

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
3:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014
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 – PRIVATE LANDS FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
JOHN HALADA
LARRY NEUENS
DON GARDNER
HARV SKJERVEN
TYLER WOOD
PATRICK SMITH
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.

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 March 12, 2014 as read.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

A letter was sent to Administrator Patrick Smith from Judy Waite, the 2013/2014 Ski Hill concessionaire. She expressed her concern of people bringing their own food to the hill versus buying from the concessionaire. Smith said the only way to prevent this from happening was to post a sign saying "No carry-ins allowed." Other ski hills in the area allow carry-ins and the committee agreed that Keyes Peak should allow them also.

5. AGENCY REPORTS

A. HARV SKJERVEN - USFS DISTRICT RANGER

USFS District Ranger Harv Skjerven reported they are coming closer to finalizing a stewardship project. The timber sale will be roughly 300 acres and \$150,000. The USFS will do all the prep work on this sale. Much of the service work for this project would be done by the county and local businesses. Smith said there will be two agreements. One is the master agreement which simply states that the USFS and the county want to enter into an agreement together and covers the "ground rules." The second agreement will be based on actual values.

USFS Silviculturist Bob MacGregor will be leaving the middle of May. He has accepted a promotion in central Washington. Skjerven has the approval to move forward with the hiring for MacGregor's position this summer as

well as Hal Thede's Reforestation Technician position this fall/winter. However, Skjerven does not yet have the money to hire for Melissa Simpson's Botanist position – so it will be filled for the time being using a temp. Skjerven assured the committee that all three of these positions will be filled in the Florence office.

The USFS sold a timber sale last week in Forest County. Potlatch paid \$225,000 above the bid premium.

Morgan Lake Campground will be an ATV campground. Notification to the public will soon be sent out.

B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES

Tony Derleth was not in attendance.

C. DNR – HENRY SULLIVAN

Tyler Wood, DNR Private Lands Forester reported that the LaSalle Falls timber sale currently has two blocks left. There are no other active sales right now. Beginning Fiscal Year 2014 – Florence and Forest Counties will have 500 acres of state land to establish.

Full staffing for the fire season will begin April 20, 2014. The tower will also be staffed again this year.

Prescribed burns plans have been written and approved. They are hoping to burn during the 3rd or 4th week of May.

June 1st is the deadline for MFL entries. Currently there are 149 practices totaling 2,385 acres in Florence County.

6. COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER SALE UPDATE

Assistant Administrator Andy Nault reported to the committee that there are six sales ready for sale in June. Nault is trying to get one more ready for this sale. They are shooting for 500 acres which would be half of their target for the year. It has been a long winter with the snow depth and cold – all this made working in the woods very difficult. Nault passed around and discussed the Spring 2014 Timber Sale Summary report.

B. BONDING

Administrator Smith feels there is no need to ask for money at this time.

C. SKID STEER ACCEPT AND/OR REJECT BIDS

Administrator Smith passed around a summary of the skid steer loader bids. After discussion it was decided to accept the bid from Fabco Equipment for a 2014 Caterpillar 279D XPS. It was moved by Supervisor Gardner, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried approve the Caterpillar purchase and send on to County Board.

D. LTE FORESTER 2014

Only four applications were submitted for the LTE Forester position. Of these four – Smith believed there were only two qualified to be interviewed. They would like to perform an "outdoor" interview sometime next week. Smith asked if any of committee members were interested in being part of this process – otherwise the interview will be conducted by Smith, Nault, and Sullivan. It was moved by Supervisor Neuens, seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to approve Smith's choice of LTE and send his recommendation to Personnel for final approval.

7. RECREATION

A. SKI HILL

Smith passed around the 2013-2014 Ski Season final report. The hill did well considering the cold weather and electrical issue that occurred.

Also it was suggested by Business Manager Mary Podnar to update the “Rules and Regulations Governing the Use of the Florence County Keyes Peak Ski Lodge” regarding the current cancellation policy. A wedding that was scheduled for May 31, 2014 was cancelled after both the security deposit and rent was paid. It was asked that the rent be refunded. The Rules and Regulations clearly addresses the security deposit, however, rent is not addressed. After discussion it was decided to update the contract to state that the \$400 rent must be paid within two weeks to secure the date and a \$200 security deposit must be paid two months before the event. If the event is cancelled within two months – the rent money will be forfeited and only the security deposit will be returned. An updated contract will be brought to the next meeting for the committee’s final approval.

8. ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

County Clerk Donna Trudell requested an Organizational Chart from each department. Smith passed around the one for Forestry & Parks. Updates were made and will be passed along to Trudell.

There will be a Cosgrove Lake funding meeting tomorrow. Smith will keep the committee updated as to how it turns out.

The 2014 Sustainable Forestry Conference will be held tomorrow also. Ed Wenger, Larry Neuens, and Pat Smith are signed up to attend.

Also, the 2014 WCFA Summer Tour will be held in Chippewa Falls on June 26th – June 27th. All interested in attending need to let Podnar know by the middle of next week so she can begin the registration process.

The wood turtle remains an issue for forestry operations and was discussed during the WCFA meeting in Marshfield.

9. COMMITTEE MEMBER’S COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Supervisor Wenger brought to the committee’s attention that there is interest in using the Resource Center as an Emergency Operations Center. There would be a few upgrades that the building would need in which grant money could be used to do.

It was discussed at the building meeting that the Resource Center will be hooked up to the Florence Utility sewer system before July 4, 2014.

10. BILLS/REVENUES – FORESTRY & RESOURCE CENTER

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

11. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Neuens, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:51.

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