

Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee Minutes

7 December 2011

Members Present: Stephen Favorite, Chair
Bob Egan, Vice Chair
Leon Kukanich
Jack Harrison
Sig Hjemvick

Others Present: Lawrence Stevens, CF, Forest Administrator
John Gagnon, CF Asst. Administrator
Constance Valkenaar, Administrative Secretary
Jill Nemec DNR County Forest Liaison
Ken Anderson, Media
Holly Tomlanovich, Sno-Eagles
Marius Neemann, Lakeland Times
Russel & Marla Mann, St. Germain
Dale Ayers, Vilas County Fair Board
Sherry Stecker, GERTA
Michael Kieffer, HYSA Eagle River Soccer
Jerri Radtke, County Treasurer

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Favorite, who advised that this was a public meeting and that notification of the meeting with the agenda was sent to the Committee members, the County Board Chairman, the Vilas County Clerk, the Vilas County Corporation Counsel, the Vilas County News-Review, the Lakeland Times, Radio Stations WRJO/WERL, and WLSL, and the Rhinelander Daily News. The notice and agenda were also posted on the Courthouse and Forestry Department bulletin boards. This notification was verified by the Forestry Department Administrative Secretary.

- 1) Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to approve the agenda to be discussed in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) Concealed Carry on County Property: The new law necessitates changes in the leases for OSP and Fairgrounds property. Upon recommendation of Corporation Counsel, a meeting will be set up between Corp Counsel, Hjemvick, Egan, and representatives of the lessees involved. This should be done at a time such that the matter will be ready for presentation to the full County Board in March 2012.
- 3) Citizen request to redeem tax deed parcel 24-282: The Committee reviewed the request of the Manns to redeem their homestead, which was taken by the County for tax delinquency in October 2011. Mr. Mann advised the Committee that he is a self employed business person with numerous outstanding receivables due to the difficult economic times. He further advised that although he accepted full responsibility for the oversight in failing to keep his taxes current, he had a great deal of trouble grasping the reality of the situation until it was too late and the County had taken ownership of the property. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to vacate the judgment contingent upon the Manns paying all taxes and the expenses that are due

prior to the 2011 taxes (\$5,828.08) and that they comply with payment of the 2011 (taxes) with everybody else, that there is just cause to allow the Manns to redeem the property because of their economic hardship as explained to the Committee and because of their willingness to pay the back taxes and become current. Favorite advised the Manns that payment of the \$5,828.08 needs to be now, separately from the tax billing arrangement for next year. Treasurer Radtke advised that the tax bill for 2011 would be for Vilas County rather than the Manns. Radtke will send a copy of the 2011 bill to the Manns; the first half due by 31 January 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

- 4) Cell Tower Proposal: Pursuant to Committee's direction, Stevens asked ATC if they were interested in purchasing 3.5 acres for the tower site, as opposed to a perpetual easement, as ATC requested. The representative, Anne Goldman, advised that the company did not indicate an interest in the purchase of the land, but the company is undergoing a reorganization and she didn't get a definite answer. She further advised that even if ATC was to purchase, the price would be much lower than the offer for the perpetual easement. Egan advised he has spoken with several individuals who have expertise in the cell tower ownership field, and the consensus is that they didn't see a problem with the \$100,000 perpetual easement offer. Discussion. Motion by Egan, seconded by Kukanich, to accept ATC's offer pending Corporation Counsel's review, and to recommend to the County Board that the County use a portion of the funds to construct a communications tower in Cloverland, and possibly allow co-location on the tower as a revenue stream for the County. Motion carried unanimously.
- 5) Oldenburg Land Trade: Pursuant to Committee's direction, Stevens contacted the appraiser for the answers to 2 questions. 1. Was the \$75,000.00 paid by Oldenburg for the 23 acres considered in the appraised value? Sullivan replied that \$75M is not substantiated by current market data. She will reconsider if some other data/circumstances is made available that supports this price. Also, there was a \$5,000.00 deduction made because the parcel has been logged. She also noted that for the past 10 years no value was taken away nor added to the value of land for the presence of a railroad grade because grades are numerous and have shown no influence on the price of lands purchased for hunting or recreation. 2. Was the lack of deeded access considered when appraising the County 40? Sullivan advised there was a \$10,000M reduction for that.
- 6) Tax Deed Land Bid Opening: One bid was received; parcel #18-78 from Denise Christensen in the amount of \$3,150.00. Motion by Kukanich, seconded by Favorite, to accept this bid. Motion carried, with Hjermvick voting nay.
- 7) Recreation Report: Stevens reported that the initial round of snowmobile trail inspections is proceeding on schedule. Stevens reported that the naming of bridges and/or trails will be left to the club for that area, per the Snowmobile Alliance at their recent meeting. The Committee will deal with such requests on a case by case basis. At this point Egan asked to be excused, and Favorite granted same. Motion by Hjermvick, seconded by Kukanich, to pay the Alliance the \$26,297.10 as the final 2010-2011 Supplemental Maintenance payment. Motion carried unanimously. Stevens advised that the snowmobile trail target opening date is 12 December.
- 8) Minutes: Motion by Hjermvick, seconded by Kukanich, to approve the minutes of the 2 November 2011 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.
- 9) ATV Route Meeting Joint Hwy/Forestry Committees: There was a brief discussion of the highlights of the 6 December 2011 meeting at the Phelps Fire Station.

- 10) Vacating Tax Lien Judgments – Costs: Due to widely varying circumstances, the Committee will continue to evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind the importance of recouping the taxpayers' funds whenever possible.
- 11) Forest Management/Timber Sales Contracts: Gagnon gave his report, a copy of which is attached. Closure of Timber Sales: Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to close Sales #859, 876, 875, 860 after all contract conditions have been completed to the Foresters' satisfaction. Motion by Favorite, seconded by Hjemvick, to close Sale #869. Both motions carried unanimously. Gagnon reported that as authorized by the Committee at the November meeting, quotes for survey work near Pickeral Creek were reviewed and the low bid, Favorite, Anderson & Maines, was accepted in the amount of \$1,234.00.
- 12) Abandoned Railroad Grades: A letter was received by Corporation Counsel and forwarded to the Department from the Sabins in the Town of Lincoln, on the old snowmo corridor 13 south of Eagle River. They own property (and have an access permit) adjacent to a portion of the abandoned RR grade which the County claims ownership of. They assert that this piece of RR grade is in fact their property. Favorite will consult with Corporation Counsel on this matter.
- 13) Snowmobile Safety Committee : Hjemvick gave a brief update. He reported that Channel 12 offered to run a series of ads through the snowmo season relating to snowmo safety for a nominal cost. There will be a press conference on 13 December to kick off the season.
- 14) Correspondence: Standing Rules – This will be placed on the January agenda. The Ag Society turned in its Annual Report.
- 15) Meetings/Education: Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to authorize Gagnon to attend the WHIP December meeting in Minocqua. Motion carried unanimously.
- 16) Monthly Budget Summary: Budget Summary reviewed; no problems noted.
- 17) Bills reviewed for payment: Motion by Kukanich, seconded by Hjemvick, to present the bills as presented to Finance. Motion carried unanimously.
- 18) The next regular meeting will be 4 January, 2012 at 8:30 a.m., Courthouse Conference Rooms.
- 19) The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Transcribed from tape and notes of Valkenaar and Stevens and presented to the Committee for approval.