

TOWN OF DUNN
Meeting at John Ohman's with NRCS
June 3, 2020

Meeting Minutes for gathering at the Ohman Farm at N1755 420th St, Meno, WI 54751 on 06/03/2020 at Noon

People Present: Jim Drier – Town Citizen, Jacob Ohman – Town Citizen, John Ohman – Town Citizen, Kristi Ohman – Town Citizen, Marty Mellenthin – Town Citizen, Lee Smith – Town Citizen, Bernie Waldach – Town Citizen, Ron Weisenbeck – Town Citizen, Forrest Johnson – Town Chairman, Dennis Weber – Town Supervisor I, John Miller – Town Supervisor II, Sally Rasmussen – Town Clerk, Greg Kidd – Assistant State Conservationist-Easements, USDA/NRCS, John Sippl – District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS, Steve Becker – State Conservation Engineer – USDA/NRCS , Austin Littmann – Dunn County Soil Conservation Technician – USDA/NRCS

Jim Drier – Jim spoke of the increased water levels on his land and that he recently sank equipment into land that should be dry.

Jacob Ohman – John Ohman's son spoke of increases in water level on their land. The increase in swamp reptiles that have invaded their property. He also spoke of the difficulty in farming.

Kristi Ohman – John's Wife has concerns for her well and sewer system due to increased water table. The snakes and frogs and other reptiles that have invaded their homestead. She also spoke of the land they can no longer farm due to increased water levels.

John Ohman – John first brought this concern to the town board of the fields he normally farms and can no longer farm. This issue has arisen since the implementation of the Weir. He would like the weir lowered, so that he can farm his land. His exact words are "My concern is that your flooding my fields and the land south of the dam (weir) that I am farming by the drop off last year, there was too much flooding. I would like to know the water table measurements before you started of the project that were taken long time ago?"

Marty Mellenthin – Marty lives below the weir and is experiencing unusually high flooding. He presented aerial photographs of his land spanning 10 years before the weir was built to prove his pond and land are more flooded now that they have ever been.

Lee Smith – Lee Smith did not speak at the meeting, but from previous conversations, his land is flooded more than usual.

Bernie Waldach – Bernie spoke to his concerns that the weir is in perpetuity when he agreed to 30 years. He also spoke of the Kadinger pond being a river now. He spoke of 833 elevation being the 100-year flood level and the weir, in his understand, would be lower than this level. He was surprised to know that the normal level would be 833 and every rain it would be at 834. He will follow up with NRCS about his agreement and the water level.

Ron Weisenbeck – Ron spoke briefly about his farmland being under water more than usual. He said the fix to get the water moving in the direction it did years ago would be a great opportunity, but he felt the NRCS needed to start at the River Bottoms and work their way to higher levels instead of starting at the higher levels and working their way to lower. The cleaning of ditches was a good idea, just in the wrong direction.

Forrest Johnson – Forrest spoke briefly about determining water levels increasing, due to saturation and not flow. He also helped to control people speaking at the same time.

Dennis Weber – Dennis spoke about his land having water in places that have not had water in 60 years.

Greg Kidd – Greg spoke about what the NRCS does to determine if the land will be able to get a weir. What steps the NRCS takes before adopting a weir and what steps they take to preserve the land around the weir. He also spoke for the Kadinger family and their wishes and what paperwork was involved in this decision.

John Sippl - John spoke of the test that they conducted the day of the meeting and the tests they took in the past. He spoke of the ongoing testing for the future.

Steve Becker – Steve was the most detailed about what was going on with the weir. He spoke of the weir being at 832 and driving around the township and looking in the ditches and culverts at water levels. He said there were three areas that the NRCS looks at to determine if the weir is causing the issues or not. The three areas are “what might be caused by annual precipitation and what might be caused by plugged up ditches due to sediment accumulation, because all ditches need to be cleaned out at some point.” He said he could not fathom why the water is backed up 17 feet above the weir, but his main objective is to find out the cause and help the town people get it fixed. His main concern was to find out if the weir was causing the issue or not. Himself, and his team, would be testing, talking to town people about cleaning our ditches and checking with other locals about water flow. The team would be surveying Bernie’s land before they left that day. His main objective is to get the culverts to run dry as they were intended. He said many of the problems may be caused by the change in land use. He stated “What I have observed and observe in a lot of places, is over time due to residue, lack of mowing, sediment residue accumulation that maybe the flow path from the culverts down to the wetland isn’t as good as it used to be for various reasons.”

Going forward, the NRCS will be working closely with land owners to find out the cause of the increased wetness and help them to fix the issue. The weir will be staying at the same level until these causes are found.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Rasmussen – Town Clerk.

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