

**FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE & COUNTY BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS MEETING
2:30 PM - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2014
LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM - LOWER LEVEL
FLORENCE NATURAL RESOURCE CENTER
FLORENCE, WI 54121**

PRESENT:

**SUPERVISOR / CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER
FINANCIAL MANAGER**

**ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
LARRY NEUENS
DON GARDNER
HENRY SULLIVAN
PATRICK SMITH
MARY PODNAR
JOSEPH BESTOR**

Absent or excused: John Halada

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Ed Kelley, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. Supervisor Halada was excused. No other County Board members were present.

2. APPROVAL / AGENDA

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

3. PRESENTATION OF POTENTIAL LAND PURCHASE

Administrator Smith presented a slide show detailing the potential Pine River Lumber Land purchase. Smith was contacted by Dick Conner and asked if Florence County would be interested in purchasing the land holding in Florence County. Pine River Lumber owns +/-1570 acres in Florence County with parcels located in Commonwealth, Fence, Fern & Tipler. Several of these parcels are adjacent to County Forest and all of them contain well managed forest land. Most could be harvested within the next 5 years. There is a recreational trail on an 80 acre parcel in Commonwealth which the county does not have an easement to. All but 20 acres are enrolled under Managed Forest Tax law.

Smith went over the options for paying for this land acquisition. One option would be an interest free Project Loan which is available through the Wisconsin DNR's county forestry fund account. Counties with lands enrolled in the County Forest Law are eligible to apply for interest free loans. These loans can be used for meritorious and economically productive forestry operations including land acquisition. This Project Loan would be debited to the county's forestry fund account and repayment would be through a timber sale severance share of 20%.

Another option would be an application to the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. If approved, up to 50% of the acquisition cost would be covered. Eligible acquisition costs include the certified value of the property and any reasonable transaction costs relating to the purchase of the property. Therefore, this grant would cover 50% of purchase price.

Other options that would be available to the county would include working with a non-profit organization. Or the county could borrow from county funds (Barrens Funds). This option would allow the county to set the payment plan. The DNR interest free loans could be used to make up the difference. This could help make it easier on the annual budgets.

The advantages and disadvantage were discussed in detail for each financing option.

Smith explained to the committee how purchasing the property would benefit the county based upon current forest productivity assumptions. The allowable cut would increase from 940 acres to 1,029 acres. The potential annual revenue increase would be between \$40,000 and \$80,000 yearly. This issue was discussed in detail.

4. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Supervisor Gardner, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to adjourn to the Public Hearing meeting at 3:30.

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