

Approved – Meeting Notes

Town of Greenville
Land Stewardship Committee
Regular Mtg

Tuesday, 26 April 2016 (5:00 pm)
Greenville Town Hall

Present: Larry Bentle, Ellen Geisler (UW Extension-visitor), John Julius, Andy Peters, Rob Peterson (guest), Jim Resick, Pete Schroeder, Jeff Steinacker, Dave Tebo,

1. Call to order. 5:00 pm
2. Approval of 21 March mtg minutes. Approved; 1st John J., 2nd Pete S.
3. Old Business:
 - a. AEA tax credit progress – Larry Bentle.
 - Tax credit application is at DATCP for review; expect response in 2-3 weeks.
 - b. New committee membership.
 - Larry will work with Pete S. to recruit new committee members from the AEA landowners.
4. New Business:
 - a. Meet with Rob Peterson - Fox Cities Regional Partnership (FCRP).
 - i. Possibilities for interaction with our AEA to open up new opportunities.
 - Rob Peterson represents the FCRP, which has 3 full time personnel. The Partnership is part of the Chamber of Commerce that represents the counties of Outagamie, Calumet and ½ of Winnebago County. The Partnership works with local businesses to solve business specific issues to increase public awareness, productivity, profitability, etc. All business interactions with the Partnership are kept private. Could we extend the Partnership's expertise to members of Greenville's AG community to brainstorm AG related ideas/actions to promote Agribusiness?
 - Jeff Steinacker raised the question of how can we effectively educate non-farmers and general public. This is an important issue if AEA members desire future public support (local government representation, possible tax levies, etc.) to preserve agriculture in our Township. Could the Partnership aid in an educational campaign to show/demonstrate what the AG workforce actually does?

- How can we initiate a program to educate via possible farm educational visits and through local schools concerning all is involved to make Agriculture work in our Township and how it is important to our community?
 - Rob said he could help connect us on how to choose an educational path. For example, get the educators out first to the farms, then they will know how best to bring in the students and parents.
 - How can barriers be decreased for young folks to come into the area and become involved in Agribusiness in whatever form?
 - Fox Valley Tech's expertise could be tapped into and partner with the FCRP.
 - UW Extension 's "Adventures in Dairyland" may be a prototype.
 - Is it possible to develop an "AG business incubator" in the area?
 - Yellowstone trail could also be promoted through the FCRP.
- b. Arrangements to have Doug Behnke present at next mtg (June 20th, 5:30 pm) to discuss long-term agreements – Jim Resick
- It was agreed to invite Doug Behnke to our 20 June meeting. Doug farms in the Town of Bear Creek, Waupaca County and is Town Chairman. Jim will invite Doug to our June 20th meeting discuss his experiences on balancing Farm Landowner-Town-County relationships and his knowledge of long-term land preservation agreements.
 - Long-term agreements discussed may include: Working Lands Program(s), tax levied and voluntary levied programs to preserve AG land. It was mentioned that Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust is now willing to work with AG landowners. Gathering Waters is another statewide organization that may be worth investigating.
 - It was further agreed that Dave T. invite Greenville Town Government personnel to our June 20th mtg hear Doug.
 - Jim provided **Attachment 1** from his office regarding information concerning farm succession programs and to initiate some thoughts for landowners.
- c. Sub-website for the Land Stewardship Committee & AEA – something to consider?
- i. A place/site to post Committee activities and news. For example: photos of our AEA area, (e.g. Coreen Fallat information), tax credit instructions, other pertinent AG information, etc.

- Dave said that it would be possible to set up a directly accessible AEA sub-website on the Township's website specifically addressing AEA related news. Dave will research on what it takes to set this up.

5. Adjournment.

- Motion to adjourn made at 6:30 by Pete S., 2nd by Dave T.

To Do:

- **Jim Resick** to make final arrangements to have Doug Behnke attend our 20 June meeting.
- **Dave Tebo** to invite Greenville Government personnel to attend our 20 June meeting. Also to look into best way to have an easily accessible AEA sub-website on the Town's website for AEA photos, pertinent information, DATCP news, etc.
- **Larry Bentle** to work with Pete Schroeder to attempt to recruit AEA landowners to become members of our committee.

Our next meeting is on Monday, 20 June at 5:30 pm.

UW-Extension Farm Succession Programs

Farm succession is a process that can take years to implement and complete. For many farmers it is a process that happens once or twice in a career. In comparison, daily farm tasks and production management decisions can provide immediate gratification to managers. For these reasons, it is easy to delay and avoid retirement and farm succession planning. Yet the requests for farm succession education and facilitation continues to increase.

Each farm business's journey through farm succession can be a very emotional and personal process.

Farm succession blends the hard facts of financial feasibility, taxes, and business entities with the emotional concepts of loss of identity, fair vs. equal inheritance issues and facing one's parents' or one's own mortality. Because of these characteristics, the most common succession strategy is the "do nothing strategy", which leaves businesses vulnerable to a host of risks, such as the viability of the business continuing to a next generation and the ability of the assets to provide adequate retirement income.

UW-Extension strives to provide information, tools, strategies and professional resources to farm businesses through a variety of educational vehicles to make the "do nothing strategy" a less attractive option. Over the past several years UW-Extension and the UW-Center for Dairy Profitability have collaborated with the Wisconsin Department of Ag, Trade & Consumer Protection's (WDATCP) Farm Center, agricultural lenders and agricultural service professionals to offer a variety of farm succession programs.

Shifting Gears in Your Later Farming Years is a two day workshop for farmers planning for retirement and/or farm succession. The program provides financial, taxes, estate planning information as well as a section on planning a retirement lifestyle. Many farmers do not consider how they will fill their time if they step away from the daily farm work. Since 2012, a total of 155 people have participated in the Shifting Gears workshops in Wisconsin. The respondents of the post-workshop evaluation indicated they increased their knowledge most on the topic "How much gold do I need in my golden years." Closely followed by "Tax Considerations" and "Estate Planning."

Wisconsin Farm Succession Professionals Network (WIFSPN) Meetings:

In 2014 UW-Extension, UW-Center for Dairy Profitability and WDATCP's Farm Center organized three meetings to bring farm succession professionals together for

networking and professional development. Two hundred and fifty people attended these meetings. In 2015 they organized four locations and had 190 participants. Networking has led to more collaboration and connections among the professionals to better serve the agriculture community on farm succession issues.

Returning to the Farm:

Returning to the Farm (RTTF) is a project designed to address the human, legal, and financial risks involved in the transfer of the farm to the next generation. The project includes two weekend sessions held in the January and February. The program requires at least one person from each generation and they are required to attend both sessions. Communication, conflict management, financial analysis of the farm, strategic planning, business arrangements, retirement planning, and estate planning are covered in the two sessions. In 2015 the FARM Team, UW-CDP and UW-Platteville collaborated to offer the program. The program had 26 participants representing 10 farms. Two hundred sixty-six people representing 85 farms have participated in a Returning to the Farm workshop since 2005. Evaluations from the workshops indicate participants use the tools provided to help analyze their farms and develop farm succession plans.

One-day Farm Succession Workshops:

For the past several years UW-Extension has offered one day farm succession workshops that provide technical information, a framework on how to start planning and access to resources and professionals. Since 2010, these programs have reached over 1,000 participants. In 2015 and 2016 there were or will be 14 of these one-day workshops held throughout Wisconsin.

These various programs have helped farm families better plan for the transfer of their farms to the next generation. As a result, these family owned farm businesses have an improved chance of continuing into the future with better planning and continuing to contribute to the rural economy. These initiatives are innovative in their intergenerational considerations and in preventing problems by starting farm succession conversations early. These programs have been used in several counties throughout Wisconsin, and are models that other communities can adopt.

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