

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
3:30 PM - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2015
LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM - LOWER LEVEL
FLORENCE NATURAL RESOURCE CENTER
FLORENCE, WI 54121

PRESENT:

SUPERVISOR / CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
USFS DISTRICT RANGER
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
DON GARDNER
HARV SKJERVEN
HENRY SULLIVAN
PATRICK SMITH
MARY PODNAR

Absent or excused: John Halada & Larry Neuens

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Ed Kelley, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

2. APPROVAL / AGENDA

Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith suggested moving agenda item 7. A (*Presentation of Off Highway Motorcycle Association – Bryan Much*) before Agency Reports. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda and Smith's suggestion.

3. APPROVAL / MINUTES

It was moved by Supervisor Gardner, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to approve the Forestry & Parks minutes of January 14, 2015 as read.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Forestry & Parks Business Manager reported that Keyes Peak Ski Hill received a \$100 donation. The donor and her family had a wonderful time at the recent ski race that was held at the hill.

7. RECREATION

A. PRESENTATION OF WISCONSIN OFF HIGHWAY MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION – BRYAN MUCH

Mr. Bryan Much introduced himself to the committee. He was representing the Wisconsin Off Highway Motorcycle Association. Mr. Much gave a slide presentation detailing dual sport / adventure motorcycling. They are requesting expanded access to our current ATV trail system. He explained that both dual sport motorcycles and adventure bikes can be used on both roads and trails and they shouldn't be confused with a dirt bike. Both types of bikes need to be licensed by the D.O.T.

Mr. Much also discussed how routes were created using maps & GPS systems and how this would bring tourist from across the country to our area. He would like the county to open up their trails on a two year trial basis. Neighboring counties have opened up their trail systems such as Forest County. He explained why he felt this was a win/win situation for the County / Blue Ox Trail Rider Club / and the Off Highway Motorcycle Association.

Blue Ox Trail Rider member ???????? asked how the Motorcycle Association was going to provide funding for trail maintenance. Mr. Much explained there is currently motorcycle legislation that should be going through this session

which will provide a sticker program just like the ATV and snowmobile programs. That money will then be available to those areas that allow motorcycle access.

The committee agreed that they were not ready to approve opening the trail system. They need more time to research the details about this issue. Mr. Much thanked the committee for allowing him to give his presentation and would be happy to answer any questions that may come up in the future.

5. AGENCY REPORTS

B. HARV SKJERVEN - USFS DISTRICT RANGER

USFS District Ranger Harv Skjerven informed the committee that the three positions in Florence should be posted on their website any day now. These postings are only advertised for ten days.

Skjerven is waiting to find out the final numbers for their budget. He said it is not looking good for the recreation portion of the budget. Chairman Kelley asked what impact it is going to have on our schools with the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding being cut from the budget. Smith said Florence County will now fall into the 25% Fund and the schools may see a decrease of funding of over \$20,000. Smith also questioned where the money for the WRAC funding was going. The spreadsheet he was given showed where the money being spent on projects for 2011 & 2012 (*none of which were Florence County projects*) – however he did not see what projects were being awarded in 2014. Florence submitted close to \$15,000 into Title II Funding. Skjerven will get an answer back to the committee.

Skjerven told Smith that he would be contacted for information regarding the “value of time” on each project for the upcoming Wallace Stewardship program.

The USFS is still moving ahead with the “Good Neighbor Authority” project.

B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES

Tony Derleth from Huber Resources shared with the committee that they currently have five crews running and four of them are working in Florence County. They are hoping for another good month of work before break-up begins. There is still good demand for products however prices have begun to drop. The market remains strong.

C. DNR-HENRY SULLIVAN

DNR-County Forest Liaison/State Land Forester Henry Sullivan reported that last week the State had a bid opening offering up six sales. Four of those sales sold totaling close to \$760,000 for Florence and Forest County’s. Two of the sales went “no bid” and they will advertise these sales again in the Spring.

The State has one active timber sale in the County right now – the Nine Day Rapids sale. The State is working on a timber sale project near Sea Lion Lake. With this work – they should meet their establishment quota for the State’s Fiscal Year 2014.

Sullivan also told the committee that there will be a Property Management meeting held tomorrow where DNR representatives will discuss the management of the Pine Popple and Spread Eagle Barren areas. Sullivan would like to use this as an opportunity to discuss Forestry road issues and possibly getting funding for the maintenance of these roads.

6. COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER SALE UPDATE

Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith informed the committee that the County has two active sales going on right now. Smith wanted the committee’s input on a sale the County has that isn’t being harvested. This particular

sale went no bid three times. The contractor who finally got the sale had two years to cut it. He did not harvest it within the two year timeframe – so he was offered a one year extension with no penalty. He still did not get the job cut – so a second extension was offered with a 5% penalty. The contract states that no third extension will be offered. Smith wants to know if the committee wants to offer a third extension because the ground is not frozen. After discussion it was decided to offer the third extension with penalty because of the good working relationship the County has with the contractor. It was moved by Supervisor Gardner, seconded by Supervisor Wenger and unanimously carried to allow Smith to amend the contract and offer a third extension with a 5% penalty.

B. WINTER TIMBER SALE BID RESULTS

The County's winter timber sale went with "no bid".

C. WOOD TURTLE UPDATE

Administrator Smith passed around the comments he sent for the Broad Incidental Take Permit (BITP) regarding forestry activities and the wood turtle. Smith doesn't believe the proposed permit does anything to help with forestry practices and is frustrated with the direction this is going. These guidelines are going affect at least one sale per year for the County which means the timber sale could have been advertised for summer harvest – but now cannot because of the wood turtle restriction.

D. SFI/FSC AUDIT 2015

Administrator Smith wanted the committee to be aware that Florence County has been selected for the upcoming SFI/FSC audit which is going to be held August 11th – 13th.

7. RECREATION

B. SKI HILL

Smith passed around the 2014-2015 Ski Season report prepared by Business Manager Mary Podnar. The hill has brought in \$9,220 for the season so far. We are a little behind compared to last year at this time. Smith received many positive comments after the recent ski hill races. The crew is getting ready for the upcoming snowmobile hill climb.

Brent DallaGrana from the Ski Hill Committee contacted Smith about an opportunity to purchase a groomer from the Kiwanis Club with a tiller for \$23,000. DallaGrana wondered if the County could go in half with the Ski Hill Committee to purchase it. Smith explained that this was not in our budget and was not sure with how to proceed with asking for the unbudgeted money. The committee would like Smith to explore other avenues of obtaining the money such as a possible loan.

C. SEA LION BOAT LANDING

Recreation/Forester Eric Brolin attended the Waterways Commission meeting yesterday and was told that Florence County was approved funding for 50% of the Sea Lion Boat Landing project.

D. MENOMINEE RIVER P.U.D. BOAT LANDING

Smith updated the committee informing them that the Town does have a deed for the town road. He is not sure if it has been signed or not. A grant has been submitted for funding for the proposed boat landing. Smith is trying to get as much money as possible – he is applying for Federal, State, and WE Energies money.

8. RESOLUTIONS

A. FUNDING FOR FLORENCE WILD RIVERS INTERPETIVE CENTER

Smith passed around a resolution to restore funding for the Wild Rivers Interpretive Center. The governor recently cut this funding out of his proposed budget. This resolution would help get this funding re-instated through

legislation. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to send this resolution on to the County Board.

B. FUNDING FOR COUNTY FOREST ADMINISTRATORS GRANT

Smith said Executive Director Jane Severt from the Wisconsin County Forest Association (WCFA) is working on this resolution. There is a WCFA meeting being held in Minocqua on Friday – where more information regarding this issue will be provided. Smith would like the committee to approve a resolution that will be drafted by Severt and Smith. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to approve the resolution once it has been drafted and send it on to the County Board.

9. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

All of Smith's issues were already addressed earlier in the meeting.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER'S COMMENTS & CONCERNS

None.

11. BILLS/REVENUES – FORESTRY & RESOURCE CENTER

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

11. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:07.

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