

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
3:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 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 DISTRICT RANGER
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
JOHN HALADA
LARRY NEUENS
DON GARDNER
HARV SKJERVEN
HENRY SULLIVAN
PATRICK SMITH
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. Chairman Kelley asked everyone to bow their heads for a moment of silence in remembrance of Supervisor Bruce Osterberg.

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 Neuens, and unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of April 10, 2013 as read.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

5. AGENCY REPORTS

A. HARV SKJERVEN - USFS DISTRICT RANGER

USFS District Ranger Harv Skjerven reported that they are currently re-working the no-bid sale they had last month. They believe it was primarily because of the winter restrictions. A sale was sold yesterday to Midwest Forest Products. The bid sold for a very good price. They still have three more sales for the year.

Dave Bathel's position has been filled by Dan Reynolds who will be stationed in the Eagle River office. He will report for permanent duty on July 1, 2013. Also, Jeff Herrett's position as Recreation Staff has been filled by Evan Miller. He too will be stationed out of the Eagle River office.

ATV trails will be opened May 10, 2013 in Florence. Three Lakes is dealing with the issue of designating their roads for ATV use. Part of the town is in favor of this and part is not.

The USFS budget is being cut from last year. There will be a meeting next week to discuss how to address the issue.

B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES – KAREN GARDNER, FORESTER

Karen Gardner was not in attendance.

C. VERSO PAPER – BUCKY HOLM.

Bucky Holme was not in attendance.

D. DNR. – HENRY SULLIVAN.

Henry Sullivan, DNR-County Forest Liaison/State Land Forester reported that the DNR staff from both the Crandon and Florence offices will be meeting with Brian Spencer to discuss how to handle the day to day happenings until a new Team Leader is hired. Supervisor Wenger expressed concern that the Team Leader's duty station needs to be at the Florence office. Sullivan said he would get a copy of the Team Leaders position description to Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith for distribution. Sullivan reported that we will have to wait and see what the DNR Forestry Leadership team decides as to where this position should be stationed. Administrator Smith has started a letter that he intends to send to the Secretary of the DNR emphasizing the need for this vacancy to be filled in the Florence office. It will be ready to send before the next County Board meeting. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to recommend this letter to the County Board.

The new Private Lands Forester, Tyler Wood will begin work on May 20, 2013. His first day in the Florence office will not be until the 22nd. Tentatively he will be sitting in Stuart's old office on the days he is here. The first six months of his employment will be focused on training which means he will be in the office around two weeks per month. Tyler should be available to meet with landowners and give people management recommendations for their properties. He will focus on plans that are already written. This position is broken down to 25% fire, 35% state lands management, and 40% private lands forestry.

The state does not have any active sales in the county right now.

So far this fire season has produced two small fires due to debris burning. Two burns are planned for the Spread Eagle Barrens around the last week of May or first week of June. Wildlife Technician Anna Jahns will advertise the burn locations in the paper. On the day of the burn, local officials will be notified.

6. LAND SALES

A. KEYES LAKE CAMPGROUND PROPERTY

Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith reported to the board that Leland Nelsen is interested in purchasing the land he currently leases from the county. It is just short of three acres. Administrator Smith had an appraisal done and it seemed rather high value for the land. Administrator Smith spoke with the Town of Commonwealth assessor to see what starting point this property would be worth based upon other assessments in the area. The assessor recommended beginning at roughly \$2,000 per acre. Nelson stated that he wants to pay a fair price for this land as it will benefit both his business and the county by the property taxes he would now have to pay on it. Based upon his property taxes, Nelsen offered \$6,622 for the land. Chairman Kelley expressed concern about not following proper procedure by putting the land up for bids. Administrator Smith said he would get a legal opinion on the extenuating conditions if this sale. It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to refer this issue to the June 12, 2013 meeting.

7. COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER SALE HARVEST - UPDATE

Forestry & Parks Administrator Patrick Smith reported to the committee that there is currently one sale active and

one sale finishing up for the county. Road restrictions just came off on Monday, May 6th.

B. BACKHOE PURCHASE - UPDATE

Administrator Smith will be bringing this to issue to next Tuesdays Audit & Budget meeting and then to the County Board meeting. Forestry & Parks is asking for up to \$20,000 for the purchase of the Florence Utilities used backhoe. Trade-in value of Forestry & Parks old backhoe is \$35,000. It was moved by Supervisor Halada, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to recommend this purchase to the Audit & Budget committee and County Board.

C. LTE FORESTER - UPDATE

Administrator Smith reported that they hired Tyler Ritchie for the LTE forester position. He will begin work on Monday, May 13, 2013. It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to support the hiring of Tyler Ritchie for the LTE forester position.

D. JOINT POSITION FORESTRY/HIGHWAY

Administrator Smith passed around a job description for the Common Labor / Forestry Technician position. This new position would report to both Highway Commissioner Jeff DeMuri and Administrator Smith. This position would benefit the Forestry & Parks department in particular with overhead costs charged from highway and in providing weekend help at the ski hill. The hourly wage would be the same for work performed in each department. Commissioner DeMuri and Administrator Smith work closely together and will collaborate on figuring out who this person would report to daily. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to support this job description as written and move it on to the Personnel Committee.

E. SUMMER OCCASIONAL WORKERS

Highway Commissioner Jeff DeMuri received permission from Personnel to take applications for the Occasional Labor – Florence County Highway Department / Forestry & Parks Department position. It is being advertised right now. Administrator Smith will take a list of workers who would like to work occasionally to Personnel. These workers would only get paid if Smith calls them to work. It was moved by Supervisor Halada, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to submit this list to the Personnel Committee.

8. RECREATION

A. PARKS

The crews are working at cleaning up West Bass Lake. Electricity will be going in next week.

9. ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Administrator Smith reported that details for the Summer Tour are set.

10. BILL AND REVENUES—FORESTRY & PARKS/RESOURCE CENTER

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

11. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Supervisor Halada, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:39.

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