of Plover Well 3, which is a test well the Village of Plover drilled for future Well 4. Fritsch corrected Schmidt by stating it is an observation well, not a test well. Fritsch uses it to take groundwater elevations, which is checked about once per week. Elevations were increasing, but are now decreasing slightly. There has not been any recharge to speak of, but the elevations may be coming up by next week because of snow melting.

McKee asked if the Village wells were drilled into bedrock. Schmidt replied the wells south of Lake Pacawa were drilled down to bedrock. Fritsch replied the well farthest to the south is drilled to bedrock, but the observation well to the north is only drilled about 25 feet deep with a small two inch pipe. McKee stated he was just curious if a well in bedrock is affecting the LPR. Fritsch stated typically municipal wells are drilled to bedrock, not in bedrock. Schmidt stated most irrigation wells, in order to get the depth they want, will go down until they hit clay or bedrock and then screen above it.

Schmidt stated the LPR Workgroup has been meeting since 2006 and is making progress. Del Monte is making a big impact on the LPR, but may not have made an official announcement of their plans. Fritsch stated Del Monte, since last year, has also been putting their cooling water along the ditches of Black Oak Drive closer to the LPR instead of spreading it on grass around the canning plant. Schmidt stated that is along the east side of County R; they have put about 30 million gallons of cooling water there. It is important for people to know the positive steps being taken to help the LPR.

Update: Leadership Portage County (LPC) Water Sampling Attitudes Survey

Schmidt stated there are three LPC volunteers here today. They have volunteered to do a project with GCAC in order to get involved in the community. GCAC asked them to go out and talk to people in the Town of Stockton, east and west of County Road J, and to offer them a free water test and take an attitude survey. The survey asks if they have tested their water lately, and if not, why not. Most people say they know there may be a problem, but for various reasons are not testing. Schmidt put together a map of the most recent nitrate test results. East of County Road J shows some numbers (5, 7, 6, and 2), and there were not any samples in the area that were

above the health standard of 10 parts per million (ppm) nitrate nitrogen. West of County Road J, along Burbank Road, there were levels of nitrate at 17, 24, 25, and 37. Further east of County Road J is the groundwater divide, and east of there the groundwater flows to the Tomorrow River Basin and out to Lake Michigan. West of there, water flows south and west to the Wisconsin River. Schmidt asked the volunteers to speak on how the project is going.

Hoerter stated people he dealt with have been pretty responsive and interested. He has not had any negative experience, they have been pretty receptive.

Mews stated she had a few people that were very vocal about the length of time of watering from agricultural irrigation wells. They know the water is being drawn down. One gentleman has ponds around his home and notices how the water draws down during irrigation and would like to only see the irrigation at night. One gentleman stated he would not be surprised if he has nitrates in his water because of all the chemicals they are putting on the field across the street. Most were surprised at the recommendation of testing their water every 15 months.

Jakusz asked if there has been any response to the results. Schmidt replied letters have not gone out to landowners yet, but will in the near future.

Fritsch asked if these results have been checked with past data to see if they are higher or lower. Schmidt replied results are pretty consistent with past data. Fritsch stated in municipal wells nitrate levels have gone down over the last 10 years. Schmidt stated Wells 1 and 2 have gone down, but asked if Well 3 is stable. Fritsch replied yes, it is pretty stable. He personally feels the reason for the drop in levels is because farmers are applying fertilizers more efficiently.

Hoerter stated LPC had their Leadership Program Day and the four volunteers for GCAC had a brainstorming session on their issue, high nitrate levels. They put their ideas on a chart, which they shared with the Committee. The chart consisted of root causes, such as irrigation, fertilizing, ground saturation, sandy soil, and yard watering; and solutions, such as education, classes, new technologies, alternative products, drought resistant landscaping, grade school programs, incentives for not wasting water, public policies on the local level, public awareness, and testing seasonally. So the issue is high nitrate levels and the overall goal is to lower nitrate levels. Mews stated the whole concept was for the group, as leaders in the community, to brainstorm ideas and find solutions.

Resolution: Support for High Capacity Well Legislation

Berndt stated there has been a change in timing for a resolution to get to the Legislature. Schmidt stated he received an email from Louis Molepske informing him the Bill may be introduced later in March. The last day of the comment floor period is today, March 4, 2010, until April 13 – 22, 2010 when they bring business back to the floor. If GCAC takes this to the Planning and Zoning Committee as a resolution on March 23, 2010, the County Board cannot take action on it until April 27, 2010, which would be too late for Portage County to give any input into the High Capacity Well Legislation. Schmidt suggests changing the structure from a resolution to a report to Planning and Zoning Committee as a discussion item, so they could discuss the issue, move forward, and it would not need County Board approval. If it goes to Planning and Zoning Committee as a discussion item, the resolution content would be the base of the discussion, but they would have other input. There would be a better chance of influencing Legislation in a timely manner, if there was no waiting for a County Board decision in April.

McKee stated he feels time is of the essence, and asked how much of the wording will change with the resolution or if it just will not be called a resolution. Schmidt replied it could be sent as a report, but the content will remain the same. The front of the resolution is basically background information. The back is where Portage County is requesting action. He feels the way the resolution is written captures what GCAC wanted.

McKee made a motion to change the resolution wording, but not the subject, to a report and submit it to the Planning and Zoning Committee for discussion. Walker seconded the motion.

Lemke commented on the second page, second paragraph. Whether sending this along in resolution form or not, it is important to look at the request 'That no additional HCWs be allowed to be installed in areas where groundwater has been depleted by drought or pumping.' That is a big area being addressed in the proposed Legislation and he feels it may be a part that has raised the most questions since groundwater conditions across

the State vary so widely. It is important to realize how dynamic this process is. The problem is that Legislation is still proposed and changing. At the moment it is difficult to say whether or not we are in support or not, because it is still in draft form and would be unsure of what we are supporting.

Schmidt stated the only thing the Portage County Groundwater Management Plan gives for guidance is human influenced depletion of the County's lakes, streams, wetlands, and groundwater reserves. It is up to this Committee to develop how to recommend this goal be implemented. When Schmidt asked Molepske for a prognosis on what will happen, Schmidt thought he would receive some detail on what they are looking at. Berndt stated we are suggesting to the Legislature what we would like to see put into the Bill. We are not making comments on what they have decided. Lemke agreed, but feels that second paragraph on page two splits those two issues. In the first part of the paragraph, GCAC is asking to see Legislation developed by a groundwater group based on principles of maintaining groundwater levels and then it gets into methods. Support of the Legislation, given it goes the right way, is great, but we may not get the chance to discuss it. Schmidt stated we may have a draft of the Legislation by the time Planning and Zoning Committee meets, but GCAC will not have another meeting beforehand. He explained the portion of the paragraph in reference to HCWs, which did not mean to preclude replacement wells. It was to prevent additional HCWs in the LPR basin.

Maatz stated a problem he has with the paragraph described is it indicates groundwater has been depleted. There are fluctuations of change, but depletion is not the issue. He would be in favor of taking the second portion of the paragraph out, in order to not regulate what the Legislation might say. The Legislation will indicate the controls and mechanisms. Maatz does not feel a resolution, intent, or recommendation from a Committee should do such, it should show your support instead of writing the Legislation.

McKee asked if this issue was much different than two paragraphs later where it speaks of the DNR establishing water budgets. We are recommending methods to preserving our groundwater. It is an issue of the number of wells and the demand for water. The numbers are different today than 50 years ago. Where are they going to be in 10 years with no limits on HCWs? Lemke stated the dialogue taking place here is part of the problem he had with pushing this forward the way it is worded. Everything addressed here are things Legislation is talking about, such as water budgeting. We are showing support based on ideas and want to maintain groundwater quality and quantity, which is a pretty broad statement. Then you get into means and methods of doing that.

Berndt stated the intent is to inform the Legislature what Portage County sees as issues and the actions we want to see happen in the County. If it is applicable, it can be spread throughout the State. We are not telling them what to do, but what we think we need here, whether or not they listen to us is another issue. Kiedrowski stated it still seems that we are trying to tell them to do something. It is a directive to not allow more HCWs.

Walker stated there have been certain observations made that various levels of surface waters have been reduced and some of the lakes have been affected. The problems have been attributed to the HCWs introduced in the last few years. He is unsure if the issue has been documented, but if it has, not allowing more HCWs would be a solution to recommend, if Legislation will go that far. Hinrichs stated we need to work at a sustainable level, the number of wells or location does not matter, but you cannot take more water out than is being put in.

Lemke stated groundwater levels fluctuate both naturally and by human influence. He does not believe any water source in the area has gone completely dry, which is fortunate for us and we should not abuse it. Schmidt stated the only reason the word depleted is in that paragraph is because it was part of the Groundwater Management Plan, 'Avoid human influenced depletion.' Lemke suggested striking the last part of the paragraph referring to not allowing additional HCWs be installed.

McKee stated he feels GCAC should make some recommendation on the number or placement of HCWs over time; something that says HCWs are an issue. Kiedrowski feels GCAC does not have the expertise, except Schmidt, to make a recommendation regarding HCWs. Schmidt stated not all HCWs are equal; a 16 inch well can pump more than a 10 inch. He feels McKee may be leaning toward the same issue as Hinrichs on the concept of sustainability for recharge. Hinrichs believes GCAC should be pushing for some sort of sustainable system. McKee asked if a sustainable system requires any governance over the number or placement of HCWs. Lemke stated he does like the mention of sustainability. Sustainability states that regardless of placement, capacity of the well, or the formation of the well, those needs are being addressed. McKee feels if no mention of HCWs is included, it will be subtracting one of the major issues in our groundwater.

Maatz stated there already is a system in place where an application is needed to install a HCW. A system of water budgeting and local committees will be addressed in the Legislation, if it occurs. He does not feel we need to say anything on a local level, because they already have the rules to indicate how the procedure is to occur. If there is Legislation with additional controls, there will be additional recommendations and methods for where they may be placed or not placed at all. Expansion or change will have to be approved for the future based on how much water can be used along with how much water is allowed for recharge. He believes checks and balances are already in place and will be there in the future.

Berndt asked what the restrictions were for placing a HCW. Schmidt replied a HCW has to be at least 1,200 feet from exceptional or outstanding resource water. Lemke stated he feels this goes back to sustainability and the desire the Legislation reflect the ideals of sustainable development, pumping, or use of our resources. Schmidt stated the second to last paragraph states 'and provide sustainable groundwater supplies for all users.' He feels this will cover what GCAC wants to say about sustainability. Lemke stated the parts removed from this document, along with the budgeting part, are being handled by the Legislation. He feels we should come across in favor of supporting and protecting our resource, but we should not tell the Legislature how to do it.

Berndt called for a vote on the motion on the table. Motion carried 10-2, with Kiedrowski and Walkowicz in opposition.

Preliminary Report: State of Portage County Groundwater

Berndt stated the report is not quite ready. McKee read an article he wrote that was printed in the Gazette. He has spoken with Gene Kemmeter and is hoping to have the report in the Gazette in small pieces.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- a. **Public Involvement/Education Sub-Committee (PIES):** Berndt stated there is a list of what this Committee had been doing, which is going around to each municipality and talking to them directly about their issues. This Committee will now check into which municipalities they have not visited.
- b. **Continuous Assessment Subcommittee (CAS):** Schmidt stated they are still working on the State of Portage County Groundwater report.
- c. **Groundwater Management Plan and Implementation Subcommittee (GMPIS):** No report.

DISCUSSION: UNLIMITED TOPICS

Schmidt stated he has been invited to speak on the groundwater quantity issue by an agriculture teacher at Mid-State Technical College (MSTC). They are holding a meeting at the Village of Almond next Wednesday and one at the Village of Amherst a month later. Schmidt forwarded the draft resolution to the teacher, along with a current GCAC listing with the vacancies. There are vacancies in the Village and Town of Almond, Town of Pine Grove, and a few others.

MEMBER REPORTS:

No reports.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date is Thursday, May 6, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 5 of the County Annex.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by McKee, seconded by Hinrichs to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Jamie Phillis, Recording Secretary

Richard Berndt, Chair

Date



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GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE ROOM 5, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
THURSDAY, MAY 6, 2010 - 7:00 P.M.**

MEETING MINUTES

GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GCAC) MEMBERS LISTING:

MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME
TOWNS:		TOWNS:	
Alban	Richard Mansheim	Plover	Fritz Aschauer
Almond	Edward Burns	Sharon	VACANT
Amherst	Mike Burress	Stockton	Richard Filtz
Belmont	Rita Walkowicz		
Buena Vista	Cathy Guth	VILLAGES:	
Buena Vista Alternate	Lynn Isherwood	Almond	Gary Schultz
Carson	Fred Copes	Almond Alternate	John Ruzicka
Dewey	Dennis Meis	Amherst	Mike Hinrichs
Dewey Alternate	Kathy Girolamo	Amherst Junction	VACANT
Eau Pleine	VACANT	Junction City	Peter Mallek
Grant	Mary Kiedrowski	Nelsonville	James Walker
Grant Alternate	Scott Provost	Park Ridge	Paul McGinley
Hull	Tim Zimmerman	Park Ridge Alternate	Christine Neidlein
Lanark	Bill McKee	Plover	Dave Fritsch
Linwood	Richard Berndt	Rosholt	VACANT
New Hope	Laurie Stoltenberg	Whiting	Sarah Gilbert
New Hope Alternate	Cathy Derezinski		
Pine Grove	Wes Meddaugh	CITY OF STEVENS POINT	Joel Lemke

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Mansheim, Town of Alban; Edward Burns, Town of Almond; Mike Burress, Town of Amherst; Rita Walkowicz, Town of Belmont; Cathy Guth, Town of Buena Vista; Lynn Isherwood, Town of Buena Vista Alternate; Mary Kiedrowski, Town of Grant; Tim Zimmerman, Town of Hull; Richard Berndt, Town of Linwood; Laurie Stoltenberg, Town of New Hope; Wes Meddaugh, Town of Pine Grove; Mike Hinrichs, Village of Amherst; Paul McGinley, Village of Park Ridge; Christine Neidlein, Village of Park Ridge Alternate; and Sarah Gilbert, Village of Whiting.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Fred Copes, Town of Carson; Fritz Aschauer, Town of Plover; Richard Filtz, Town of Stockton; and James Walker, Village of Nelsonville

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dennis Meis, Town of Dewey; Bill McKee, Town of Lanark; Gary Schultz, Village of Almond; Peter Mallek, Village of Junction City; Dave Fritsch, Village of Plover; and Joel Lemke, City of Stevens Point.

STAFF PRESENT: Ray Schmidt and Jamie Phillis, Planning and Zoning Department.

OTHERS PRESENT: Louis Molepske, Jr., State Representative; Cindy Mews, Kelly Scharbarth, and Sharon Jakusz - Leadership Portage County (LPC); Mike Splinter, County Board Supervisor District 26; Barbara Feltz, Friends of the Little Plover River; Barry Jacowski, County Board Supervisor District 19; Patty Dreier, County Executive; Ken Schroeder, University of Wisconsin Extension; and Cathy Dugan.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Berndt.

Representative Molepske reported the Groundwater Legislation did not come out of Committee in either House. He, along with other colleagues in both Houses and the Environment Committee of Natural Resources, has asked the Legislative Council Committee to consider taking the proposal on for a summer long project into 2011. Instead of the normal public hearing process, they will be going through each section of the bill, and decide what should be done and can be done under the parameters of reality. The Legislative Council has not accepted the project yet. If it is not accepted by the Committee, then it will be on hold until next session, which begins in January 2011, for some Legislator to introduce the bill. There is a lot of initiative on the issue and it will not go away.

Schmidt asked if the Legislative Council will take into account the bill proposed already and all opinions expressed at the public hearings as a basis for starting the new process. Molepske replied a statement of purpose was given to the Committee for their review. The statement focused on High Capacity Wells (HCW), quantity, and what is the appropriate reaction to the decreased flows in the exceptional water resources. There is a non-statutory public rights stage in the Little Plover River (LPR), but we are unsure how to enforce it. The previously proposed bill will be on some people's minds, but the Legislative Council does not have to start there.

Berndt asked if Committee members will remain the same. Molepske stated the Committees can change. They redirect by what Committees Legislators request to be on. Everyone knows of this issue. The issue is to know what to do when there is a problem. Other states have come up with water budgets, which are trying to figure out how much water is in the area, how much water is needed, how much water is being used for industry or farming, and how to increase the cubic flow per second. Other states are much more advanced than Wisconsin; they have better modeling and have put their mapping into Geographical Information Systems (GIS) overlay systems. Some counties are better than others, but Portage County is above the curve and Waushara County is below.

Berndt introduced new Portage County Executive, Patty Dreier. Dreier congratulated Schmidt on 30 years of service to Portage County. She is interested in learning more about issues this Committee is working with, and what we need to do from the government standpoint to assist in creating the future GCAC is looking for.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER(S): Berndt introduced several new members on the Committee. Richard Mansheim, Town of Alban, owns a small farm, 23 acres, in the northeast corner of Portage County. He grows and sells cut flowers wholesale to florists. Ed Burns, Town of Almond, helps run a family potato farm with his father, three brothers, and a brother-in-law in the southern part of Portage County. Mike Burress, Town of Amherst, owns a small farm in Amherst. He raises sheep and sells lamb chops. Cathy Guth, Town of Buena Vista, is on the Town of Buena Vista Board and farms vegetables in the Central Sands area with her son. Laurie Stoltenberg, Town of New Hope, lives on Sunset Lake and owns the old Weller's Meat Market in Nelsonville and restored the building to open up an antique shop. Gary Schultz, Village of Almond, was not present. Schmidt introduced Lynn Isherwood and stated she will be the Town of Buena Vista Alternate. He also introduced prospective member, Wes Meddaugh, from the Town of Pine Grove.

Nominations/Elections: Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Berndt opened nominations for Chair. Guth nominated Burns. Berndt called for other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed and McGinley moved to cast a unanimous voice vote for Burns. Zimmerman seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.

Burns asked for more information on the job of Chairman. Schmidt replied the Chair basically runs the meeting and comes up with agendas for meetings.

Berndt opened nominations for Vice-Chair. McGinley nominated McKee. Berndt called for other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed and Guth moved to cast a unanimous voice vote for McKee. Zimmerman seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.

Burns asked Berndt to continue to run this meeting so he could observe before taking over.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 4, 2010: Motion by Zimmerman to approve the minutes, seconded by Gilbert. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters from each Town or Village confirming new members.

BERNDT READ THE PUBLIC NOTICE: Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Dugan stated she used to be a member of the Committee and had a few questions and comments. When she was on the Committee, it was a Committee that was certainly advisory, but thought of as offering regulation to growers. Now she sees big growers on the Committee. Berndt stated there have been growers on the Committee in the past, but they come and go. Dugan stated we are in a time of crisis with the Groundwater Legislation focusing on groundwater and high capacity wells. We also have the quality problem not being discussed. In 2007, there was a big report that made the front page of the paper regarding the poor quality of groundwater here in Portage County as a result of chemicals used by big growers. She is confused as to what the charge of the Committee is these days. Schmidt replied there will be an orientation later for the rest of the Committee as to what the charge is, but basically it is to guide groundwater policy and advise the County Board on what this Committee believes groundwater policy should be. He suspects this coming year they will be dealing with both groundwater quality and quantity issues extensively. Each municipality has the prerogative of appointing a citizen member to the Committee. For a while the Committee was unbalanced. When Dugan was on the Committee it did not have any, or very few, representatives from the agricultural sector and now there are more. For a while, only about ½ of the municipalities were represented and now we are near 100%. Dugan stated she does not see a government body as having the need to have people who are being regulated in the body; they should come before the Committee and give testimony. More neutral members, who do not have a dog in the fight, should decide or give recommendations, certainly not the people whose livelihoods are involved. Jacowski stated he would disagree with that last statement, he feels the persons involved should be valued members. Who would not have a dog in the fight of groundwater? Dugan stated there are many more people in the County whose water is affected by large growers who are taking too much and contaminating it.

Berndt stated we are the Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee (GCAC). We look at the problems, advise the County as to what we think, and recommend what should be done. Our recommendations have to go through the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Committee and the GCAC's recommendation on the HCW Legislation was denied by the P&Z Committee. Jacowski stated every one of the members on GCAC was picked by their community. Berndt agreed the Committee does not pick the members; they come to us from their municipalities.

Schmidt introduced Barry Jacowski, new County Board Supervisor from the Town of Belmont. Jacowski stated he is District 19 and he represents the Towns of Belmont, Almond, and the northern half of Pine Grove. Jacowski is also now on the P&Z Committee.

Hinrichs stated he has been on the Committee for a few years, and one of the things they have been lacking is a voice from the farming community and industry. When the Committee has questions on how something works, they have to get someone in to answer the questions. Now there are people on the Committee that will be able to give that input. The Committee now has all the voices it needs to educate people.

Report: Little Plover River Workgroup

Schmidt provided the Committee with some graphs on the LPR flow, which he received from Barb Feltz, a representative of the Friends of LPR. Schmidt also provided a chart on the drought severity index for Central Wisconsin, which comes from the State climatologist office. It tries to look at both precipitation and a heat index for evaporation transpiration; if you add the two together you get the drought severity. Back in earlier days it will show you times when we had much more severe droughts than we do now. We are in a drought, but it is mild compared to the past.

Schmidt referred to one of the graphs and stated there was a pretty heavy rain in mid-March and the LPR actually got up above 6 cubic feet per second (cfs). If you compare 6 cfs (in March 2010) with the history of flow in the LPR, 6 cfs was the average flow from 1959 – 1987. If you look at the flow from January 2005 through July 2010

the LPR only got above 6 cfs a few times in 2008. Recently it has been down below 4 cfs, closer to 2 cfs, which is where it is now. The LPR is pretty reactive to precipitation, some rainfall does soak into the wetlands and soil, and some does get into the groundwater and will provide sustained flow. The hope is to keep at least 2 cfs in the LPR throughout the year. Feltz stated the LPR flows near her home are hovering at 2 cfs, half of the public rights stage.

Zimmerman asked if the entire watershed is discharged beyond normal. Schmidt replied yes, groundwater throughout the area is low, but groundwater within the LPR basin itself is significantly lower than groundwater in the rest of the area. The river is nothing more than a leak in the groundwater. Feltz stated in areas where there were wetlands around the LPR, they are no longer wetlands. There are areas on her family land that used to be wetlands year round, but now it can be farmed because it has dried up. The entire ecosystem, or aquifer, has been affected.

Schmidt stated there have been some successes in the LPR, which have been strictly voluntary. The Village of Plover has moved 85% of its pumping from wells near the LPR to the well near Lake Pacawa. Del Monte has recently bought some formerly irrigated agricultural land and is in the process of taking wastewater discharge they used to put in the area south of their plant, and moving it north about a half mile closer to the LPR. This will help recharge groundwater closer to the river and will help sustain the flow. Farmers in the area have gotten together and are cooperating to modify their rotations so they are not all planting potatoes on the fields nearest the LPR in the same year. Most have a three year rotation. Burns stated his farm has a five year rotation. Schmidt stated potatoes use a lot of irrigation water in a given year, so farmers are trying to balance their irrigating. They have been doing this for about four years and are hoping this year to see real progress. Hopefully, we can move forward without the Legislature.

Update: Leadership Portage County (LPC) Water Sampling Attitudes Survey

Berndt explained the program to new members. LPC volunteers have been trying to educate the public on groundwater by talking to well owners about possible groundwater problems, going through a survey with them, and obtaining a water sample. Schmidt checks samples to see if there are any nitrates. Schmidt stated the volunteers were asked by the Committee to interview people in a certain part of the Town of Stockton, in a residential area with a lot of septic systems and wells. Small farms used to exist, but they went out of business. Countywide, about 30% of wells are above the health standard for nitrate nitrogen. Two municipal systems are above the health standard, the Villages of Plover and Whiting, and both treat their water to get it below the health standard for nitrates. About 20% of the samples were above the health standard for nitrate. All but one of those samples came from one area, which is downgradient from bigger potato fields.

Regarding the attitude survey, about 2/3 of the people interviewed stated they were not concerned about their water quality. Some were aware they may have chemicals in their groundwater, so even though they are aware chemicals may be there, they were not concerned about their water quality. Clearly there is an educational need. The vision for this program was to be a pilot project where we may consider having GCAC representatives go out in their own areas and see what the attitudes are, along with a free water tests. The tests are quick and not laboratory quality analysis, but can determine if water is above the health standard for nitrate.

Hinrichs asked if the group not concerned with their groundwater was of the younger generation. Scharbarth replied no, they just thought their water tastes fine so nothing is wrong. Mews stated unless they see sediment, discoloration, or odor, they do not really think about it. All the samples she took were above the health standard. The project did help to educate some people in the area. Schmidt stated there has been cooperation from the medical community as far as asking people if they have their water tested and if they have enough fluoride in the water.

Scharbarth stated they had to present at their group meeting today and the four volunteers who worked with this Committee felt they were lucky. They thought the Committee ran well compared to what other participants in the group stated their committees had done. As part of the group meeting, they had to come up with some recommendations for their committee. Mostly, they only had recommendations for the project, such as getting the University involved by having students go out to do surveys and get water samples. Mews stated maybe the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) could develop an internship, or it would be a great experience for those individuals to sit on GCAC as a junior member to have a connection and resource.

Kiedrowski asked who sponsors LPC. Scharbarth replied the Portage County Business Council. Kiedrowski asked if there was funding involved. Mews replied they paid their own money to participate in the class. As leaders in the community they went into this program as a network resource and learned a lot about Portage County. They toured Portage County, went out into the agricultural areas, and had interviews with education systems and people from the community. Jakusz stated when presenting to their leaders, they taught them some of what was learned at the Committee. In order to collect samples and take surveys, they needed to learn a bit. They shared what they learned with their group and other LPC members thought the time was well spent with GCAC. Mews stated they did hand out the surveys and education piece with their presentation.

Berndt thanked the LPC members for their participation with GCAC.

Update: High Capacity Well / Groundwater Conservation Legislation

Schmidt stated he has a few video clips from a public hearing in Madison, but will save them for next time. At the hearing, Mike Copas stated growers are making tremendous efforts in trying to minimize the amount of water they use while growing crops. Copas will be at the next GCAC meeting to inform us what is possible and what his farm is doing to conserve.

Member Orientation: History, Role of Members, Expectations

Schmidt provided the Committee with a handout explaining GCAC. In the mid-1980's, the County Board formed the Groundwater Council and further appointed a technical advisory committee made up of scientific types and a citizens advisory committee made up of average people. Citizens were unsure about all of the scientists making decisions, and the County Board was being forced to move on groundwater policy because the County had not even considered it before. By 1988 there was the first Portage County Groundwater Management Plan (GMP), and shortly after that, the Groundwater Council was dissolved. The Citizens Advisory Committee was reconstituted, in the form it has now, and given its mission. Basically, the mission is to implement the GMP. Later, subcommittees were added with their own special roles, because there was so much discussion on many different issues that meetings were taking several hours. The GMP and Implementation Subcommittee handles how things are going to be done. The Public Involvement Education Subcommittee puts a tremendous effort on educating and involving public. The Continuous Assessment Subcommittee looks at what is happening to water and what impacts programs have.

The major role of GCAC members is to get together and share knowledge and opinions with other people. Self education is a big part of the Committee, but also educating the rest of the group. The Committee's charge is to come up with solutions to groundwater issues and present the finished product to the County Board for their consideration. County Board Supervisors have many different issues to deal with, are on many different committees, and cannot get in depth with groundwater issues because there is so much to know. GCAC does the data gathering and goes through the rough process until there is something to present to the P&Z Committee. The P&Z Committee is charged with groundwater management in the County and so anything that comes from GCAC must go through P&Z Committee for consideration. Sometimes there are public hearings involved and sometimes they decide things on their own. Generally, Schmidt will make a presentation to the P&Z Committee on the issue from GCAC and usually it is well received and then goes on to the County Board and is well received by them. Another role members have is to communicate with their municipal Board and give them a report and gather feedback for GCAC. That way GCAC is up-to-date on what is going on in all parts of the County.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- a. **Public Involvement/Education Subcommittee (PIES):** Berndt stated they have not met in a while.
- b. **Continuous Assessment Subcommittee (CAS):** McGinley stated they are in the process of putting together the State of Portage County Groundwater Report and hope to have it done in the next few months.
- c. **Groundwater Management Plan and Implementation Subcommittee (GMPIS):** No report, there are currently no members on the subcommittee, other than the chair.

DISCUSSION: UNLIMITED TOPICS

None.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Village of Park Ridge: McGinley stated they are planning an educational program this summer with some water testing. Neidlein stated they are looking at a June informational meeting in Park Ridge. Berndt stated this goes with the PIE subcommittee; they have been trying to hold informational meetings in each municipality.

Town of Grant: Kiedrowski stated they are interested in the HCW Legislation and Well Abandonment.

Town of Linwood: Berndt stated they have a lot of iron in their water, which people have been complaining about. The town has referred them to various water treatment units.

Town of Hull: Zimmerman asked how the testing went for the new City well, which was to lower the citizen's wells in the Town of Hull. Schmidt replied they have not had any complaints. The Water Department contacted Schmidt about information on existing wells near the new municipal well. The City ran a test well for a few days and then extrapolated out to a month. The well is a 20 foot diameter caisson with laterals going out 150 feet in four directions below the water table. It is called a Horizontal Collector Well, which could lower the water table for a substantial size area.

Town of Belmont: Walkowicz stated she wanted to address the education issue; it is getting out there, but filtering back to GCAC slowly. The farmers do not want to pollute the water; they each have family growing up on their farms. Farmers are trying to protect the land, because it is what they will pass on to their children or be their retirement, and they cannot sell polluted ground. It is important that farmers and growers are a part of this Committee so we can all work together and not against each other. Farmers use barriers and plant accordingly to prevent run-off and are learning to use less chemicals, less water, and have less evaporation. Everyone is working hard to do the right thing, and to educate those who are not.

Village of Amherst: Hinrichs stated the nitrate removal plant is not running yet. The Village has been blending water within three wells trying to keep the nitrate level below 10 parts per million. He knows a grower in Plainfield that has to put 2/10" of water on his potatoes in order to protect them from the wind. Hinrichs asked this grower where he gets his information from and the response was the Farm Service Agency Department of Agriculture Extension water program. You can go online and put in calculations to see how much water to put on the crop. Burns stated there is a program called WISPER, where they calculate how many inches per day for certain size crops. You can maintain your water use like a checkbook. Hinrichs stated the program is set up to maximize a crop, but somewhere there should be a second level of sustainability. Burns stated they are not telling you how much to put on to have the perfect plant, they are telling you how much you lost yesterday. Schroeder stated the program tracks evaporation transpiration and it is a check and balance based on crop cover, whether the row is completely closed over by plant material, or if it is only 50% covered. It is what you base the amount of evaporation transpiration, which is the water the plant uses and gives off. The program is to predict where the soil moisture is at, but it is not perfect. Most growers do ground work and adjust accordingly. The main focus of the program is to avoid overwatering. They are also encouraged to pay attention to the weather forecast so they are not watering and then we get a half inch of rain and end up overwatering, that is when nitrates are ending up in the water. This summer the University research team is holding a drip irrigation study in Coloma. Part of that project is to look at deficit irrigation to where we are not trying to keep the plant transpiring at capacity, but to look at the effects of yield and quality.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date is Thursday, July 8, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 5 of the County Annex.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by McGinley, seconded by Zimmerman to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Jamie Phillis, Recording Secretary

Ed Burns, Chair

Date



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MEMBERS EXCUSED: Paul McGinley, Village of Park Ridge; and Joel Lemke, City of Stevens Point

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rita Walkowicz, Town of Belmont; Fred Copes, Town of Carson; Dennis Meis, Town of Dewey; and Dave Fritsch, Village of Plover.

STAFF PRESENT: Ray Schmidt and Jamie Phillis, Planning and Zoning Department.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ken Schroeder, University of Wisconsin Extension; Bob Scovill – Scovill for Assembly; Barry Jacowski – County Board Supervisor District 19; Roger Turzinski; Laura Krist; Cathy Dugan; and Ryan Eckert.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Burns.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER(S): Burns introduced two new alternates and one new member to the Committee. Ruzicka, alternate for the Village of Almond, stated he lives in the Village of Almond and farms

about 2,000 acres in the Towns of Buena Vista, Almond, and Pine Grove with his mother, Cathy Guth. Wes Meddaugh was at the last GCAC meeting, and was recently approved as the Town of Pine Grove Representative. Meddaugh stated he is an agronomist at Paramount Farms in Bancroft, which consists of about 15,000 acres in Portage, Adams, and Waushara Counties. Lynn Isherwood was also at the last meeting, but has now been approved as the Town of Buena Vista Alternate. Isherwood stated she farms about 1,200 acres south of Plover in the Town of Buena Vista.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2010: Motion by Walker to approve the minutes, seconded by Guth. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Schmidt read a letter dated May 25, 2010 from Louis Molepske updating the status of the Groundwater Protection Act Assembly Bill 844.

BURNS READ THE PUBLIC NOTICE: Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Report: Little Plover River (LPR) Workgroup

Schmidt stated earlier this year Del Monte announced they had bought property to the north of their plant to spread wastewater on. It will actually go $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile closer to the LPR and will help recharge groundwater. Where they used to put their wastewater, south of the plant across County Road B, some of the water would go off toward the Buena Vista Creek system rather than back toward the LPR. A gain of approximately 60 million gallons of water per year will be going into the groundwater to feed the LPR system. They are also moving their cooling water to the north end of the field they purchased, which will also help feed the LPR. The LPR is monitored on a constant basis and as of July 1, 2010 was flowing at about 1 cubic foot per second (cfs), which is fairly low. Yesterday, Schmidt checked one of the long term groundwater monitoring wells out near Tree Acres and the LPR; both were up from last week. Going into July with 1 cfs in past years has given us a dry river by the end of July. There is not a lot of flow and unless the precipitation continues the way it has, there will not be enough to keep the LPR from drying up this year. The LPR Workgroup has made the decision not to add water to the river in the upper reaches to keep the flow going all summer. There is another LPR Workgroup meeting in July.

Jacowski asked the reasoning for not adding water. Schmidt replied it costs several thousand dollars to pump water into the stream. The group felt since it was coming from irrigation wells located only about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the stream, they were pumping groundwater out into the stream and sending it to the Wisconsin River faster than it would otherwise get there. The Village of Plover and Curt Soik, a local potato farmer, were bearing the cost for pumping. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) does not have any money available, but they have been helping with technical expertise.

Schmidt provided a handout that shows the LPR flow at Kennedy Avenue and County Road R at about 2 cfs in April. The minimum public rights stage (PRS) at County Road R is 4 cfs, which means any time the flow drops below 4 cfs, the public rights to use the stream are impacted for fishing or other public uses. The PRS has been set by the DNR Board and Legislature as the target minimum flow to keep the stream in good shape for everyone to use. The flow at County Road R this week was 1 cfs.

McKee asked what the impact will be on the LPR flow from Del Monte moving their pumping. Schmidt replied measurements will be taken the same way they are now at County Road R and Hoover Avenue. Del Monte is keeping track of how many gallons of water they are spreading. There are dull modeling tools for predicting the impact right now. Burns asked how the increase in flow can be quantified to tell if the credit should go to Del Monte or to precipitation. Schmidt replied that has been a problem for years. Burns stated it would be nice to know which has a greater influence.

Jacowski asked if the PRS is measured at County Road R. Schmidt replied yes. At Hoover Avenue, further west, the equivalent PRS is 6 cfs and at Kennedy Avenue it is about 2 cfs, which is about the same flow rate as when it is 4 cfs at County Road R. Jacowski asked when was the last time the LPR flowed 4 cfs at County Road R. Schmidt replied May 2008; it has been below 4 cfs ever since.

Burruss asked what the implications are for the PRS, can people go fishing. Schmidt replied the rights of the public for full use of the resource, whether it is for wildlife, fishing, or kayaking, is impacted any time it gets below 4 cfs. The 4 cfs was set based on maintaining a healthy population of trout. Anything below 4 cfs allows DNR to provide grant money, technical assistance, and allows for lawsuits based on the State established public rights stage. Burns asked who established the PRS figures and how did it come about. Schmidt replied the DNR recommended 4 – 7 cfs and the LPR Workgroup settled on 4 cfs as the minimum for a healthy stream. The DNR Board adopted it and recommended it to the Legislature. It was not objected to by the Legislature, which means it is established. There are not many PRS established in the State. State Statute provides for PRS as a basis for action.

Dugan asked if more education on the PRS would be helpful for the Committee. Schmidt replied people do not always understand the PRS. There was a PRS presentation from the DNR in the past and the new Committee members may benefit from the information.

Mansheim asked if a PRS is set for any other stream in Portage County. Schmidt replied no. The PRS is established only when there is a reason to do so. In the past, it has been established based on some request to use or pump directly out of a stream or lake. This is the first time the PRS has been used when there is no pumping directly out of a lake or stream. Hinrichs stated there is a PRS set for the Waupaca River near Waupaca, not in Portage County, where the Country Club was pumping water out of the stream. McKee asked when the PRS was established for LPR. Schmidt replied November 2008.

Walker asked if the Del Monte pumping will still be an above ground pumping process. Schmidt replied they will be applying their wastewater through a center pivot irrigator, much like they did before. Their non-contact cooling water will be going to a large size infiltration basin. They started the process last year by pumping into the ditches along County Road R north of the railroad tracks, which was fairly successful in moving the water closer to the LPR. Now they will be discharging another ¼ mile north into a designed infiltration basin to maximize infiltration. Walker asked if that will minimize the evaporation process. Schmidt replied yes. It will be going onto the land and not pumped directly into the river or wetlands adjacent to the river. Before wastewater can go out on the field for infiltration, it goes through a clarification process. South of County Road B, where they were irrigating their wastewater, the groundwater flow is east to west. The groundwater coming in from the east was 25-30 parts per million (ppm) nitrogen and the groundwater leaving Del Monte's spray wastewater was below 10 ppm. Enough clean water was being added to bring the nitrate level down, which is a tremendous asset. It is anticipated that will happen to the north as well.

Guth asked about the Plover H2O Project consisting of two years of pumping over 600-700 million gallons of water and which way the water flowed there. Schmidt replied those are the numbers reported and the water would flow to the southwest toward the Buena Vista Creek system. Burns asked what year the project took place. Schmidt replied in 2006-2007. Guth asked if it was a coincidence the PRS was set a couple years after the project took place. Schmidt stated it is not all from one cause, everyone contributes to the problem.

Somers stated if you study the headwaters of the LPR, it is not the same as it was 20 years ago. The headwaters are basically gone, and he feels the dams should be put back in. Schmidt stated he is not sure why the dams were taken out. The DNR and landowners made that decision. Burns asked if there were wetlands at the headwaters that slowly leaked into the LPR. Somers replied yes, more than 20 years ago.

Jacowski asked how far the water flows under the moraine. Schmidt replied water flows under the moraine west of Arnott; it starts at the groundwater divide about one mile east of Arnott and flows west to the Wisconsin River. Burns asked if a wetland was being established on the other side of the moraine. Schmidt replied one is being established to the north of State Highway 10 that flows to the Plover River.

Hinrichs asked if there were monitoring wells to watch the effects of Del Monte's efforts. Schmidt replied there are two monitoring wells. When reading them in the past, over 8-10 years, they were tracking very closely with the well located by Tree Acres. They would rise and fall at exactly the same rate and time.

Scovill asked if there was any comparison on other small waterways in the area with the LPR, and if they have been experiencing the same downturn in flow. Schmidt replied there has been some research on other small waterways. The University has research comparing the LPR to other streams outside of the Central Sands

where there is a much lower density of irrigation wells and irrigated agriculture. There is a significant difference in the drop in flow. That is a public study. Earlier, the Bloody Run Creek, near Wisconsin Rapids, also dried up primarily based on Wisconsin Rapids municipal wells in the Town of Grand Rapids. The Bloody Run and LPR are the only two streams documented well, but there are some smaller (dried up) streams in the eastern part of the County. Stoltenberg Creek northwest of Amherst has dried up the last few years, and a small stream in the southeastern part of the County in the Town of Lanark is not running anymore. There is no water left in Boelter Lake and most lakes are down lower than they have been in decades.

McKee asked if there is any similarity with the Buena Vista Creek and the LPR. Schmidt replied they do not track at all together. He is not sure if the Buena Vista Creek has a larger contribution area. Isherwood stated Buena Vista Creek is in the ditch system, in the Drainage District and it has headwaters. Near the headwater areas there is not much irrigated agriculture, so there is a good flow starting there. Burns stated it has the wetlands. Guth stated it is on the other side of Eckels Road and is irrigated there, but there is a wetland area right there. Schmidt stated that the contribution zone for Buena Vista Creek goes all the way out to the groundwater divide by County Road J, east of Arnott.

Presentation: Groundwater Conservation and Irrigation Management (Copas)

Michael Copas introduced himself as the Senior Research Agronomist for RPE, Inc. and Wysocki Produce Farm. Schmidt wanted Copas to elaborate for GCAC on his testimony from the Assembly Hearing in Madison this past spring, which included steps the farming industry has taken to minimize impact and reduce water usage. Copas went through a power point presentation for the Committee.

Copas introduced Nick Somers who works with him on a management level. Somers is more involved on when irrigation has to take place. Copas looks at the whole picture and broad spectrum in order to make recommendations. Copas invited Somers to elaborate on what is involved in making the decision to water a crop. Somers provided the Committee with a handout. He is with Plover River Farms, northeast of Stevens Point on County Road J and County Road Y, the Jordan Park area. Somers is a smaller grower. They look at all of their fields to see what soil types are on the field. Not many fields have only one soil type, so they use the predominant soil type for that field. They know how much water that soil can hold at certain depths. The longer the depth, the more water it can hold. If all the water is taken from a crop, it will die or wilt, so they take 50% of the soil water holding capacity (WHC). Different crops take different WHC. After everything is monitored, a computer program is developed to keep track of canopy cover. A weather station tracks sunlight, temperature, wind, and knows when a crop emerged, calculates each day how much row closure there is, and gives recommended evaporation transportation (ET). There are instruments to help determine in the field if the meters read the same as the computer model. There is also a 'feel' test. Pick up a handful of soil, if it clumps together and shows fingerprints, it is saturated soil. If it is weak and breaks apart, it is close to irrigating time. If the ball falls apart, then water immediately. There is a DTN that forecasts the weather. If a line is coming in for rain, they will know how much precipitation to anticipate and whether or not to wait to irrigate. Schmidt asked why irrigators are running sometimes when it is raining. Somers replied there may only be 2/10 of an inch coming, so they will irrigate to compensate for the amount the crop needs.

Copas stated the big point growers are working on through the Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA) is the LPR and the drawdown of lakes in the Central Wisconsin Region. They want to be a part of the solution and have worked with the University of Wisconsin and other companies in terms of developing the data to look at the problem and figure out solutions.

Somers stated there may not be enough monitoring of wells. They are going to check their wells more often, get more data, and find solutions to problems.

Berndt asked why they would irrigate at night, if moisture on leaves causes blight. Copas replied at night there is no wind, which carries the disease around. It may be better from a disease standpoint to water during the day when the plant is able to dry off quicker, but the fact is money can be saved and evaporation can be reduced by watering at night. When nighttime lows are at 70 degrees and the dewpoint is at 68, there is not going to be much evaporation. There was a study done by Bill Bland at the Soils Department in Madison on the amount of relative humidity we typically experience here in Wisconsin versus Idaho. When irrigating during the day with high humidity, the temperature of the water pumping out of the irrigation system is well below the dewpoint, which

means you are gaining water because the water in the air is condensing on the cold water coming from the irrigator and more water is being applied to the soil than is being pumped.

Filtz stated it would be nice if all growers would do this, but they may not all be able to afford it. Copas stated what is being seen in agriculture is that people who are unable to take those steps are not successful. Filtz stated when he was a kid there were several dairy farmers in the area and now there is only one left.

McKee asked how many High Capacity Wells (HCW) are pursuing the high tech water management. Copas replied that is part of the data collection process. McKee asked what type of data they are pursuing. Somers replied they will be collecting data on crops grown to find out how much ET there is and how much water is being pumped. Copas stated part of the industries investment into the Universities research is a shift in what is recommended for a crop. All models to date that define how to raise a crop and water usage, have been drawn off a potato crop with 100% canopy from May 1st to September 15th. That was drawn up in the 1970-80's when 80% of the acreage was Russet Burbank. That has shifted tremendously, and snap beans, carrots, peas, cucumbers, and other crops are being grown. There has been a huge diversification, but they are still using the ET numbers drawn off of a potato crop. They are going in to assess each independent crop and study each to get the ET rate and demands of that crop. Essentially, all crops will be redefined to develop models. Somers stated all growers can do this even without a computer. It is like a checkbook. ET's are published for each area everyday by the University. Berndt asked if there are programs for fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. Copas replied yes.

Hinrichs asked the meaning of deficit irrigation. Copas replied they will define an individual crop with an allowable depletion, which means they can allow the water in that type of soil to deplete to a given level. If the water is depleted below the given level, then you reach a wilting point, which causes yield reduction and crop loss. Most of the time irrigation occurs on a 50% allowable depletion. When talking about deficit irrigation, they look to see if they can push to 55% allowable depletion or more without sacrificing the crop. Hinrichs asked if they let the level drop to 50%, do they automatically bring it back to 100%. Copas replied depending on the weather forecast, they will bring the level close to 100% without fear of overwatering. Hinrichs stated his problem with self regulation is that there is no limit on the amount of water they can take. He feels it should be considered how much water is coming out of the ground, how much is going back in, and where the level of sustainability is, which is the part he does not hear about with the grower industry.

Copas stated we cannot single out one group to place the blame; everyone needs to be part of the solution. Jacowski stated individuals, whether farmers or residents, tend to blame the HCW. What we need to remember, whether you are drawing an inch of water to raise a potato crop or a glass of water to brush your teeth, is that we are all tapping into the same aquifer. Everyone needs to look at the big picture and become more responsible.

Dugan asked what type of research is being done at the University and how it is funded. Copas replied they are engaging many different facets when talking about the agro-ecosystem, soils, horticulture, plant pathology, disease aspect, entomology, insect control, etc. They are also trying to engage the Atmospheric Oceanic Science Department and bring all of the aspects together. The funding is set up through the WPVGA to provide for all different aspects being looked at. There is a set amount given to each individual aspect and there are also competitive grants.

Dugan asked how many people are employed at the Copas and Somers places of business and their economic impact. Copas replied with RPE, Paragon Farms, and Wysocki Produce Farm, there are about 210-225 full-time employees. They also hire an additional 150 seasonal employees during planting and harvest. Somers replied they employ 50-60 seasonal, 15 full-time employees during the summer, and about 8-9 full-time employees during the winter. Copas stated in terms of the economic value there are direct employees spending money, and money going to the businesses they work with, such as Faivre Implement, irrigation companies, and processors. Guth stated she has an article from the Badger Commontater that states in Portage County every dollar of agricultural income generates \$.93 of County income. In Central Wisconsin, agriculture represents about \$1.26 billion of economic value. Burns stated he did a Google search and found there are almost 10,000 jobs in Portage County related to agriculture, which is 23% of the County's workforce.

Schmidt thanked Copas and Somers for their presentations. He asked how deep they irrigate. Somers replied it depends on the rooting of the crop. Potatoes root at 12 inches. They are a shallow crop, which takes frequent

monitoring. Corn, beans, and peas are deeper rooted crops. When they are small, they do not hold much water, so it takes a lot to irrigate a small crop. Copas stated with the deeper rooted crops the allowable depletion is pushed farther. A soybean crop may be pushed to 70% before there is any impact because you are drawing from a deeper profile. Typically, when those crops are managed for irrigation they will work to maintain water in the topsoil so the bottom will not dry as fast. Schmidt asked how much loss of evaporation comparison there is between daytime and nighttime irrigation. Copas replied during the day there is ET, which is figured in with evaporative loss off the crop assuming there is 100% canopy closure. When there is 100% canopy closure there typically is not evaporative loss off the soil because there is a layer maintaining 100% humidity. Schmidt asked how much the windbreaks reduce the ET from a field. Copas replied that is a hard number to figure because it is a holistic view of things. The function of the windbreak is erosion control, but there are secondary benefits of reducing the evaporative loss. The ecosystem is being built and reducing soil losses of organic matter. If the soil organic matter is increased, there is a higher water holding capacity and it does not dry out as fast and builds better soil. Schmidt asked if potatoes use the most water during the growing season. Somers replied the full season crop Russet Burbank probably would be the biggest user because it grows so long. There are 20,000 less acres of potatoes being grown in the Central Sands region in the last 10 years and they have been replaced by sweet corn, green beans, and peas.

The Committee thanked Copas and Somers for their time and information.

Update: High Capacity Well / Groundwater Conservation Legislation

Schmidt stated it was anticipated the Legislation package would have been reworked and the Legislature would have introduced it to the Legislative Council. According to Louis Molepske's office, the package has not moved to the Legislative Council yet, but hopefully will this year in a better format. There were some problems with the package last time, which is why individual groups came out against it and demanded that municipalities have primary water use and everyone else secondary. Growers stated they need the water to maintain their businesses. He feels it was not handled very well by the Legislature last time. It has not moved from where it was in April when Legislature adjourned. We need to reach a point of sustainability.

Jacowski asked why Schmidt feels it was not handled well by Legislature. Schmidt replied the Legislature appointed a study committee that went on a tour in different areas in the State. From that tour, they went behind closed doors and put together the package. In mid-winter they announced the public hearings, but the package was not available to anyone until shortly before the hearings. People did not have enough time to digest it. The Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Committee looked at it and took a position in opposition to the package primarily because there was not enough time to consider different aspects. It is too important of an issue to be rushed through public hearings the way it was. Jacowski stated it was obviously a flawed Legislation and they did what they should have by not acting on it. It was outside influences trying to push the Legislation. Schmidt stated the Legislature has the ability to take the input from the public hearings and use it as their informational base whenever decisions are made on the use of HCW. They did not take the public hearing information and incorporate it into the package. Jacowski stated he thought they did not act on it because they did not have enough information. Schmidt stated they did not act on it primarily based on objections of some major groups and the lack of time to deal with them before moving to Legislature. If they had brought out the draft Legislation late in fall so people would have had time to look at it before the public hearings, correct discussions could have been held to figure out how this would work. Burns stated both Jacowski and Schmidt are on the same side, the Legislature came out with this plan and none of the other Legislators knew about it, along with the public.

Jacowski thought the County wanted the P&Z Committee to be in favor of Groundwater Legislation before it was ever written. Schmidt replied that is not true. There was a draft Bill and GCAC asked the P&Z Committee to come out in support of Groundwater Conservation Legislation. GCAC sent a resolution to the P&Z Committee who heard input at their meeting and decided not to follow the recommendation of GCAC. Jacowski stated but the Legislation was not written yet. Schmidt stated it was a draft, which is the process; the Legislature writes it and everyone responds to it. You cannot say the Legislation is not written until it is complete and goes to the Governor's desk. It was out there with the ability to react to it, but not enough time was given to put a consensus together on what it meant for Portage County.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- a. **Public Involvement/Education Subcommittee (PIES):** Berndt stated the Village of Park Ridge first held their information program with free water testing on June 20, 2005 and had a retest on June 21, 2010.

Neidlein stated the program was held in conjunction with the Village Board meeting. There were 45 households participating with water samples. Kevin Masarik and some volunteers did the nitrate screening on those tests. About half the group stayed for the program. Schmidt and Masarik addressed issues that were pertinent to the Village and answered questions. Test results were between 2 and 4 ppm, so they were all within a safe range. The Village of Park Ridge is unique, there are private wells, but there is also public sewer. Berndt stated this group is trying to get in contact with various townships for retesting.

- b. **Continuous Assessment Subcommittee (CAS)**: Hinrichs stated they met last Friday to continue working on the State of Groundwater Report for Portage County. They have the quantity data and are looking at different ways to map the information in order to show where wells are and overall water usage. The second part of the report will be on the quality of the groundwater. Schmidt stated they are also looking at a certain series of pesticides in groundwater based on what was applied years ago.
- c. **Groundwater Management Plan and Implementation Subcommittee (GMPIS)**: Filtz stated they have not met recently.

DISCUSSION: UNLIMITED TOPICS

None.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Village of Whiting: Gilbert stated they have instituted new sewer and water rates, which should have an impact on groundwater use. Schmidt asked how much they raised rates. Gilbert replied for some it was significant.

Town of Hull: Zimmerman stated they are looking at the impact of the new City of Stevens Point well, but it has not been pumping.

Town of Grant: Kiedrowski stated the Bloody Run Creek starts in the Town of Grant and runs into Grand Rapids in Wood County. An article in the Daily Tribune stated it is a short creek about 3 ½ miles. She thanked growers for any potatoes they may have supplied to church picnics.

Town of Buena Vista: Isherwood stated she is in the northern edge of Buena Vista and are in the Portage County Drainage District. They are monitoring the flow in some of the ditches and some are better than the LPR.

Town of Amherst: Burress stated they are looking at accepting the Management Plan for Lime and Ebert Lakes.

Town of Almond: Burns stated he made a graph of rainfall received in the last three months, which he shared with the Committee.

Village of Amherst: Hinrichs reported he was at the last Village Plan Commission meeting and they spent about two hours talking about groundwater and what is going on with the wells in the Village.

Town of Pine Grove: Meddaugh supplied the Committee with an article from the City Pages regarding the Wisconsin River Watershed.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date is Thursday, September 9, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 5 of the County Annex.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Berndt, seconded by Ruzicka to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Jamie Phillis, Recording Secretary

Ed Burns, Chair

Date



**PORTAGE COUNTY
GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE ROOM 5, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 - 7:00 P.M.**

MEETING MINUTES

GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GCAC) MEMBERS LISTING:

MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	Attendance	MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	Attendance
TOWNS:		09/09/10	TOWNS:		09/09/10
Alban	Richard Mansheim	Present	Plover	Fritz Aschauer	Excused
Almond	Edward Burns	Present	Sharon	VACANT	
Amherst	Mike Burress	Present	Stockton	Richard Filtz	Excused
Belmont	Rita Walkowicz	Present			
Buena Vista	Cathy Guth	Present	VILLAGES:		
Buena Vista Alt	Lynn Isherwood	Present	Almond	Gary Schultz	Present
Carson	Fred Copes	Absent	Almond Alt	John Ruzicka	Present
Dewey	Dennis Meis	Present	Amherst	Mike Hinrichs	Absent
Dewey Alt	Kathy Girolamo		Amherst Jcnctn	VACANT	
Eau Pleine	VACANT		Junction City	Peter Mallek	Excused
Grant	Mary Kiedrowski	Present	Nelsonville	James Walker	Present
Grant Alt	Scott Provost	Present	Park Ridge	Paul McGinley	Present
Hull	Tim Zimmerman	Absent	Park Ridge Alt	Christine Neidlein	
Lanark	Bill McKee	Present	Plover	Dave Fritsch	Present
Linwood	Richard Berndt	Present	Rosholt	VACANT	
New Hope	Laurie Stoltenberg	Present	Whiting	Sarah Gilbert	Present
New Hope Alt	Cathy Derezinski				
Pine Grove	Wes Meddaugh	Absent	CITY OF ST PNT	Joel Lemke	Excused

STAFF PRESENT: Ray Schmidt and Jamie Phillis, Planning and Zoning Department.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ken Schroeder and Jennifer Stewart, University of Wisconsin Extension; Barry Jacowski – County Board Supervisor District 19; Paul Cieslewicz – Town of Buena Vista Chair; Scott Provost – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR); Jim and Barb Gifford; and Cathy Dugan.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Burns.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER(S): No new members.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2010: Guth stated it was discussed at the July meeting that two years after the dewatering projects the public rights stage was set and she would like it noted in the minutes. Phillis will listen to the recording and add the statement to the correct place on page 3. Motion by Berndt to approve the minutes with addition, seconded by Guth. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

BURNS READ THE PUBLIC NOTICE: Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Presentation: Public Rights Stage

Scott Provost, WDNR, helped to set the Public Rights Stage (PRS), also called Public Rights Flow (PRF), on the Little Plover River (LPR). He went through a power point presentation on the process of setting a PRS.

Provost explained the public's right of water is embedded in the Public Trust Doctrine in Wisconsin, which means all waters are held in trust for the public. Everyone has a right to use the water. There is a certain amount of water that can be taken from a river or stream before having a negative impact. There are many criteria to look at when establishing a PRS, such as measurements, fisheries data, chemical temperature data, physical flow, habitat data, and how navigable the stream is. The LPR was the most complicated PRS the DNR has set.

McKee asked if the supplemental water being pumped into the LPR would warm as it traveled downstream. Provost replied yes. The channel width becomes an important factor as well, the wider the channel the shallower the water. In early August the pump was on for longer periods, temperatures stabilized below 70 degrees even at 2.5 – 3 cubic feet per second (cfs). The reason being, when the pump was on for longer there is a more sustained flow, which regulated things. This supports the hypothesis that the higher the flow, the more regulation of water temperatures occurs. According to temperature, the DNR recommended a rate of at least 4 cfs in the LPR to maintain temperatures below 70 degrees.

Provost explained in order for a stream to meet a level of navigability, it needs to have a flow that protects fish, aquatic life, and aquatic habitat. At that flow, it should also protect navigability. There should be enough water flowing to see it, hear it, and add to the natural scenic beauty and aesthetics. Burns asked if it needs to meet all three criteria. Provost replied those are the criteria they would like it to meet. If for some reason, fish, aquatic life and habitat can be protected, but the definition of scenic beauty is not met, it would be enough. Scenic beauty may be different to each person. Burns asked if all navigable streams have a PRS. Provost replied no, very few do. A PRS is only set if there is a reason to do so, such as someone wanting to take water from the stream. There is only a certain amount they can take without a negative impact, so a PRS is set.

Schmidt stated keeping the LPR at 4 cfs to maintain the water temperature below 70 degrees at critical times is important in the summer and asked about other times of the year. Provost replied if the flow is too low in the winter, it can get too cold. The fish will start spawning in November or December and the eggs will sit in 33-34 degree water all winter and mature, then hatch in March or April. If the temperature gets too low it can kill the eggs or postpone the hatching, then they will warm up too fast and die. If the stream loses flow or freezes to the bottom, fish will not be able to live. The DNR only looked at high temperatures when setting the PRS for LPR. Schmidt asked if we are able to keep a healthy flow through the winter, the fish lay their eggs, eggs mature, will there be more fish next summer or is there another year wait before they are reproductively active. Provost replied correct, they do not start reproducing until approximately two years old.

Guth asked how long there have been trout in the LPR. Provost replied there have always been trout in the LPR. Guth asked if the Buena Vista Creek used to be planted. Provost stated the Buena Vista Creek was a natural trout stream. If you look at the 1918 Soil Survey, the Buena Vista Creek was an outstanding trout fishing stream. There is still plenty of native reproduction taking place. It was stocked to provide other opportunities for sportsmen, but there has always been a brook trout population.

McKee asked what the LPR flow is today. Schmidt supplied the Committee with a handout he received from George Kraft showing flow levels at Kennedy Avenue, Eisenhower Avenue, Hoover Avenue, and Interstate 39. Provost replied on August 24, 2010, it was still below the PRS at Eisenhower Avenue/County Road R. The water level can bounce back, but any amount of groundwater removed is impacting the LPR. The point is how much can be removed before killing the stream. Pumping water into the stream is not a self-sustaining system. The only long term fix would be to find a way to budget water, since there have been so many years of prolonged drought. Jacowski stated according to George Kraft there have not been drought years. Provost stated this year was not a drought year. Schmidt stated what Kraft was saying with the chart from the State Climatologist was that throughout Central Wisconsin it was not a drought, but a near drought. The area in the LPR basin is responding as though it were a severe drought because the flow is so low. Central Wisconsin, in general, did not have severe drought conditions from those years, but north of here did. Provost stated the northwestern part of the State has lakes much more impacted than this area because of the prolonged drought. Jacowski asked how many high capacity wells are in that area. Provost replied zero, other than municipal wells.

Cieslewicz stated in the last two or three years in Ditch #4, which is the second best trout stream in Portage County, there have been times when there was only two inches of water flowing through it. This year there has been 14 to 18 inches flowing. Provost stated there are other reasons why Ditch #4 water level would be down, there are a lot of irrigation and cranberry marshes along the ditch that are taking water.

McKee asked if there are other scenarios similar to the LPR situation. Provost replied water laws are different east of the Mississippi River versus west of the Mississippi River. There are no groundwater laws in Wisconsin that exempt municipalities from taking water from streams. The only authority DNR has to regulate any type of well, is if it is located within 1,200 feet of a trout stream or spring with a flow of 1 cfs or higher.

Burns asked if there used to be weirs and dams in the LPR years ago. Provost replied yes. A dam can be put on any stream, but if water going out is greater than water going in, the water level drops and there will be a net loss over time. Burns stated if there was a wetland used for a reservoir that would trickle out over the dry years, and soak up water in the wet years, that should increase the flow. Provost replied if there was a wetland it would increase storativity, but it still comes down to groundwater pumping. The more water pumped out of the ground, the more impact there will be on the water table. Schmidt stated if the water table drops below the level of water in the stream, some of the water in the stream actually moves into the groundwater.

Jacowski felt that suggests water cannot be held. Provost stated if groundwater is drawn down, water will seep back out into the water table. A dam can be put in and hold back water for a period of time, but anyone can pump that water out with a well. Jacowski stated we can hold water for times of need, like during the spring runoff. Provost replied dams on a trout stream are death, if you want to keep trout alive, you cannot dam it up. Schmidt asked if that is why small dams were removed east of Kennedy Ave on the LPR. Provost was unsure.

Stoltenberg stated the Nelsonville dam was probably built at the turn of the century and removed in the mid 1980's, which had a long history. There are articles showing there were trout in the stream, so every case must be different because those dams did not kill those trout. Provost stated those are brown trout below the dams. In the upper reaches of the stream there is enough flow to keep the water temperature low enough for brook trout. From that point upstream, the fish must have been artificially planted. Stoltenberg asked what Soik's pumping did for the LPR. Provost replied when it was obvious the LPR was drying up and the fish would be stranded and die, Soik's pumped in so much water into the stream to artificially sustain the stream. Stoltenberg asked if there are rights to put in wells along the LPR and the cfs is going lower, is there a use percentage done or regulations on use. Provost replied no. Stoltenberg asked if it would be likely that the well taking the most is the one contributing the most to the deterioration of the stream. Provost replied no, someone may be using the most, but it is not one person or thing, it is a collection of them all contributing to the deterioration. Stoltenberg stated even if those drawing from the LPR are pushed further away from the stream, they will still be drawing from the groundwater, just at a further distance. Provost stated correct, but the closer to the stream, the more immediate impact there will be. Right now there are no laws, so everyone that is cooperating is doing so voluntarily.

Schmidt referred the Committee to the notes of the LPR Workgroup, which would explain what is going on with the group. They are moving toward a solution. Del Monte is helping by diverting their wastewater closer to the LPR. As they discharge that wastewater, they raise the level of groundwater, and that tends to equalize the level of the groundwater for quite a distance. Provost stated other groups want to copy the LPR Workgroup is doing.

Burns stated he had a tour of the LPR just south of the park. He was told that 30 years ago the stream was knee deep and now it is shin deep. The dam is holding the elevation of the water true, and asked if that would be a build up of sediment. Provost replied yes, there could be sediment build up. Burns asked if there has been any thought to narrowing the channel so it flows faster through the area. Provost replied if the channel was narrowed out, it would help, but it would have to be narrowed all the way. If there is deep water in a narrow area, it will not warm up as quickly.

Stoltenberg asked if a shallow stream runs slower than a deep stream. Provost replied it depends on the flow. If you put your thumb over a garden hose and then remove it, the same amount of water would come through, it just comes faster. The 10 units flowing are what matters, not how deep. The flow will affect the temperature. Jacowski disagreed that it would be the same amount of water coming out of the hose, if you put your thumb over the end. Provost stated it is simple physics, if there are 10 cfs coming from a tube, the tube gets blocked off, the amount of water coming would still be 10 cfs. It does not matter how small the hole is, it will just travel faster.

The Committee thanked Provost for his presentation and time.

Report: Little Plover River (LPR) Workgroup

This issue was discussed above with the presentation.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- a. **Public Involvement/Education Subcommittee (PIES):** Berndt stated various municipalities have been contacted to hold programs. Letters went out and they are waiting for response.
- b. **Continuous Assessment Subcommittee (CAS):** McGinley stated they are meeting next Friday.
- c. **Groundwater Management Plan and Implementation Subcommittee (GMPIS):** No report. Schmidt stated the intent of the group is to assess how well we are following the groundwater programs that have been set up already and how well we are implementing the revised GMP the County adopted in 2004.

DISCUSSION: UNLIMITED TOPICS

Dugan stated the League of Women Voters is holding a program on September 30, 2010 from 7-9 pm at the Sentry Theatre. The topic is "There is Enough Water in Central Wisconsin, Right?" It covers the history of groundwater or water supply, not quality, but quantity. It is mostly targeted to Portage County. Schmidt will give a presentation on the history and science of the area's water supply. She supplied the Committee with posters and flyers they can share with the public. The idea is to get more information out to the general public. Ken Schroeder and Jen Stewart from the Portage County University Extension will take a different angle. After those presentations there will be a panel made up of Representative Molepske, Mayor Halverson, Dan Mahoney – Village of Plover, Patty Dreier – Portage County Executive, Sarah Brish – Convention and Visitors Bureau, and a grower. They will all be asked to come up with solutions. The audience will get time to ask questions. Schmidt thought some of the growers on the Committee may have a suggestion as to who would like to be the grower on the panel. Schroeder stated there are some choices, but no commitments.

Schmidt stated a future agenda topic could be George Kraft presenting the science behind his recommendations. McKee suggested getting a representative from the Villages of Plover and/or Whiting to give their perspective.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Town of Buena Vista: Isherwood stated groundwater levels are up.

Town of Almond: Burns stated he conducted an experiment, in April he measured a well close to Lake Huron, not in Portage County. It was 63 feet to water, they pumped out of it all summer, and today it is still 63 feet to water. How long does it take rain to go 63 feet? Schmidt replied it depends on the layers it has to travel through. Some lakes are perched above clay layers and there is an actual disconnect with the groundwater below.

Town of Dewey: Meis stated the Dewey Marsh is full. There are a few feet of black tar and muck, so if that is taken away, it will go down, but the water is not penetrating the marsh at all.

Town of Buena Vista: Guth stated there are some farmers trying to drain their fields.

Town of Linwood: Berndt stated there is high groundwater level, which has been a problem for some driveways and roads that have been washed out with the rain.

Village of Plover: Fritsch stated they are maintaining 15% of pumping from wells closest to the LPR and the other 85% of pumping from the well further away, with the exception of about a month after the July storms when Well #3 was out of service from lightning. They also keep track of six monitoring wells throughout the Village and those groundwater levels are way up. They continue to look at ways to reduce pumping. There is an ongoing leak detection program, where they go out and survey the systems for leaks.

Town of Grant: Kiedrowski stated there has been no flooding.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date is Thursday, November 4, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 5 of the County Annex.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Berndt, seconded by McKee to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Jamie Phillis, Recording Secretary

Ed Burns, Chair

Date



**PORTAGE COUNTY
GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE ROOM 5, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2010 - 7:00 P.M.**

MEETING MINUTES

GROUNDWATER CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GCAC) MEMBERS LISTING:

MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	Attendance	MUNICIPALITY	MEMBERS NAME	Attendance
TOWNS:		11/04/10	TOWNS:		11/04/10
Alban	Richard Mansheim	Present	Plover	Fritz Aschauer	Present
Almond	Edward Burns	Present	Sharon	Casey Jakubek	Present
Amherst	Mike Burress	Present	Stockton	Richard Filtz	Excused
Belmont	Rita Walkowicz	Present			
Buena Vista	Cathy Guth	Present	VILLAGES:		
Buena Vista Alt	Lynn Isherwood	Present	Almond	Gary Schultz	Excused
Carson	Fred Copes	Present	Almond Alt	John Ruzicka	Present
Dewey	Dennis Meis	Absent	Amherst	Mike Hinrichs	Present
Dewey Alt	Kathy Girolamo		Amherst Jcnct	VACANT	
Eau Pleine	VACANT		Junction City	Peter Mallek	Present
Grant	Mary Kiedrowski	Absent	Nelsonville	James Walker	Present
Grant Alt	Scott Provost		Park Ridge	Paul McGinley	Excused
Hull	Tim Zimmerman	Present	Park Ridge Alt	Christine Neidlein	Present
Lanark	Bill McKee	Present	Plover	Dave Fritsch	Present
Linwood	Richard Berndt	Present	Rosholt	VACANT	
New Hope	Laurie Stoltenberg	Present	Whiting	Sarah Gilbert	Excused
New Hope Alt	Cathy Derezinski				
Pine Grove	Wes Meddaugh	Absent	CITY OF ST PNT	Joel Lemke	Present

STAFF PRESENT: Ray Schmidt and Jamie Phillis, Planning and Zoning Department.

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Cirno; Dale O'Brien – County Board Supervisor District 17; Barry Jacowski – County Board Supervisor District 19; Patty Dreier – County Executive; Cathy Dugan; George Kraft – University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP); and Roger Turzinski.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Burns.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER(S): Casey Jakubek was introduced. He lives on Lake Jacqueline in the Town of Sharon. He is attending UWSP for Water Resources Management.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2010: Motion by Berndt to approve the minutes, seconded by Walker. Motion carried. McKee stated he has been to a number of meetings and read the minutes, but the minutes from this meeting are some of the best he has read. Phillis thanked him for the compliment.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

BURNS READ THE PUBLIC NOTICE: Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Presentation: Groundwater Pumping and Surface Water in Central Wisconsin – George Kraft
Kraft stated the presentation will go over groundwater basics, effects of pumping in general, history, and how much water is pumped in Portage County. The question asked for the last few years is whether the effects on groundwater are from pumping or drought. Kraft went through his presentation.

Groundwater is part of the water cycle; it is the water under the earth's surface where all the spaces between the cracks in the rock and the sand are saturated with water. Soil holds water, but it cannot be pumped from a well because the soil is not completely saturated. If you go deep enough below the earth, in most places, you will hit a zone where everything is saturated with water, which is called the water table. Everything below the water table is the groundwater. Groundwater comes from local precipitation and does not travel more than 50 miles from where it comes in (infiltrates), to where it goes out (discharges). Precipitation can either run off into lakes and streams and get carried out of the watershed, or it can soak into the ground. If it soaks into the ground, plants can use it and take it up with their roots. Some of that water sneaks past the plant roots and percolates deeply, becoming part of the groundwater. Groundwater does not sit still from the moment it gets to a saturated zone; it begins to travel looking for a place to get out of the aquifer.

The effects of pumping will come from any well, big or small. Water that was going to a lake will end up being intercepted by a well, and the lake is deprived of the water. If a well is particularly close to a lake, and it is being pumped hard, it may actually pull water from the lake. Wells will also lower the water table, by taking water out of storage. This ends up shifting the watershed, or groundwater boundaries. So the results of pumping are water interception, reversing the water flow, dropping the water table, and shifting the watershed boundary.

Guth asked where his chart came from. Kraft replied he made it up as an example.

Kraft went through the history of groundwater. In the 1950's people were concerned with the destruction of streams and what would happen in the future. 1959 was a great year for groundwater awareness. The Legislature was seriously considering regulating how much water could be pumped from groundwater.

Another question is whether effects on groundwater levels are from pumping or drought. Precipitation records from 2000-2008 do not seem to reflect a drought, compared to drier periods in the past that did not see water levels as low. The 2000-2008 precipitation may have been a little below average, but nothing like a record drought. There is missing water; low groundwater levels that cannot be explained by weather alone. Looking at the Little Plover River (LPR), there are a number of high capacity wells in the area. In five of the past six years, the LPR has dried up and had fish kills. From 1965 to 1987, a flow gauge installed by the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) provided good records. Kraft pointed out records from 1959 to 1987, which showed fluctuations, but the average flow was 10 to 10.5 cubic feet per second (cfs). Kraft explained a cubic foot is approximately 7.5 gallons. Droughts occurred in 1959, 1964, and 1988. The lowest flow during that 28 year period was 3.9 cfs for one day. Kraft said the flow has been below 3.9 cfs for the last four to five years and stated pumping has made an impact.

Kraft stated statistics and calculations are two tools to determine how much water is missing. Statistical flow data was taken from the LPR when it was not being impacted as much by pumping and the data was compared to other streams to predict what current LPR flows should be. Calculations can be made using flow models. Kraft said there is a pretty good signal that water was missing in the LPR in 1976. Kraft estimated from 2005 to 2009, an additional 4 to 4.5 cfs was missing, leading to portions of the stream going dry. As to where the water is going, Kraft said Del Monte pumps a lot of water out, but also returns wastewater and estimated their impact at .2 cfs or less. Other impacts are: Village of Whiting - .67 cfs; irrigation wells – 2 – 2.5 cfs; Village of Plover – .6 - .7 cfs, down from 1.1 cfs. Kraft explained how calculations and flow models work.

Kraft spoke about groundwater and lake levels. He said there are a number of USGS wells that can be used as reference wells where there is not a lot of high capacity well pumping around them – Nelsonville, Amherst Junction, Wild Rose, and Wautoma. There are also USGS wells with long term records in areas where there is a lot of pumping – Plover, Bancroft, and Hancock Research Station. Using data collected and a groundwater flow model helps estimate how much water is missing in the areas with many high capacity wells.

Kraft listed conclusions and implications. There is missing water - low stream, lake, and groundwater levels are consistent with what pumping would do. Water has been missing for two to four decades in some places where there is a lot of pumping. By Kraft's calculations, using data from USGS, Geological Natural and History Survey scientists, and scientists at the UW-Madison Soil Science Department, Pickerel Lake would not have had the fish kill two years ago, Wolf Lake water levels would not be as low, and the LPR would not have dried up, if not for pumping. Future low water conditions will become more common without pumping management. Pumping expansion in new areas may lower water levels in more lakes and streams.

Schmidt said he invited Kraft to provide information and science from his models. It is up to GCAC members to make recommendations to the County Board and State legislature as to what should be done with the information.

After questions and answers, the Committee thanked Kraft for his presentation and time.

Report: Little Plover River (LPR) Workgroup

Schmidt explained the LPR Workgroup is a voluntary group consisting of representatives from area agricultural interests, DNR, Portage County staff, riparian owners, watershed residents, Del Monte, municipalities, County Board, Trout Unlimited, and other conservation groups. The group is focused on preventing the LPR from drying up and on maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Last year, the DNR Board established a minimum healthy flow (public rights flow) at four cubic feet per second (cfs). Schmidt stated the LPR did not dry up in 2010. Since the heavy rains in September, the flow has been around 10 cfs, and is starting to drop.

Schmidt referred to a map he and Fritsch provided. The map represents a proposal by the Village of Plover as their long term plan for land use conversions in the LPR area to help the river survive.

Fritsch referred to the map, pointing out the area outlined in pink, which is where Del Monte has set up wastewater irrigation. A pit is located near Roosevelt Drive where Del Monte's cooling water is deposited. Wastewater is sprayed on the majority of the rest of the field. In the area outlined in blue labeled "Acquisition – Future Park", the Village of Plover has talked with the landowner about purchasing land and potentially developing a park. The other area outlined in blue is planned for industrial use and will be removed from irrigated agriculture. The purple outlined area is planned as residential, for which the Village of Plover would provide sewer and water. The green dot outlined area is a planned Department of Transportation (DOT) wetland restoration, also removing irrigated agriculture. There are future plans for the yellow outlined area, which is closest to the LPR, to discontinue irrigated agriculture.

Schmidt said the proposed land use conversions and acquisitions are part of a 20 year plan. Fritsch added some proposals have already taken place, some are in process, and some may or may not happen. Schmidt said the wetland restoration area could serve as a groundwater storage area near the headwaters for spring melt or for heavy precipitation events. Schmidt added the irrigated landowners have been involved in the LPR Workgroup meetings and are aware of the issues and are part of some of the solutions.

Schmidt invited GCAC members to attend LPR Workgroup meetings. Anyone interested in receiving notices should contact Schmidt.

Jacowski asked if the Village of Plover well capacities are above anticipated future water needs. Fritsch replied the Village of Plover continues to grow. Well capacities are adequate now. More pumping is being shifted to the Well #3 site. The Village of Plover, in conjunction with the Village of Whiting, is studying locating a well field further south of Well #3.

Hinrichs stated he is not convinced taking irrigated land out of production is a long term benefit. Schmidt said it makes sense in local areas where there are groundwater or surface water depletion impacts.

Fritsch noted the proposed map is a starting point and can be modified.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- a. **Public Involvement/Education Subcommittee (PIES):** Berndt stated only two municipalities have responded to letters sent about holding programs in February. Guth asked if all towns received the letters and who they were sent to. Berndt replied the letters went to all town clerks.
- b. **Continuous Assessment Subcommittee (CAS):** Schmidt stated the CAS is in the process of putting together a report dealing with the current state of groundwater in Portage County, looking at quantity, quality with nitrate and trends in localized areas, updating the list of pesticides being tested, and developing protocols for lab testing. A draft should be available for the January meeting.

- c. **Groundwater Management Plan and Implementation Subcommittee (GMPIS)**: No report. Schmidt stated this group has not met; a new Chair is needed.

DISCUSSION: UNLIMITED TOPICS

Schmidt distributed copies of "How much does it cost to remove a pound of nitrate-nitrogen from water?" put together by Bill Ebert (Golden Sands RC&D). Based on Ebert's estimates, the cost is between \$5 and \$6 per pound to remove nitrates in the groundwater and bring the level from 15 parts per million (ppm) to below the health standard of 10 ppm to 7 ppm. Stoltenberg asked if there are additives for water treatment devices. Schmidt replied reverse osmosis units can decrease the amount of nitrate-nitrogen in a private residence water supply, but it depends on factors such as the pump's water pressure and flow.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Village of Park Ridge: Neidlein stated the September 30 program by the League of Women Voters will be shown on the cable access channel and a copy will be available at the Public Library. She said the estimated turnout was 150 and felt the presentations were good. A good variety of questions was asked.

Town of Amherst: Burress stated members of the Town of Amherst Plan Commission would like to see what it would take to do some monitoring of the wells and get more information about the recharge area. Schmidt said that would be part of the drinking water education program, which he would like to present in 2011 to all municipalities that do not have a public water system.

Town of Almond: Burns stated he has a record of rainfall, which some neighbors have kept track of since 1945. He reported May through September 2010 has been the wettest on record. He also reported he measured the well north of Lake Huron (Waushara County). It has raised two feet since the last meeting. It is now 61 feet to groundwater. Burns questioned how long it takes the rainfall to travel 61 feet. Schmidt replied it depends on what it is traveling through. Burns was asked how much data there is on the well north of Lake Huron. Burns replied the water table in 1958 was 60 feet. It dropped to 63 feet last summer and is now 61 feet. He also measured the elevation of Lake Huron and a well about a mile away. The lake level was 14 feet lower than the groundwater table. Schmidt said eastern Portage County has groundwater gradients of 20 feet per mile. It was felt the more data points out there for information, the more helpful for decision making on GCAC's part.

Town of Linwood: Berndt stated during the flooding, septic systems backed up into basements. Property owners are wondering what that will do to their septic system. Schmidt said he knows what it is doing to the groundwater. Berndt asked if the situation is damaging to the purity of their wells. Schmidt replied it most likely is. Berndt suggested owners have their wells tested.

Village of Plover: Fritsch stated on the back of the sheet he handed out are measurements from the monitoring wells he referenced last meeting, which is what he distributed at the LPR Workgroup meeting. Groundwater elevation data is collected each Monday morning.

Village of Nelsonville: Walker stated Nelsonville received 5.5 inches during the rain event in September. The Tomorrow River flooded and there was flooding in the basement of the mill. It took several days for the water to recede.

Town of Plover: Aschauer stated the Portage County Drainage District meets on November 16 at the Buena Vista Town Hall.

Town of Lanark: McKee stated they would like the drinking water education program presented in Lanark.

Village of Almond: Ruzicka stated he measured a couple of wells in the Towns of Buena Vista and Almond and compared with records back to the 1960s. The water table in those wells now is where it was in the 1960s.

Town of Buena Vista: Guth stated parts of Buena Vista received five inches of rain (during the September rain event), and after three days, farmers were back out harvesting.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date is Thursday, January 6, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 5 of the County Annex,

which will be a joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Committee (P&Z) to discuss the relationship between the two Committees. Executive Dreier will also address the Committees. Hopefully, the State of Groundwater report will be presented at this meeting since P&Z and the Executive will be in attendance.

Schmidt provided the Committee with a list of meeting dates for 2011.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by McKee, seconded by Hinrichs to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Jamie Phillis/Patty Benedict, Recording Secretaries Ed Burns, Chair Date

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