

**Koochiching County
Consolidated Conservation Committee
May 5, 2011
7:00 PM
Birchdale Community Building**

Minutes

Attendance: Ralph Lewis
Linda Lafky
Daniel Zimney
Gary Swenson
Mike Hanson

Dennis Monrean
Etta Erickson
Roland Height
Denton Hasbargen

DNR Representative: Joe Brown, Littlefork

Others present: Kris Berthiaume

Guest: Dale Olson, Environmental Services Director

Administrator: Kallie Briggs

Order: Chairman Ralph Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM on Thursday, May 5, 2011 in the Birchdale Community Building.

Minutes: Motion/Second/Passed Denton Hasbargen/Dennis Monrean to approve the March 3, 2011 minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Guest: Environmental Services Director, Dale Olson attended the meeting to update the committee on some of the environmental services/issues in Koochiching County. They were as follows:

- **Solid Waste:** Kooch's solid waste, which is about 7,500 – 8,000 tons per year, is shipped to Kittson County. This equates to approximately 400 loads per year. At a cost of \$200,000 per year in transportation costs, \$45,000 in tipping fees, this was less expensive for the county than trying to build and maintain a land fill. This year, because of gas prices it could be as much as \$5,000 more. Obviously, if the ton per year goes down below 7,500 tons like it did on 2009, so does the overall cost of solid waste.
- **Recycling Program:** There are thirteen sites for drop off of recyclable waste. Sentence to Serve (STS) program picks the waste up and sorts it. STS uses their own vehicles and staff, making this a great program for the County. The State used to pay 50% of the STS program but with recent budget cutbacks, State funding has diminished. The program continues to be strong even though there is only one STS Supervisor now.
- **Septic Systems:** Kooch was the last County in the State to write a Septic System Ordinance and when they did, they made it the least restrictive as possible. Although they do not check systems on a regular or daily basis, they do try to make sure people are

to code. The State wants to give Counties money to inspect septic systems but most counties are telling the State to keep the money and do the enforcement themselves.

- Other Duties: The Environmental Services Department also reviews all building permits, shore land ordinances, wetlands (there are 7 different kinds of wetlands) and wetland banks.
- Wetlands: The department is currently working with the State and Federal Government on a wetland bank at Dunick Lake. The process is in its final stage after working on this particular stage for 3-4 months. The final draft will give the county 12.8 credits at Dunick Lake. Another kind of credit is the White Cedar bank credits for wetlands. There are not many of these left in the US but there are some in Kooch. When an 80 acre parcel is logged off and put into wetland the parcel will receive ten credits. These can never be used again and are treated as untouchable.

RECAP Project: Commissioner Hanson told the committee the Feasibility Study has been completed and because of the confidential nature of the project, a public review of the study is available. The Minnesota Delegation, especially Senator Klobuchar, has been very supportive and helps the process along. The contact person the RECAP Committee was working with at the Department of Energy left and her replacement is looking at the project differently; which has set the funding mechanism backward. Despite some obstacles, the project continues to move forward with the legislators, companies and groups very interested in the project. Boise may possibly be interested in the steam.

Old Business:

- Ditching: After some discussion on the \$1700 ditching project on the Olson land and request for a partial payment from the ConCon Committee, the Committee felt if they helped pay for one private person, they would be obligated to help others. The only ditches that should be funded by ConCon dollars are ConCon ditches. Private individuals should work with the County and the State if they have other issues with ditching.
Motion/Second/Passed, Dennis Monrean/Daniel Zimney to deny partial payment to Mr. Olson on his ditching project. Motion passed unanimously.
- Advertising for Committee Members: Commissioner Hanson put ads in the Indus Paper. Gary and Denton continue to looking for another member. Kris Berthiaume said she was interested in filling Eleanor Wilson's position. **Motion/Second/Passed. Etta Erickson/Daniel Zimney to appoint Kris Berthiaume to the ConCon Committee.** Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Expenses: The financial expenses for administrative and office expenses were presented. **Motion/Second/Passed, Dennis Monrean/Linda Lafky to approve the expenses as presented.** Motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Date: the next meeting will be June 29, 2011 in the Birchdale Community building.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.