

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
3:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 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
USFS – SILVICULTURE
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS RECREATION/FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
JOHN HALADA
DON GARDNER
BOB MACGREGOR
HENRY SULLIVAN
PATRICK SMITH
ERIC BROLIN
MARY PODNAR

Absent or excused: Larry Neuens

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 Wenger seconded by Supervisor Halada, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as posted.

3. APPROVAL / MINUTES

It was moved by Supervisor Halada, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of January 8, 2014 as read.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

5. AGENCY REPORTS

A. HARV SKJERVEN - USFS DISTRICT RANGER

USFS Silviculture/Forester Bob MacGregor reported that the stewardship project is on hold until the USFS lays out the actual sale for the County.

The County is projected to receive \$88,444 under the 25% fund election. All of this money can go directly to the schools. The projected amount for the Secured Rural School (SRS) is still unknown at this time.

There are eleven active USFS timber sales going on in the district. Three of them are located in Florence County. MacGregor also reported that there is a shortage of logging trucks because the mills are paying high rates for hardwood and pulpwood. This is making it difficult to get wood moved off of the landings.

Melissa Simpson has accepted a position with the Ottawa National Forest. Her first day was Monday.

USFS had held their annual Lauterman Ski-in chili dump this past weekend. Sixty four people participated.

B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES

Tony Derleth was not in attendance.

NOTE: Tony Derleth left message on DNR Forester Henry Sullivan's phone stating that the committee could call him on his cell phone and he would answer any questions they might have during the meeting. Sullivan did not get message until after meeting.

C. DNR – HENRY SULLIVAN

Henry Sullivan, DNR-County Forest Liaison/State Land Forester reported to the committee that there is one active timber sale located near the LaSalle Falls Hiking Trail. They have established the sales they plan on advertising for next fall. These are field complete and the paperwork is turned in for review.

In March the DNR plans on making the rounds with local fire departments in preparation for the spring fire season.

At the yearly Property Management meeting plans were laid out for the state owned natural properties in Florence County. Two of the bigger properties are the Pine Popple Wild Rivers and Spread Eagle Barrens. There are smaller owned ones such as the Haley Creek Swamp. This property was previously owned and managed by BCPL. Now that the DNR owns it – they do not plan on managing the 120 acres of nice oak and this is concerning to Administrator Smith. According to Wisconsin Act 166 – if there is harvestable timber on state owned lands that is not harvested – the DNR must provide a reason as to why. Smith said they are harvesting timber on the Spread Eagle Barrens which is a state natural area, why won't they manage this property – which up until the state took over ownership – was managed? Sullivan is requesting clarification on this. The committee would like Smith to put together a letter expressing their concern about the state making decisions on this property without a Master Plan. The public owns this land and should have a say as to how it is managed. The County would also like input.

D. DNR – JOSH MARTINEZ

Wildlife Biologist Josh Martinez was not able to attend the meeting however wanted the committee to know that there was going to be an article in Outdoor News and the Florence Mining News regarding the crop damage permits that were recently handed out. These permits were good until the end of bow season. Most of these permits were filled after the gun/deer season after Christmas. The concern Supervisor Wenger is hearing is the fact that there are not many deer where these permits have been issued. He does not want this to happen again next year. Administrator Smith said this was discussed at the Property Management meeting and it sounds like they plan on issuing more permits next year.

6. COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER SALE UPDATE

Administrator Smith reported to the committee that there is one active timber sale and one sale that just ended.

Smith wanted the committee to be aware that they do have a potential issue with one of their loggers. A logger sent in a Certificate of Insurance using a new vendor name. Smith followed up with the logger and he said yes he started a new company but the old one was still running. Smith sent the logger a letter informing him that according to our contract we cannot accept any checks from the new company and that he cannot begin work until we get an updated Certificate of Insurance.

B. HIGHWAY/FORESTRY WORKER 6 MONTH EVALUATION

Highway/Forestry worker Bob Butterfield's 6 month evaluation is coming due. Both Highway Commissioner Jeff DeMuri and Smith believe he is doing an excellent job for both departments. They would like to see him receive a \$1.50 raise which is going from 80% to 90% of his top wage. It was moved by Supervisor Gardener, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to approve Bob's Butterfield's \$1.50 raise and send this recommendation on to the Personnel Committee.

C. COUNTY FORESTER POSITION UPDATE

Eric Brolin introduced himself to the committee and the committee welcomed him to the department.

7. RECREATION

A. LAKE EMILY LANDING GRANT/ORDINANCE CHANGE - UPDATE

Bids were put out for advertisement and are due next month. Smith has not yet had time to work on the ordinance change of charging a boat landing fee.

B. COSGROVE LAKE DREDGING - UPDATE

Smith reported that it appears permits will be issued next week for this project. Notification for this project was in the paper. No one requested a public hearing. Smith said \$3,100 has been paid in engineering costs and \$4,500 was raised in donations. The group is now looking for help in writing the actual grant. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried that Forestry & Parks helps in the grant application process for this project.

C. RIFLE RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

Wildlife Technician Anna Jahns is working on the application process for getting a grant to improve the sidewalks and create handicap accessibility at our rifle range.

D. SKI HILL

The hill was shutdown a couple of days due to the cold weather. Smith passed around 2013/2014 Ski Season report. The Mike Roberts Memorial Race was well attended. Future happenings at the hill include Winterfest on March 1st and the Snowmobile Hill Climb on March 15th – March 16th.

8. ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

The department has been working on details for the US2 railroad grade bridge project so Recreation/Forester Eric Brolin can begin the grant application process.

Smith is also working on a "Climate Control" grant project. Smith would like to re-plant and reforest the scrub oak on Spur Lake Road to make it a productive forest again. The money would be coming from the Wildlife Conservation Society.

The Discover Wisconsin crew would like to come to the ski hill this winter for filming.

9. COMMITTEE MEMBER'S COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Supervisor Neuens did not want to lose his timeslot – so he sent an email wanting to say hello to everyone from sunny California!

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 Gardner, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:30.

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