

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
3:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2013
LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM - LOWER LEVEL
FLORENCE NATURAL RESOURCE CENTER
FLORENCE, WI 54121

PRESENT:

SUPERVISOR / CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR / VICE CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
USFS - SILVICULTURE
DNR – FORESTRY SUPERVISOR
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
JOHN HALADA
LARRY NEUENS
DON GARDNER
BOB MACGREGOR
CRAIG WILLIAMS
HENRY SULLIVAN
PATRICK SMITH
JACOB WALCISAK
ANDREW NAULT
MARY PODNAR

Absent or excused: none

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Ed Kelley, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. He asked that everyone introduce themselves to Craig Williams who was hired as the new DNR Florence/Forest County Team Leader.

2. APPROVAL / AGENDA

It was moved by Supervisor Halada, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to approve the Agenda as posted.

3. APPROVAL / MINUTES

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of August 14, 2013 as read.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

A note was left in the North Lake Donation box complimenting the great fishing experience that was had.

5. AGENCY REPORTS

A. HARV SKJERVEN - USFS DISTRICT RANGER

USFS Bob MacGregor took the place of USFS District Ranger Harv Skjerven who was unable to attend. MacGregor reported to the committee that there was a bid opening last week for the Wood Chuck sale which had six bidders. They were very pleased with the amount of bidders and another bid opening will be held next Tuesday. Things seem to be going well on the ten active sales that are going on right now.

The boardwalk at Lauterman's National Recreation Trail was rebuilt during the USFS's district workday.

There has been discussion with the county about moving ahead with a stewardship sale with the USFS.

B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES

Tony Derleth reported to the committee that 1,100 acres are being cut in the county.

Price Lake Loop has been opened, however, Hemlock Road still is bermed on the Hwy 101 side. Fixing this road will be on their Falls agenda.

Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith decided to talk about the timber trespass settlement at this time. A map and spreadsheet was passed around showing the line issue between Goodman Forest LLC and the county which included volume stumpage values. The county land that was trespassed on used to be Goodman Timber – Smith believes it was an honest mistake. The corner information for this area was lacking. After speaking with Karen Gardner and Tony Derleth an agreement was made as to where the lines should be and an agreed payment for the fair market value of the wood. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to approve the invoice between Huber & Associates and the county.

C. DNR – HENRY SULLIVAN

Henry Sullivan, DNR-County Forest Liaison/State Land Forester gave the floor to the new Florence/Forest County Team Leader, Craig Williams. Williams official start date is September 22nd. He explained that he has been working for the DNR for the past 19 years. He is familiar with the Florence County forests through working with DNR Forester Sullivan and Administrator Smith over the past years. He said he still has a lot to learn on the building side of things. He needs to see if these are issues he should be part of - or is it something Sullivan can pick up. Williams plan is to try and spend one day a week in the Florence office to get up to speed on some of the things he wasn't familiar with and to help Sullivan with state and county land management issues.

Chairman Kelley asked Williams if he was a member of the Pine/Popple Wild Rivers Master planning committee. Kelley was concerned because the Pine/Popple Wild Rivers Master Plan is past due and the committee has been getting by on an interim plan. Kelley explained the importance of Williams being on this committee because these decisions directly impact Florence County and local township taxes. He wanted representation on the planning process itself – and not after the fact. Both Team Leader Williams and DNR Forester Sullivan said they will pass along any information to Kelley as soon as it is available to them.

Supervisor Neuens expressed concern about Williams not being at the Florence location. Williams assured the committee that from a county forest commitment standpoint – part of his job is to meet this time standard – and he will do what is necessary to make sure it happens. From a timber program standpoint, Williams not being here shouldn't have much of an impact.

Supervisor Wenger told Williams that former Team Leader Boren played an important role with the running of the Resource Center building. So he was concerned with the fact that Williams would be spending a lot less time here than this position used to. Williams said he and Smith have been discussing these issues and they plan to work through these things together. Supervisor Wenger recommended Williams come back to the committee in a few months to discuss the impact, if any, of the Team Leader position being held at the Crandon location.

Sullivan passed around two maps detailing the upcoming State Land timber sales. Business Manager Mary Podnar and Sullivan have been working on preparing the bid opening information. Bids are set to be opened October 2, 2013. There are three sales – two of them being re-advertisements. A total of 435 acres are being sold. The state has also been busy preparing for the Fall 2014 timber sale which was also detailed on Sullivan's map.

Assistant Administrator Jake Walcisak asked what two sales were being re-advertised. The first one Sullivan said was the Savage Lake II sale. It was advertised in January of 2013 and had no bid. If there isn't a bid the second time

around – the state has the right to sell it direct as long as it meets their minimum appraisal value. The second sale being re-advertised is the North Power Dam sale which was given back to the state by G&G Forest Products. It is nice quality wood but on rough terrain.

Sullivan also passed around a map detailing the 2014 prescribed burns. He went over the changes that were made since the last time he reported to the committee.

6. LAND SALES

A. OPEN & AWARD BIDS

Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith reported that there was only one bid submitted for the parcel from Rudy Vassar and it was for \$1,001. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to accept the bid and have it put on the County Board agenda for next week.

7. COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER SALE HARVEST - UPDATE

County Forester Andrew Nault reported to the committee that there are nine active timber sales in the county right now. DNR Forester Sullivan and Nault have been working on the six sales for the fall which will consist of approximately 500 acres. The Fall bid opening is scheduled for November 13, 2013.

B. BUDGET 2013

Administrator Smith passed around the 2013/2014 budget.

C. BUDGET 2014

Administrator Smith explained each line item to the committee for the proposed 2014 budget. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to send the proposed budget to the Audit & Budget committee.

D. POLARIS RANGER PURCHASE

The Forestry & Parks Department purchased a 2013 800 EPS Polaris Ranger from Cozy's Polaris in Marinette for \$8,676 – with accessories included. They were able to get a \$5,000 trade in for their other two machines. A few more things still need to be added to make the track system work – but so far, the department is extremely pleased with its performance. Smith purchased the machine so he could take advantage of the \$1,000 rebate. It was moved by Supervisor Gardner, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to approve the purchase of the 800 Polaris Ranger.

E. OCTOBER 16TH TOUR WITH US FOREST SERVICE

Administrator Smith went over a “draft” agenda for the upcoming Wisconsin County Forest Association, Wisconsin towns Association and Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest tour. Chairman Kelley recommended taking a tour of the county forest and then a tour of the national forest to see the differences. Smith said this might be difficult but would certainly look into it.

F. ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR POSITION

Assistant Administrator Jake Walcisak reported to the committee that he has accepted a position with the Taylor County Forestry Department which is located where he and his wife grew up. Supervisor Wenger asked why he decided to move so he and the committee could better understand why people leave the department. Walcisak said that moving back home was why he pursued the position and the wages were a bonus. The position offered an immediate \$4,000 increase in wages and after five years - \$15,000 more than was he was making in Florence County. The committee commended Walcisak on the great work he did for the county and wished him the best.

Smith told the committee that he went to the Personnel Committee last night and asked that Walcisak's position be put on the agenda. It will be advertised in this and next week's paper. Smith will be accepting applications until September 19, 2013 and hopes to begin the interview process on Monday & Tuesday the following week. He wanted to know if any committee members would be available these days. Smith also noted that he considered not interviewing for Walcisak's position because he felt Forester Andy Nault could easily step into the position. He was told by the Personnel Committee that it had to be advertised. It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to support the hiring process for the Assistant Administrator's position.

G. TIMBER TRESPASS SETTLEMENT

This agenda item was addressed under Huber & Associates in the Agency Reports.

8. RECREATION

A. SPREAD EAGLE BOAT LANDING IMPROVEMENTS

The Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes Association approached Smith about putting a boat wash station on the Spread Eagle boat landing. Smith understands their concerns but feels the boat landing is too small for a boat wash. The association also hinted to Smith that they wanted the county to take care of the maintenance of the boat wash. This is something Smith is not in favor of because it could start a precedence of the county being responsible for all future boat washes on county landings. Smith also spoke with Steve Freiberg about how much something like this would cost and Freiberg believed it would be around \$30,000 - \$40,000 to install and roughly \$1,000 each year to maintain. If the county does decide to allow a boat station on county property, the county would need a lease saying we have no obligations for the any up-keep of this station. It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried that the Forestry & Parks Department not pursue this any further and if the association still wants a boat wash it will be their responsibility to present the committee a proposal.

B. LAKE EMILY LANDING GRANT/ORDINANCE CHANGE

Administrator Smith was looking for support from the committee to look further into the possibility of charging a boat landing usage fee. It was moved by Supervisor Gardner, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to have Smith investigate the details of charging a boat landing usage fee and bring his findings back to the committee.

C. COSGROVE LAKE DREDGING

The town of Florence is helping with the mailings and postage of a letter and questionnaire being sent to all Cosgrove Lake owners in regards to the Cosgrove Lake Dredging project. A sample was passed around to the committee. Answers to this questionnaire are being sent to the Florence County Lakes and Rivers Association (FCLARA) for review. The results will be given to Smith. FCLARA is also willing to set up an account for donations to this project. For now, Smith suggests that the committee wait and see how the landowners feel about the possibility of dredging the channel.

Smith wanted to know how the county should answer the survey since they are a landowner on the lake. It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried that the county should answer **X I have no opinion either way.**

9. ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Administrator Smith said he received a request from County Clerk Donna Trudell to create a Uniform Expense Policy. Smith wanted the committee to know that he will be working on this policy and a line item for this expense has already been added to budget. He intends on including the purchasing of hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, jeans, and boots in this policy. Both Smith and the committee agreed that it is important for Forestry and Parks employees to be

identifiable. Supervisor Neuens suggested that Smith work with the Highway department in drafting similar policies. The board recommended that Smith go ahead and create a policy that best suits the needs of the department.

Smith asked the board if they were interested in moving the Forestry & Parks committee meeting before the Audit & Budget meeting. Smith believes if the committee approves the Forestry & Parks bills – there should be no reason to question them.

Smith passed around the 2013 campground revenue/days camped spreadsheet.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER'S COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Chairman Kelley wanted it noted in the minutes that the Forestry & Parks Committee would like to thank Walcisak for all the excellent work he has done in the county. They wish him nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

Supervisor Neuens wanted to know if any action was taken on the power loading ordinance – he did not see mention of this issue in any committee minutes. Smith told Neuens that he emailed County Clerk Donna Trudell and Zoning Administrator Rich Wolosyn the motion from Forestry & Parks that asks the Personnel & Zoning committees to look into the power loading issues. Smith said he will pass along the information again.

Neuens asked Smith if he would be planning a Fall Tour. Smith thought it would be a good idea to go around the county and see the projects they are working on. They will plan on something in October.

Chairman Kelley said the USFS wants to hold their fall meeting in Florence. Smith is waiting to hear more about the planning process.

11. BILLS/REVENUES–FORESTRY & PARKS/RESOURCE CENTER

It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to approve bills being paid for by the Forestry and Parks and the Florence Natural Resource Center.

12. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:40.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Podnar, Business Manager
Florence County Forestry and Parks