

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
3:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 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
SUPERVISOR / COMMITTEE MEMBER
USFS NEPA COORDINATOR
DNR – COUNTY FOREST LIAISON/STATE LAND FORESTER
FORESTRY & PARKS ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FORESTRY & PARKS BUSINESS MANAGER

ED KELLEY
ED WENGER
LARRY DZEKUTE
SUSAN THEER
HOLLY STRATTON
ADAM FELTS
HENRY SULLIVAN
PATRICK SMITH
ANDY NAULT
MARY PODNAR

ABESENT OR EXCUSED: None

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chairman Kelley called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. Roll call was taken. All supervisors were present.

2. APPROVAL / AGENDA

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

3. APPROVAL / MINUTES

Supervisor Wenger wanted the “Committee Member’s Comments and Concerns” amended and to read that he met with Senator Johnson and Representative Duffy’s *aides* at the Federal Sustainable Forestry meeting. It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to approve the amended minutes of September 13, 2017.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

5. AGENCY REPORTS

A. CHAD KIRSCHBAUM - USFS DISTRICT RANGER

USFS NEPA Coordinator Adam Felts reported that there is one timber sale going on in the County. Chad Kirschbaum has been hired as the new District Ranger and is busy moving. Recreation Specialist Larry Vassar retired last week. They are hoping to rehire the position.

Administrator Smith reported that they are close to finishing their Stewardship project. Felts thanked the County for all the hard work they have been putting forth on these projects. Smith said he would put together a spreadsheet detailing how the Stewardship money passed through and what it meant for the County.

B. HUBER & ASSOCIATES

Tony Derleth was not in attendance.

C. DNR – HENRY SULLIVAN

DNR County Forest Liaison/State Land Forester Henry Sullivan reported that the State and Huber & Associates are working together on a road grading project. There are two active timber sales going on in the County. State field work is complete and they plan on advertising their sales after the County.

There are no Good Neighbor Authority projects in Florence County at this time.

Liz Wood was hired as the Tax Law Specialist and will oversee tax law for Florence, Forest and Marinette Counties.

Advertising for the Wildlife Biologist will be announced within the next couple of months. Wildlife LTE Brittany Henderson has expressed interest in this position. She is doing an excellent job in the County. After discussion it was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to send a letter of recommendation for hiring Brittany Henderson for the Wildlife Biologist position.

6. COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER SALE UPDATE

Administrator Smith passed around the Fall 2017 Timber Sale packet. Sullivan discussed and detailed each sale to be advertised. It was moved by Supervisor Stratton, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to advertise these timber sales.

B. TIMBER SALE EXTENSIONS

Smith wanted the Committee to be aware that the same contractor who wanted a free extension that was discussed at last month's meeting – may need another extension.

C. GUNNELSON LAND PURCHASE – APPROVAL OF APPRAISAL

The County needs an appraisal for the purchase of this land. Smith emailed three appraisal companies. Smith reviewed his findings with the Committee. After discussion it was moved by Supervisor Stratton, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to approve moving ahead with VMS Appraisal Company.

D. GINSENG HARVESTING

Smith received an email requesting permission to harvest ginseng on the County Forest. According to DNR rules – one must have a landowner's written permission to harvest. Supervisor Stratton would like Smith to consult with Jane Severt and other Counties to see if they allow harvesting on their forests. It was moved by Supervisor Stratton, seconded by Supervisor Wenger, and unanimously carried to move this issue to next month's meeting and see what Smith finds out.

7. RECREATION

A. ATV TRAILS

Smith attended a meeting where Iron Mountain official are trying to connect trails through town that will link up with our trails.

Re-decking of the Nicolet State Trail Bridge should be complete within the next couple of days.

B. SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

Still issues with the Aurora connection. Recreation Manager Mat Gummin has been trying to get in contact with the landowner regarding this issue.

C. SKI HILL CONCESSIONAIRE

There has been an ad in the newspaper for the Ski Hill Concessionaire for the last three weeks – so far there has been no interest. Smith has been contacting local businesses to see if they were interested. Smith will double check on the license situation for the lodge to see who the license is issued to.

8. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

A. PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Smith is close to completing all of the department’s performance evaluations.

B. SELECT SUPERVISORS TO EVALUATE ADMINISTRATOR

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried that Chairman Kelley and Supervisor Theer would complete Administrator Smith’s performance evaluation.

9. COMMITTEE MEMBER’S COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Supervisor Wenger and Smith attended the Federal Sustainable Forestry meeting in Crandon. Smith volunteered to be on the Secured Rural Schools and 25% Fund committee. There seems to be a “disconnect” with how the money is being allocated to the schools.

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 September.

11. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Supervisor Wenger, seconded by Supervisor Theer, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:29 PM.

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