

Special Livestock Siting Study Committee Minutes
Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Members: Gary Koch, Mary Kuhn, David Troester, Travis, Dawn Adams, Adam Hady, Sara Tedeschi, Ed Ruff, Forest Jahnke, Bart Mitchell, Chad Sime, Gillian Pomplun.

This meeting has been scheduled for discussion on the Special Livestock Siting Study Committee purpose, objectives, criteria, and future meeting specifics.

Koch made an introduction. A lot of county residents brought forth issues regarding the Gruber Livestock applications. Some community members may have felt the county did not answer or address some of their questions and concerns. A lot of work was done by a previous committee. Koch's understanding is that the committee got dropped in 2020 when covid hit. At this time, we will be reviewing ordinances and state regulations. Hoping to find some common ground that we may use to help other entities in the county that do not feel supported.

Introduction of committee members:

Gary Koch: alderman 3 city of Prairie du Chien, chairman of Land Use Committee. Gary finds all these issues relevant and is passionate about land and water.

Chad Sime: Dairy producer resides in the township of Utica.

Edmund Ruff: certified crop advisor for 25+ years. Was a Farm management Teacher SWTC, Human Services, Ag teacher, 40 continuing education units in a 2-year cycle.

Sara Tedeschi: UW Extension representative. Resides in the northern part of Crawford County. Sara is currently farming an organic vegetable farm.

Forest Jahnke: resident of Clayton township, Rolling Ground area. Jahnke added he was on the first committee, did a lot of writing for the report for last time.

Dave Troester: Land Conservationist

Bart Mitchell: absent.

Travis Bunting: Land Conservation Technician, Bunting stated he is most familiar with technical standards from NRCS and DATCP.

Mary Kuhn: farmer, Land Con committee, livestock/crop

Adam Hady: UW Ext, farmer, Ag educator in Richland County, connection with regional educators.

Dawn Adams: Public Health, resident in the Utica township.

Gillian: Independent Scout reporter.

An effort to get a well-rounded group was made. There are many issues, environmental issues, small vs large farmer, new regulations in the works to mention a few. Going back to the Gruber livestock applications and the massive response by community members. There was a lot of concern for the environment: topography, karst, water, economic issues, quality of life issues. Trout fishing, health issues, odor, well contamination. We will be looking at how we can deal with these issues. How to go about regulations and county ordinances. Tranel was ok with us looking at this, there should be some scientific bases if you are telling people what they can do with their land. The county can do more restrictive but has to be scientifically related. So, do we bring in specialists? Side committees? The driftless area is a unique area. Hard to come up with a solution that fits, that helps people understand all the issues.

Koch's nightmare is that we have a spill. NPR: marathon counties had a spill, happens frequently, can have drastic impacts.

Regulating large operations: they have lots of regulations: small farmers need to be looked at too.

Troester: people feel they have not been heard; committee feels hands are tied. Big things to consider are the operation ordinances. How we investigate any additional regulation. Without trying to single out one aspect of the ag community. We have DATCP 51 right now, some feel it's too prohibitive, others not enough. Tried to make sure the committee is aware of the rules and prohibition. Stay neutral, here's what you can/can't do, here's what might happen if you do. A lot to juggle. Important to address the issues. Once aquifers are contaminated it's never fixed.

Jahnke: Our aquifer is stand still. Hydro geology is forest's jam. That is the science that makes cc unique. There was a challenge of verified scientific fact; can another county be used to verify for cc. use the most local science possible. DAWS, waste storage ordinance.

Sime: process needs to be updated

Kuhn: manure storage issues, there would have been some unintended consequences. Economic reason why larger farmers do what they do. The number of family members that want to farm need to go larger.

Koch is hoping to come up with a strategy of where we want to be.

Kuhn asked, "what is our goal?". What is our process for 500 animal units?

Jahnke: stated there are recommendations for what could be done in the last report. There are 8 of them. Does the committee accept those 8 and go from there. Or are the 8 starting points: well testing, updating current livestock ordinance, taking it to the next step, take to Land Conservation Committee, then to county board if action is required.

Koch: Today I do not know what our goal is. Kohn feels he has an obligation to look at this information a little more. If we don't go through this process, we drop the ball.

Jahnke asked how the committee will proceed with monthly meetings or quarterly meetings. Koch added that he doesn't want to drag this out.

Troester stated it's the way Ag has moved over the last decades; you must go big to survive or to keep the family in farming. There are consequences such as road damage, conservation issues, etc.

Not talking about current farms. Only talking about new and expanding units.

Tedeschi: talking about potential on how managed, not prohibiting. Animal to land ratio is highly different. Evaluate and develop;

More likely to get support from farmers,

Koch asked that committee members email Troester with ideas and opinions.

Sime added that the committee should work with what is already there, modify, add, make everyone aware of what is already there.

Troester will put the ordinances in the minutes.

Jahnke: livestock siting that they can't do their obligations;

Resources for landowners who come to the office with issues.

It was suggested that Bart Mitchell be asked for questions and concerns from the township's perspective.

Tedeschi asks if the ordinances are up to date. Also, if the last set of recommendations; water testing; animal waste storage, are up to date, and if not, how do we get up to date

Jahnke shared with the committee that the DAWS results may be available by the next meeting.

Troester stated the Animal Waste Storage form was updated in 2025; if there is a permitted storage facility, or have a rental agreement, the landowner and renter must sign. Letters went out last week to the 8 landowners who rent for animal waste.

The committee agreed these will be open meetings, however no public comment will be heard.

The next meeting date will be Tuesday, May 12, 2026.

Motion by Kuhn, second by Sime, to adjourn the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Opprieht
Administrative Assistant