

CITIZENS (WOOD COUNTY) GROUPWATER GROUP MEETING

DATE: Monday, March 18, 2019
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Riverblock Building, Conf. Room #206

Present: Rick Antin, Jeff Brewbaker, Bill Clendenning, Nancy Eggleston, Gordon Gottbeut, Adam Groshek, Mark Holbrook, Tamas Houlihan, Kim Keech, Rep. Scott Krug, Bill Leichtnam, Matt Lippert, Logan Manthe, Dan Matthews, Rick Potter, James Schuerman, Rep. Katrina Shankland and Nancy Turyk.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Bill Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
2. **Public Comment**
 - a. Gordon Gottbeut explained how the phosphorus credit works.
 - b. Rick Potter commented that the point source solution is regulated to 95% and may cost millions to get to 97%. It may be easier to pay the tax.
 - c. Adam Groshek shared that they know that the TMDL for phosphorus 85% comes from the agriculture industry and 15% from point sources.
 - d. Mark Holbrook asked Rep. Katrina Shankland if state legislature always works this way. Rep. Katrina Shankland explained that the legislature needs to be educated with conversation on the ground passing a preventative legislation with resources. Rep. Katrina Shankland also shared that the DNR, DATCP and Health & Human Services need to be part of Senator Robin Vos Water Quality Task Force hearings.
 - e. Bill Leichtnam shared that Mark Holbrook is attending the Senator Robin Vos Water Quality Task Force meeting on March 20th in Madison.
 - f. Dan Matthews commented that the Wisconsin DNR treats the agriculture industry differently than the paper industry.
3. **Correspondence/Updates:**

Bill Leichtnam shared the Wisconsin Counties magazine and three articles as handouts at the meeting:

 - A. Wisconsin Counties magazine - Bill Leichtnam shared that the title on the front magazine says "got water? addressing our clean drinking water challenges".
 - B. New research indicates tainted Kewaunee County wells tied to manure pits – Bill Leichtnam commented that new research by USDA microbiologist Mark Borchardt shows nitrates and coliform in the water mostly comes from agriculture – and not human waste.
 - C. Tony Evers, Republicans both looking to get factory farms to pay for cleaner water – Bill Leichtnam shared that this article talks about increased use of fees paid by the state's growing animal feedlots to help the DNR efforts to keep millions of tons of farm manure from tainting drinking water.
 - D. Second sampling of southwest Wisconsin groundwater study planned for April – Bill Leichtnam commented that there will be a second sampling of water in Grant, Iowa and Lafayette counties who are part of SWIGG.
4. **SPEAKER Scott Krug – 72nd District Assemblyman**
"Efforts to protect surface and groundwater in Central Wisconsin & statewide"
Speaker Vos's Water Quality Task Force

Rep Scott Krug gave a brief overview of protecting surface and groundwater and legislation on the state level:

 - A. The state is focusing on groundwater this session.
 - B. Act 1 has not been signed.
 - C. Governor Tony Evers has \$70 million in bonding in the state budget which includes various full-time environment positions.
 - D. Speaker Robin Vos Water Quality Task Force will meet on March 20th and April 3rd in Madison to go over current water quality policy and laws. A 12 city road tour across the state on water

quality will be scheduled with the closest one in Stevens Point. The task force findings will take close to a year to complete.

- E. Rep. Scott Krug mentioned that he is a member of the 2019 Assembly Committee on Environment. Rep. Joel Kitchens is the Chair.
 - F. Rep Scott Krug shared that he is co-sponsoring the P3: A Pollution Prevention Wisconsin's Trading Marketplace bill. This legislation would create a clearinghouse for trading credits from reducing water pollution.
 - G. Rep Scott Krug is co-sponsoring a Well Compensation bill which would provide \$10 million in grants assisting the most vulnerable with ongoing well maintenance and treatment.
 - H. Water Quality studies are being updated to reflect water quality and water quantity.
- Discussion followed.

5. **Update on MOU w/ AGC & status of bottled water distribution and RO System Installation (monthly conference call)**

Nancy Eggleston gave an update on the monthly phone conference call that was held last week on the MOU with the Armenia Growers Coalition. She updated the group on problems and solutions that may require a modification to the MOU. She also reported on the following from the monthly phone conference call:

- A. There hasn't been any testing follow-up of RO Systems that were installed for homeowners.
- B. There is wariness from landowners regarding the lawsuit and assistance from the Armenia Growers Coalition. Homeowner Testing Program has been created to help families test their own water which has been approved by the Armenia Growers Coalition. Families felt uncomfortable with the farm coming into their home and testing their water.
- C. There have been a total of 338 responses between Wood County and Juneau County from the December letters regarding water sampling. Over 900 letters were originally mailed in December. A second letter will be mailed in early April to those who did not respond to the first mailing. Families will be offered to participate in the Homeowner Water Testing Program.
- D. The Ho Chunk Nation is giving space to the Health Department at their convenience store south of the casino for bottled water to be handed out on April 2nd and April 11th.

6. **Planned JOINT MEETING of Wood, Juneau & Adams County and 4 new counties (Land & Water, Health Departments Committees meeting March 22nd in Adams County)**

Bill Leichtnam shared that on Friday, March 22nd there will be a meeting in Adams County of Land & Water, Health Department and UW Extension staff. County Board members will not be a part of this meeting. The joint meeting between Wood, Juneau and Adams County staff will be discussing where you want to go and how to proceed. The meeting is open to the public. County Board members and county offices will be meeting on April 29th at The Reel Inn in Necedah. Sauk County, Jackson County, Portage County and Waushara County are also interested in joining the meetings.

7. **CGG Recommendations to CEED ("Action Items") Recommendations to full County Board, Legislature & Governor (Should we forward 30+ list of ideas to Wood County Board thru CEED?)**

Bill Leichtnam shared that Rock County is the perfect storm with too many chemicals in the soil. Rock County has created a Nitrate Workgroup which consists of 12 people with funding from the American Transmission Co. Nancy Eggleston commented that there is a farmer in Rock County that will be doing different farming practices to study nitrates in the soil. The study will take 5 years to complete as weather plays an important part.

Motion by James Schuerman to create a Wood County Nitrate Workgroup to model Rock County Nitrate Workgroup. Second by Gordon Gottbeheut. Motion carried unanimously.

8. **"Membership Growth" of CGG among farming community**

Bill Leichtnam commented that we are all in this together and have to attract the farming community to assist in groundwater protection. He encourages everyone to reach out to the agriculture community to join the Citizens Groundwater Group meetings.

9. **“Outreach Activities” of CGG (Ideas & Report)**

Bill Leichtnam encourages everyone to attend groundwater meetings and town meetings. Education is important and needs to continue.

10. **Future Speakers to invite**

April – Rick Georgeson, PACRS

May – open (Bill Leichtnam will find a speaker.)

Suggestions for speakers:

- A. Tamas Houlihan, Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association
- B. Farmers for Tomorrow
- C. Portage County Board Supervisor
- D. Scott Provost, Wisconsin DNR
- E. Dr. Laura Clark, UW Soil Scientist

11. **Roundtable**

- A. Rep. Katrina Shankland – There is a nitrate subgroup of Senator Robin Vos Water Quality Task Force. The Task Force is groundwater on a large scale. Nutrient Management Plan focus is on economic development but focus should also include water quality.
- B. Adam Groshek – Nutrient Management Plans should be more on water quality versus the economic component.
- C. Tamas Houlihan – Conservation and other groups are doing research to reduce phosphorus and nitrate levels in the soil. We all need to work together, grow food and be responsible.
- D. Nancy Eggelston – Nutrient Management Plans also needs to focus on water quality.

12. **Announcements of members / visitors (upcoming parallel events / meetings)**

- A. Rick Potter shared that the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair on June 21-23 in Custer will offer free water testing.
- B. Rick Potter also shared that the Wisconsin Conservation Voters Lobby Day is March 27 with registration starting at 9:00 a.m. There is no cost to attend. Register online to attend.
- C. Bill Leichtnam asked everyone to think about the current structure of the group and if officers are needed.

13. **Next Meeting**

Monday, April 15th, 2:00-4:00 p.m. @ Wood Co Riverblock Building, Room 206

14. **Adjourn Groundwater Group Meeting** Bill Leichtnam adjourned @ 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Notes by Kim Keech, Planning & Zoning Office