

**BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
MINUTES**

April 10, 2020

The Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (Board) met via teleconference on **April 10, 2020**. The meeting was preceded by public notice as required by Wis. Stat. § 19.84.

Call to Order

Board Chair Miranda Leis called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

Members Present

Miranda Leis, Paul Bauer, Andy Diercks, Patty Edelburg, Kurt Hallstrand, Paul Palmby, Dan Smith and Carla Washington.

Minutes

Motion

A motion was made by Paul Bauer and seconded by Patty Edelburg to approve the March 5, 2020 and March 27, 2020 DATCP Board minutes. Motion was approved unanimously.

Public Appearances

Bob Welch on behalf of the Apartment Association of Southwest Wisconsin, appeared before the Board to speak in opposition of the ATCP 134 Statement of Scope. Mr. Welch stated that his industry is already responding to the crisis and a form is going out to all members. Many of the tenants are working full-time, with the ones that have lost their jobs we are working with those tenants directly. Some landlords only own 1-2 units and that is their only source of income, we do not want landlords to be picked out in this crisis. Mr. Welch asked the Board to limit the fee freeze indicated in the Statement of Scope to 90 days.

ATCP 134 – Residential Rental Practices

Emergency Rule

Statement of Scope

Division of Trade and Consumer Protection

David Woldseth, Policy Analyst from the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection presented the Statement of Scope for Wis. Admin. Code ch. ATCP 134 emergency rule, to the Board. Mr. Woldseth gave a brief overview and requested the Board approve the Statement of Scope.

Motion

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Statement of Scope for Wis. Admin. Code ch. ATCP 134 emergency rule. Motion was approved unanimously.

**ATCP 106 – Price Gouging in an Emergency
Emergency Rule
Preliminary Public Hearing Notice
Division of Trade and Consumer Protection**

David Woldseth, Policy Analyst from the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection presented the Preliminary Public Hearing Notice for Wis. Admin. Code ch. ATCP 106 emergency rule, to the Board. Mr. Woldseth gave a brief overview and requested the Board approve a Preliminary Public Hearing Notice for Friday, April 17, 2020.

Motion

A motion was made by Paul Bauer and seconded by Andy Diercks to approve a Preliminary Public Hearing Notice for April 17, 2020 for Wis. Admin. Code ch. ATCP 106 emergency rule. Motion was approved unanimously.

Secretary's Office Update on the

Interim Secretary Randy Romanski stated that the staffing level activities have increased in call volume for the consumer protection hotline and farm center. The consumer protection complaints are mostly on price gouging, which our staff is looking into. The farm center hotline has had 42 public contacts and there is an increasing sense of stress in them. Our staff is trying to help people navigate a difficult time. There have also been 29 counseling vouchers distributed in March, which is high for any month. We are asking you to communicate with partners to make it known that the farm center is available.

FAQS - Frequently asked questions are being published on a virtual basis. We are working with divisions to get guidance out to the public as quickly as possible and are trying to answer questions as fast as they come in.

Outreach – Angela James will talk more about this in a minute, but we have been reaching out to our stakeholders during the emergency pandemic situation to help keep food on the shelves and to support the industry. Ashley Andre has been channeling information on the stakeholder conference calls. We should all be supportive of the agriculture industry because they are working to feed us.

Federal level – Last week we sent a letter to the USDA Secretary asking him to use the purchasing power to buy commodities. We believe it is important to support the supply chain and asked USDA to make purchases and distribute food.

Sen Baldwin's office has been on our stakeholder's calls and is trying to address the supply chain issues at the federal level. NASDA has also signaled their support for that effort.

Dairy Market Coverage Program - We asked the Secretary to open the Dairy Market Coverage program because when it was open the milk prices looked good. The Secretary could reopen the primary request on dairy products, but we were non-specific in our letter to talk about commodities.

Paycheck Protection Program – This program is getting complex and we are asking the federal government for clarification. How flexible is this program for farmers and are farmers eligible?

Thanks to our Board members because you are working behind the scenes trying to connect businesses to what consumers want.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Angela James stated that this completes our fourth week of stakeholder group calls with retail groups, the dairy industry, livestock and animal groups, and crops and agriculture business groups. All four groups have meet at least once a week over the last four weeks. We have also held our second meeting with the Ag lending insurance groups. We are trying to focus our discussions to push out relevant information on COVID. We are trying to get ahead of the issues, this week we polled people to see what changes are working and not working. Our goal is to keep the information lines open and to give people a reliable place to get up to date information.

Adjournment

Motion

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded, motion approved unanimously. The Board adjourned at approximately 12:48 p.m.

All reports and any associated documents presented during a Board meeting can be accessed by contacting the Office the Secretary, Legal Counsel at (608) 224-5029.