

Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee Minutes

6 April 2011

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

Others Present: Lawrence Stevens, CF, Forest Administrator
Constance Valkenaar, Administrative Secretary
John Gagnon, CF Asst. Administrator
Dale Mayo, Parks/Rec/Snowmo Coordinator
Tim Friedrich, acting DNR Forestry Liaison
Ken Anderson, Media
Holly Tomlanovich, AWSC/Sno-Eagles
Uno & Jodi Bloom
Terry Hess, BCPL
Gary Eskridge
Mark Nuyen, Magnum Post

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 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 Harrison, seconded by Kukanich, to approve the agenda to be discussed in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to approve the minutes of the 4 March 2011 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3) Tax Deed Land Bids Opened: Bids were opened as follows:
#12-2272-0006 – Bid received from Mark Siegworth in the amount of \$7,700.50.
Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Harrison, to accept the bid. Motion carried unanimously. #12-2300 – Bid received from Christopher Plude in the amount of \$55,000.00. Motion by Egan, seconded by Kukanich, to reject the bid. Discussion. Roll call vote: Egan, Kukanich, Hjemvick, Harrison voting aye. Favorite voted nay. Motion carried.
- 4) Abandoned RR Grade: Discussion of the Bloom property and the ownership of the abandoned railroad grade which bisects it. Due to correspondence received from Corporation Counsel and Attorney Garbowicz, motion by Egan, seconded by Hjemvick to postpone discussion of this item. Motion carried unanimously.
- 5) Deerskin 40: Discussion of the advantages to ascertaining whether legal access exists for the County. This would be good to have for forest management purposes or in the event the County decides to dispose of this parcel. One quote has been received for

this project in the amount of \$750.00. Motion by Egan, seconded by Favorite, to approve the expenditure of not more than \$750.00 for the search. Motion carried unanimously.

- 6) Tax Deed Land Sales: The Committee reviewed the 2011 Land Sales Prospectus. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to approve the Prospectus. Motion carried unanimously. Stevens advised that the new For Sale signs will be ready later this month. They will then be posted and the sale will be advertised for a 1 June opening date. The IT Department is working on improving public internet access to sale information.
- 7) Acquisition of State Trust Lands: Terry Hess of the DNR advised the Committee that the State BCPL wishes to divest itself of certain real estate within the boundaries of the County Forest Block, and would consider a trade or sale if the County is interested. The Committee directed Stevens to work with Hess and bring the matter back to the Committee with their recommendations.
- 8) Mill Creek Highlands Subdivision: Stevens showed the Committee a copy of the recorded plat, with the changes the Committee had directed.
- 9) Parks & Recreation Report: Mayo advised that the Snowmobile Alliance, at their 3/16/11 meeting, voted unanimously to close the trails for the season immediately. The Department announced the trail closure on 17 March. Mayo advised that the Shooting Range opened for the season on 22 March. The Committee directed Mayo to inform the Sheriff's Department that the Range is open.
- 10) Snowmobile Trail Safety Committee Report: Hjemvick advised that there is nothing new to report at this time.
- 11) Timber Contracts Activity & Forest Management Report: Gagnon gave his report, a copy of which is attached. Several extensions need to be made on contracts set to expire in May. Request from Mark Nuyen to extend his contract #838 without stumpage increase due to current economic conditions. He extended his request to include the other contracts in need of extensions. Discussion regarding stumpage increases. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Harrison, to suspend all stumpage increases for a period of 12 months. Motion carried unanimously. Further discussion regarding Sale #838. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, that Gagnon is directed to monitor the leaking and to encourage Nuyen to make the necessary repairs or remove the equipment from the County property. This includes giving Gagnon the authority to close the sale down. The Committee then can make the decision whether to terminate the contract. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Egan, seconded by Kukanich, to grant 12 month extensions to Sales #838, 852, 854, 846, 853, 855, 856, 875, & 876. Motion carried unanimously. The Department is directed to provide the Committee with some alternatives to stumpage increases when granting extensions.
- 12) Timber Sales Haul Ticket System: Gagnon explained the haul ticket system to be implemented. Discussion. Motion by Egan, seconded by Favorite, to approve the new language to be incorporated into the timber sale contracts, with the changes directed by the Committee, i.e. inserting "...and firewood" into #3a. Motion carried unanimously.
- 13) Annosum Root Rot: This problem has been detected in other Wisconsin counties. Language has been drafted to be incorporated into the timber sale contracts to deal with the eventuality of a problem in Vilas County. Discussion. Friedrich advised the Committee of the seriousness of this disease. The current contract language will require the contractor to treat for the disease where the Department requires it, with

the Department providing the chemical and the contractor being responsible for the application. If the disease does appear in Vilas County, this contract language can be modified. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, to approve the new language in the timber sale contracts with the changes per discussion.

- 14) Timber Sales Advertisement & Bid Opening: The Committee reviewed the new timber sales prospectus for their information and had no problems with it.
- 15) Abandoned Railroad Grade Ownerships: Favorite advised that he is working with County departments to construct a County inventory of abandoned railroad grades off the tax roll, abandoned railroad grades that the County has owned or does own, the reason being that these corridors are being looked at as a valuable asset to the County for trail systems. Due to the complexity of title issues, Corporation Counsel will need time to research these issues. Stevens showed the Committee a map put together by the Mapping Dept. that illustrates the issue somewhat. One of the highlights of the map is the amount of RR grade that has no indicated ownership. Research of this issue will continue, with priority given to parcels of special interest to the Department, in particular a parcel in Conover desirable for trail which has undergone mortgage foreclosure and is for sale. This matter is not on the agenda; the Chair will be briefed on the situation later.
- 16) Resolution for 2011 Budget Adjustment: Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, to approve a resolution for the County Board authorizing a revenue adjustment of \$2.40 because payment received exceeded budgeted amount.
- 17) Resolution County Forest Reforestation: Discussion. The resolution should state reasons that revenue could significantly exceed (expected) budgeted amount in any given year, and the importance of setting aside portions of these unanticipated revenues into the Segregated Land Account for the purpose of sustaining the future of the County Forest by assisting with the expenses of reforestation. Committee directed that this resolution be restructured to cap the Segregated Land Account at \$225,000.00. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, to restructure the resolution, raising the cap to \$225,000.00 and allocating \$25,000.00 towards reforestation. Motion carried unanimously.
- 18) Correspondence: DNR letter to Cathy Nordine reviewed.
- 19) WCFA Spring Meeting Report: Stevens gave the Committee a report, highlights included: ADA Accessibility for motorized aids; Stewardship grants; 15 Year Plan amendment to accommodate biomass harvesting and tree retention guidelines.
- 20) Meetings: Invasive Species in Woodruff on 15 June – motion by Egan, seconded by Kukanich, for Gagnon to attend; WCFA Summer Conference in Oneida County - motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, for Stevens & Gagnon & any interested Committee member(s) to attend; Sampling Technology in Stevens Point on 7 April – motion by Harrison, seconded by Kukanich, for Gagnon to attend; snowmobile trail relocation meeting mid-April in Three Lakes, motion by Kukanich, seconded by Hjemvick, for Mayo to attend. Stevens requested authorization to attend the annual meeting between the County Forests and the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest on 26 April in Rhinelander. Motion by Egan, seconded by Harrison to send Stevens. All travel motions carried unanimously.
- 21) 2011 Membership in Nat'l Forest & Schools Coalition: Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, to approve continued membership. Motion carried unanimously.
- 22) Monthly Budget Summary: Steven advised that the Summer Help have been selected. The Committee directed that Personnel be advised. No problems noted with the budget.

- 23) Bills reviewed for payment: Department was advised by County Clerk that he has been directed to replace Committee vouchers with journal entries for interdepartmental bills. The Committee directed Valkenaar to send a memo to County Clerk asking for clarification. ESRI bill discussed. Stevens asked the Committee to decide which account should be debited for this bill; Forestry or Land. Motion by Favorite, seconded by Egan, to pay from the Land account. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Egan, to pay the monthly bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- 24) The next regular meeting will be 4 May, 2011 at 8:30 a.m., Courthouse Conference Rooms.
- 25) Motion by Harrison, seconded by Kukanich, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

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