

**FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**3:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2017**  
**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 DISTRICT RANGER  
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER  
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR  
ASSISTANT FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR  
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY  
ED WENGER  
HOLLY STRATTON  
SUSAN THEER  
HARV SKJERVEN  
HENRY SULLIVAN  
PATRICK SMITH  
ANDY NAULT  
MARY PODNAR

**ABESENT OR EXCUSED:** Larry Dzekute

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Chairman Kelley called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. Roll call was taken. Supervisor Dzekute was excused.

**2. APPROVAL / AGENDA**

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

**3. APPROVAL / MINUTES**

Supervisor Stratton wanted the motion from the March 8<sup>th</sup> minutes amended. She wanted the motion under item 6. County Forest, B. Timber Sale Extensions to include “taking back/cancelling an old contract per Administrator Smith’s recommendation”. It was moved by Supervisor Stratton, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of March 12, 2017 as amended.

**4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**5. AGENCY REPORTS**

**A. HARV SKJERVEN - USFS DISTRICT RANGER**

USFS District Ranger Harv Skjerven informed the Committee that the hiring freeze has been lifted – however budget spending has been put on hold. They are still working on the environmental analysis for the Morgan Lake sale. They are waiting for the archeology report to be finished. The USFS is on target for meeting their timber sale quota.

Supervisor Wenger said three representatives from the Federal Sustainable Forestry Committee were sent to Washington to support the Secured Rural Schools (SRS) Act. Wenger wanted Skjerven to know that other states in the nation are envious of Wisconsin due to the excellent working relationship it has with the Federal Forest Service regarding SRS and GNA work.

Skjerven informed the Committee that the YCC program will be having a special project bringing kids from across the nation to work on recreation projects. They will be staying at Trees for Tomorrow. The program will run for six weeks.

The announcement for the fire position opening here should be announced Monday.

**B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES**

Tony Derleth was not in attendance.

**C. DNR – HENRY SULLIVAN**

DNR County Forest Liaison/State Land Forester Henry Sullivan told the Committee that there are no active timber sales.

Sullivan received a list of positions that have been affirmed/appointed and Jeff Olson will be the GNA Coordinator. Craig Williams will be the Team Leader for Florence and Heather Berklund will be the Area Leader.

Fire season is beginning for the department.

Sullivan encouraged the Committee to go on the DNR website and take the Recreation Opportunities Analysis survey. It aims to identify existing and future recreational needs in each region of the state and determine the role of DNR lands in helping to meet those needs.

The Pine Popple Wild Rivers Advisory meeting will be on Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 PM – 3:00 PM in the Resource Center large conference room.

**6. COUNTY FOREST**

**A. TIMBER SALE UPDATE**

Assistant Administrator Andy Nault reported that there are no active timber sales in the County.

**B. APPROVAL TO ADVERTISE TIMBER SALE FOR BIDS**

Nault passed around and discussed the Spring 2017 Timber Sale packet. There are five sales totaling 523 acres. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Stratton, and unanimously carried to approve advertising the Spring Timber Sale bids.

**C. HIRING APPROVALS**

Interviews were held last week for the Equipment Operator/Recreation Manager and Occasional Laborer positions. Our current Parks and Ski Hill Assistant was recommended for the Equipment Operator/Recreation Manager position. All three applicants were recommended for the Occasional Laborer position. These candidates were approved by Personnel at the April 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. The department now has an opening for the Parks and Ski Hill Assistant position. It was moved by Supervisor Theer, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to support the hiring of all candidates. It was also moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to support advertising for the Assistant Parks and Ski Hill position.

**D. MILL TAX DISCUSSION**

Smith discussed an email he received from Executive Director of the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) Jane Severt regarding WCFA's stance on forestry mill tax funding. WCFA is not advocating for the forestry mill tax to remain as is, they feel there is room for fiscal accountability in expenditures of the dollars. They feel it is the role of legislators to determine how to fund essential forestry programs if the current forestry mill tax is eliminated. There are many questions regarding how much funding is really needed to conduct essential forestry programs in

Wisconsin.

Supervisor Stratton is concerned because the mill tax also funds other institutions. Now all entities will need to fight for funding.

**E. GNA & STEWARDSHIP WORK UPDATE**

Overtime opportunities for Administrator Smith and Assistant Administrator Andy Nault was discussed at the Personnel meeting for GNA and Stewardship work. More information was requested from Smith by Personnel for the next meeting.

**F. POTENTIAL LAND PURCHASE**

Smith received a letter from a citizen who has 214 acres of land for sale in the Town of Homestead. He contacted a Trust Company who suggested he contact the County first. Smith spoke with the landowner and he is willing to work with the County. This property borders County Forest. A snowmobile trail runs through this property as well. The County would be eligible for the Knowles Nelson Stewardship grant to purchase this property. Costs could also be offset by entering acres into County Forest land.

Smith also passed around and discussed a Florence County Forest Land Acquisition in the Town of Homestead Resolution. This resolution is needed to apply for the Knowles Nelson grant. After discussion it was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Stratton, and unanimously carried to approve pass the resolution and for Smith to proceed with purchase of the Homestead property and send on to the County Board. Smith will attend the County Board meeting to discuss.

**G. UPDATE ON DNR LAND SALE**

Smith is still waiting for a price for a piece of property that is for sale by the DNR located by Spring Lake off of US2. It is approximately 250 acres. This property would not be eligible for Knowles Nelson funding – however there are zero interest loans the County can apply for.

**7. RECREATION**

**A. ATV TRAILS**

ATV trails have been shut down for the Spring and will open once it dries up.

Supervisor Stratton updated the Committee regarding the proposed ATV trail going into Aurora. The potential County N ATV trail was on Highway's agenda – however they did not want to act until the Town of Aurora passed a resolution to allow ATV's on their town roads. The town of Aurora will let the people decide at their meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup> if they want this resolution passed.

She also said it was discussed at Highways meeting the four possible trail options. They believed two of these options to be safe. They approved opening N & B. This approval will be renewable each year with the condition that ATV riders obey the laws.

**B. APPROVAL FOR PURCHASE OF MATERIALS FOR PROJECT**

The department received a grant to re-deck four bridges on Nicolet Trail south of Hwy 70. Smith received bids from two vendors. He is looking for approval to purchase this material. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to approve this material purchase from the lowest vendor.

**C. CREDIT CARD MACHINE FOR SKI HILL**

Smith discussed the need for possibly purchasing a credit card machine to be used the Keyes Peak Ski Hill. He also

discussed possible options. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Stratton, and unanimously carried to move forward with the credit card machine purchase.

**D. ARCHERY RANGE**

Fred Erwin from the Keyes Peak Ski Hill Committee was in attendance to discuss the development of an Archery Range near Keyes Peak Ski Hill. Fred presented a diagram of the proposed area for the archery range. There was a long discussion about the range and potential safety impacts. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger and Supervisor Theer to proceed with designing the range with insurance requirements being met and checking on other safety measures to be utilized.

**E. OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN UPDATE**

Smith explained that the current plan is set to expire at the end of 2017. We have an extension for one year - the end of 2018 - to allow for a plan update to take place. Bay Lakes has been contacted and gave an estimate of approximately \$14,000 to update the plan. The committee asked Smith to research any grants to help reduce costs of the update. Smith did explain that the plan allows the county to apply for grants for snowmobile, ATV, parks, and boat landings. The cost of the update will be well worth the expense because of the future grants that the plan will help to county to be eligible for.

**8. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Smith told the committee that the WCFA summer tour will be in Bayfield County. Dates for the tour are June 21st, 22nd, & 23rd.

Smith updated the committee on the County Highway weight limits. The Highway Committee voted to change the weight limits to allow for 98,000 pound logging trucks.

**9. COMMITTEE MEMBER'S COMMENTS & CONCERNS**

None.

**10. BILLS/REVENUES – FORESTRY & RESOURCE CENTER**

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

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 PM.

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