

# Bioenergy Council Conference Meeting Notes

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July 29, 2014

**Meeting held at 01:00 P.M.**

**Members Participating:** David Donovan (Co-Chair), Deb Erwin, Keith Reopelle, Mike Allen, Don Nelson, Tom Nowakowski, Tim Clay, Dan Bahr, Tom Unke, Mike Troge and Gary Radloff

**Agency Staff Participating:** Tom Nowakowski on behalf of Dave Siebert, Ken Rineer, Roger Kasper and Ty Rohloff

## **Welcome and Introductions (Ty Rohloff)**

Members that participated were able to introduce themselves. Ken Rineer was able to introduce himself to the group. Ken replaced Deb Erwin on the council after Deb transferred to a position with Xcel Energy. Ken discussed his work history and experience with energy management

## **Draft Recommendations:**

### **Review of Recommendations (Dave Donovan)**

- Recommendation Number 1 – DATCP should work with the WDNR and the PSCW to encourage the U.S. EPA to treat carbon emission from biomass feedstock as net neutral.
  - This is in the same format as it was in the meeting. Jamie did not make any changes currently, but does have a few suggestions for what can be done. He would like to keep the recommendation going. Dave is the other group chair. The recommendations are due by June 2015, but they need to have some time to submit comments and review.
  - The recommendation is for DATCP to support the DNR in trying to make biomass net neutral.
    - Dave can put something together but he would like input.
    - The bio-council is charged with drafting language for consideration.
    - Dick Gorder agreed with the statement, but asked to clarify net neutral. There would need to be a place to document net neutral.
    - Some kind of life cycle process would need to be completed.
      - There would be a standard that is applied to the net neutral language, such as how it is quantified and determined.

Several members had questions regarding the definition of “net neutral.” Dave Donovan agreed to draft language and forward it to the whole group. The entire council will be able to review it and submit final comments. The draft and comments will be communicated via e-mail. Once all comments are included a vote will take place via e-mail to either accept or reject the recommendation.

- Recommendation Number 2 – Support innovative financing structures for Bioenergy projects
  - There are two versions of this recommendation that were sent out. There are some language differences between the two. The newest version is dated 7/14/14.
    - A subdivision was added to break up the advised recommendation. The first bullet point remained the same.

- The second bullet point “Consider state-created financing tools” was proposed by Tom Unke.
    - Tom advised of the 1603 grant program. It is based on the monetization of tax credits. Some of the other companies may not have the tax credit ability and this allows them to take the grant in lieu of the tax credit. This is due in part to Obama’s recovery plan. It has since sunset
    - David advised that he wants to hear what the group would like and understands that there are different viewpoints to it.
      - Ty advised of the basic purpose of the Bioenergy Council.
        - I. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE
 

The Bioenergy Council is established under s. 15.137(6), Stats. The council advises the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) on practices for sustainable biomass and bioenergy production, as described in s. 93.47, Stats. The Bioenergy Council is attached to DATCP. DATCP's Office of the Secretary is responsible for the operations of the Bioenergy Council. [http://datcp.wi.gov/uploads/Environment/pdf/Bioenergy%20Council\\_Structure\\_and\\_Membership\\_Procedures.pdf](http://datcp.wi.gov/uploads/Environment/pdf/Bioenergy%20Council_Structure_and_Membership_Procedures.pdf)
- Deb Irwin advised of changes that she heard about from the commission.
  - Small Digester funding through Focus on Energy
  - Another decision the Commission made, has been a shift to a revolving loan program using the Focus on Energy funds.

Tom Unke will provide language to Dave for Recommendation 2. The final draft will be circulated to the council for comments. Dave will incorporate the comments and the group will be able to vote on the final recommendation. If the recommendation is approved, it will be forwarded to Secretary Brancel.

- Recommendation Number 3 – Support Creation of a Renewable Thermal Energy Standard
  - The title was changed so that it better represents that it’s regarding the creation of a renewable thermal energy standard
    - It would be based on the RPS, but that is secondary to the main point.
    - Advised that Deb Irwin provided several insights and research into the recommendation update.
  - If DATCP took this up, it would be ready to be addressed in the next session
  - The discussion for the workgroup is really about the requirements themselves.
    - The first recommendation for this is to get DATCP to pull together various stakeholders and potentially get their support.
    - The next recommendation is to consider expansion of bioenergy eligible for the RPS. The council came to the consensus that the latter would be most likely to successfully set standards, while the former will include more stringent standards. They acknowledge that there may be changes and that there are ways to connect to the RPS.
    - There were still concerns with the final language and it was decided that Tim Clay would join the current work group and offer language that would represent his members at Cooperative Network.

Recommendation 3 language will be revised by Keith and Tim and offered to the group for comments via e-mail. A final recommendation will be offered for any comments and then re-sent to the council for a vote.

### **Next Steps – (Ty Rohloff)**

#### Membership Update –

- Jamie Derr has been in contact with a possible replacement for Andy Fiene who left the council earlier this year. The candidate was not interested in being on the council at this time. Ty will continue to work with Jamie and consider suggestions from others regarding the open seat on the council.
- Dave Donovan is willing to stay on through the completion of the recommendations. Once the recommendations are acted on, a vote will need to occur to find a replacement for the co-chair position.

#### Future Meeting –

Once the recommendations are finalized and voted on a meeting poll will be sent to schedule a follow-up meeting including future activity of the council.

### **Meeting Adjourned**