

**DLM PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR SESSION
1-31-07 1:00 P.M.
COUNTY BOARD ROOM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Fletcher, Dennis Frame, Larry Amundson, Dan Byom, Dennis Deitelhoff, Danny Foote, Tim Geiger, Wally Geske, Eric Gullicksrude, Gerald Hawkinson, Nan Horton, Chris Hovell, Sheree Nelson, Todd Quarne, Tom Schank, Larry Sonsolla, Buzz Sorge, Sharon Spahr, Roland Thompson and Jon Zander.

STAFF/ADVISORS PRESENT: Reed McRoberts, Kevin Lien and Dave Appleyard.

Chairman Fletcher called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Chairman Fletcher announced that the open meeting law had been complied with through notifications and posting.

Chairman Fletcher announced that, at the request of Appleyard, he was recommending that the presented agenda be amended to move agenda item #9, Committee Concerns, up to agenda item #5. Appleyard stated that based upon committee member statements made during previous sessions and comments written upon prioritization worksheets, it is apparent that many advisory committee members have concerns over the value of merging the Departments of the Division of Land Management into a single Department. It is equally as apparent that several committee members are very reluctant to prioritize services provided by the Division as they feel that all the services currently provided are valuable and should be maintained. Appleyard stated his opinion that these concerns should be addressed by the advisory committee and staff before the planning process continues any further. Spahr made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Horton. Motion carried.

Thompson made a motion to approve the previous session minutes as printed, seconded by Horton. Motion carried.

Chairman Fletcher asked if there were any committee concerns that members wished to have discussed? A committee member stated that he didn't see what was going to be gained by the merger and asked the other committee members if anyone thought that the Departments were not running well? A committee member questioned if the combining of Departments would provide greater efficiencies in public services? A committee member stated that she did not want to see the elimination of any of the current public services as a result of merging the Departments. Chairman Fletcher asked Appleyard to provide any insights that he may have as to why the County Board is intending to move forward in the combining of Departments. Appleyard stated that several Board members already view the various Departments as a single Department due to the close working relationships of the staff and Department heads within the various Departments within the Division. The concern of these Board members is that there appears to be three Department Heads in a single Department. Other Board members are intent on combining similar Departments in order to reduce the number of Department Heads and Standing

Committees of the County Board. Still other Board members would intend to use the process used in the combining of the environment and land use Departments as a template to combine human resources Departments into a single Department of Human Resources. Appleyard stated that it has become very apparent to him that the County Board intends to merge the Departments of the Division of Land Management. Appleyard reminded the committee that County Board Chair, Barb Semb, had informed the DLM Advisory Committee of this fact during a previous session. Appleyard then stated that the Advisory Committee is being asked to develop a prioritization of public services provided by the Division in order to provide public input into the process of elimination of services in the event of budget cuts. Appleyard stated that as costs associated with County Government continue to rise in an era of county revenue caps, services must certainly be eliminated. Appleyard stated that the Advisory Committee is being asked to advise the county as to which public services currently being offered are essential services that must be retained and what services are important but are not essential. A County Board member of the Advisory Committee provided an insight as to the difficulty facing the County Executive/Finance Committee as that committee works through the process of attempting to maintain public services with the revenue limits placed upon the county by the state. A committee member stated that the prioritization of services is needed for that time when efficiency is not enough and services must be eliminated. This committee member felt that it was important for the advisory committee to help set county service priorities. A committee member stated that it looks to him that the Departments are already combined and all staff are working together. Another committee member agreed. A committee member stated that he anticipates revenue shortfalls at the county level and this makes prioritization of services a very important committee task. A committee member stated that as an employee of the private sector, he is already being asked to do more with less people. Another committee member added that his experience in the private sector leads him to believe that management positions in County Government may need to be combined. A committee member voiced his concern that when Appleyard retires, the county will not fill his position just dumping his responsibilities onto other staff members. A committee member observed that there are three deficiencies in the current division of Land Management; the current Division of Land Management Coordinators position does not have supervisory authority over any employee outside of his own Department and that this must be corrected, the writing is on the wall that the merger shall take place so the advisory committee should proceed in creating an effective Division of Land Management as well as an effective Standing Committee, the prioritization of services is very important and the Advisory Committee should proceed with the process. A committee member questioned if it was now time for the Advisory Committee to make some fundamental decisions as to how to proceed so as to improve the ongoing process? A committee member stated that if the Departments are merged it is essential that there be a single Division Manager that answers to the Standing Committee and to the County Board. Chairman Fletcher asked Appleyard to distribute and review his draft proposal for the Administrative Structure of the Division of Land Management (a copy of this draft is attached to these minutes). Following review, a committee member stated that the two supervisors need to have clear supervisory authority and that there needs to be a clear chain of command within the Division. The committee member felt that if the Supervisory positions did not have clear supervisory authority, staff and clients would go directly to the Director with questions and/or grievances. A committee member asked if the Supervisor positions would be union or non-union positions. Appleyard responded that the intent would for the positions to be non-union. The committee member stated that if they were classified as Supervisory positions, it would be easier to have the positions classified as non-

union. A committee member stated that in order to see clearly how the proposed Administrative Structure was going to work, it was necessary to see the position descriptions for the Director and the two Supervisor positions. Chairman Fletcher asked the committee members if the committee felt that they were ready to approve the draft Administrative Structure as proposed with the understanding that further discussion shall take place following committee review of the position descriptions or would the advisory committee prefer to discuss the makeup of the Division of Land Management Committee prior to taking action? A committee member asked if it was being proposed that the standing committee continue to include non-county board citizen members? A committee member stated that non-county board membership must be retained in order to maintain citizen perspective. Several committee members stated that agriculture is not very well represented on the County Board and that it is essential that the standing committee retain active agricultural membership. Chairman Fletcher asked Appleyard to explain what legal options the advisory committee has in its recommendation to the County Board. Appleyard responded that committee membership can consist of any number of County Board Supervisors, it must include the chair or designee of the Federal FSA Committee and may include up to two Non-County Board Members. Appleyard stated that some but not all counties have added Non-County Board members to their Environment and Land Use Committees. Appleyard added that several of the counties that have merged departments that included the Land Conservation Department, the FSA Committee member is only invited to attend those committee sessions that involve activities that are assigned by State Statute to the Land Conservation Committee. Further, meetings to which the FSA Committee member is invited to attend, they are limited to active committee participation on those agenda items which would normally be assigned to the Land Conservation Committee. Chairman Fletcher proposed, for discussion purposes, that the proposed Environment and Land Use Committee be a ten member committee consisting of 5 County Board members that represent rural districts within the county, two County Board members that represent urban districts within the county, the FSA Committee Chair or designee, one member actively engaged in livestock agriculture and one member representing the county's Town Association. A discussion followed concerning the desirability of having a relatively large, 10 person committee. A committee member voiced the opinion that the proposed Environment and Land Use Committee would be responsible for overseeing programs and Ordinances that affect virtually every land parcel of the unincorporated areas of the county. A committee member stated that for a single committee to assume the responsibilities of the current three committees, it is necessary to have as broad a range of experience and expertise as possible. Chairman Fletcher asked Appleyard if he had an estimate of tax levy savings by eliminating two committees while expanding the remaining committee from 7 members to 10 members? Appleyard responded that by eliminating two committees, 17 or 18 committee meetings per year would be eliminated. Appleyard felt that a reasonable estimate would be about \$8500.00 in savings. Three additional members on the new committee would be about \$1800.00. A committee member questioned if the advisory committee should be recommending that the committee have two members representing urban interests when the county has very limited jurisdiction within the incorporated areas of the county? Two committee members voiced their opinions that it was essential that urban interests be represented. A committee member questioned if one livestock producer was enough representation. The committee member stated that the county's livestock producers are losing their representation at both the town and county level. A committee member observed that there is going to be ever increasing conflicts between rural and urban landuses within the county. Following discussion, Horton made a motion to approve the Administrative Structure of the

Division of Land Management as proposed, with the understanding that staff will present position descriptions for the three management positions prior to the next meeting, seconded by T. Schank. A committee member asked Lien and McRoberts if they were comfortable with what was being proposed? Lien and McRoberts stated that they were involved in the development of the proposed Administrative Structure and were comfortable with the motion. Motion carried. Following further discussion, Nelson made a motion to approve a ten member Standing Committee consisting of seven County Board members (five of whom must represent rural districts), the FSA Committee Chair or designee, one livestock produces and one member representing the county Towns Association, seconded by Hawkinson. Motion carried.

Chairman Fletcher then asked Appleyard to distribute the results of the Advisory Committee prioritization of services survey. Appleyard reminded the Advisory Committee that they had combined the Zoning, Planning, Sanitation and Surveying services for prioritization purposes and had ranked the services provided by the Land Conservation Department separately. Chairman Fletcher reviewed the results of the Zoning, Planning, Sanitation and Surveying survey with the Advisory Committee. Following review, a committee member observed that the provision of services to walk in costumers in both the Zoning and Planning Departments were both high priorities and could be combined. A committee member questioned how the county could eliminate low priority services when those services are mandated by the state? Appleyard responded that the Wisconsin Counties Association is working hard at securing legislation that would allow county's to not provide services for state mandated programs if the state does not fully fund them. If such legislation were to be adopted, the county would most certainly take a very close look at what mandated services to eliminate. At that point in time, the advisory committee service prioritization survey would be very helpful to the County Board. A committee member voiced concern that the County Unified Numbering System services were ranked too low. Chairman Fletcher responded that the Committee should review the thirteen Zoning, Planning, Sanitation and Surveying service area prioritization rankings from the lowest to the highest to determine if there were any concerns with the results of the prioritization process and to discuss those concerns in order to finalize the prioritization of services rankings. Chairman Fletcher asked if there were committee concerns that enforcement of the Shoreland Ordinance was the thirteenth priority? There were no concerns voiced. Chairman Fletcher asked if there were any concerns with the County Unified Numbering System being ranked twelfth? A committee member voiced concern that this ranking is too low for a program that is so important for public health and safety. A committee member asked if it were state mandated? Chairman Fletcher responded that the service is not state mandated but the service is provided to comply with County Ordinance. A committee member asked if any other service provider could provide this service? McRoberts responded that he provides the service because he is onsite anyway for driveway and septic inspections. He provides the Uniform Addressing service because it is efficient for him to do so. A committee member asked if once the current Uniform Addressing updating process is complete will it still take as much staff time as is currently the case? McRoberts responded that it will. A committee member stated his opinion that the service should continue to be provided. Several committee members stated that although they feel that it is an important and necessary service, they gave it a much lower priority ranking than what it deserves simply because of the political mess that currently exists within the Emergency Management Department and that the service delivery outside of the Division of Land Management is ineffective. A lengthy discussion took place concerning the ineffectiveness of the Emergency Management Department and the

resulting poor public service delivery of the County Unified Numbering System. Following further discussion, the committee reached consensus that they needed to move on with the prioritization process but that the County Board Chair, Barb Semb, and the Law Enforcement Committee Chair, Gerry Van Tassel, be asked to appear before the Advisory Committee to explain the problem and what they are doing to correct it. Chairman Fletcher asked if the committee had any concerns with enforcement of the Floodplain Ordinance being ranked eleventh? There were no concerns voiced. A committee member asked Lien if enforcement of the Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinances were very time consuming? Lien responded that now that the Village of Trempealeau had annexed the developed property along the Mississippi River, enforcement of the Ordinances is no longer very time consuming. Chairman Fletcher asked if there were any committee concerns with enforcement of the County Animal Waste Management Ordinance being ranked tenth? There were no concerns voiced. Chairman Fletcher asked if there were any committee concerns with enforcement of the Well Ordinance being ranked ninth? A committee member voiced concern that the enforcement of County Ordinances are being ranked so low. The committee member went on to state that if the county does not enforce its Ordinances, county citizens shall no longer take compliance seriously. A committee member stated the position that all of the services provided are important and all should continue. A committee member stated that no further review of service prioritization should occur, that the remaining eight service areas are so crucial that the elimination of any of them must not be allowed to occur. A committee member questioned if the enforcement of the Well Ordinance shouldn't be added to this absolutely essential list of priorities? A committee member asked if the county does not enforce the Well Ordinance, will the DNR do it? Chairman Fletcher stated that the DNR would ensure compliance on a percentage of the wells installed, about 10%. A committee member voiced concern that ensuring compliance with the Well Ordinance is necessary to ensure the health and safety of county citizens. A lengthy discussion followed. Following discussion, Thompson made a motion that the top eight service areas are to be considered to be essential services that must be maintained, seconded by Horton. A committee member asked how the five services areas ranked lower than eighth are to be categorized? Chairman Fletcher responded that they are to be considered to be valuable public services but would be categorized as tier two public services. Motion carried. Chairman Fletcher stated that due to time constraints, the prioritization of Land Conservation service areas would be completed during the next session.

Chairman Fletcher asked Appleyard to review the survey of County Departments concerning fees for services. Appleyard informed the committee that Lien had conducted the survey. Appleyard reviewed the fees that various County Departments charge for services. A brief discussion followed.

Chairman Fletcher instructed Appleyard to place the following items onto the next committee agenda:

- **Prioritization of Land Conservation Department Service Areas.**
- **Uniform Addressing System.**
- **DLM Committee Structure**
- **DLM Director and Supervisor Position Descriptions**
- **DLM Organizational Structure**

The next DLM Advisory Committee meeting was scheduled for February 28, 2007 to be held in the County Board Room beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Being no further business to bring before the committee, Sorge made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Quarne. Motion carried.

Chairman Fletcher adjourned the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

**David Appleyard
Recording Secretary**