

Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee

Minutes

1 October 2014

Members Present: Steven Doyen, Chair

Rocky Caffarella, Vice Chair

Ken Anderson

Willy Otterpohl

Art Kunde

Others Present: John Gagnon, CF, Forest Administrator

Dale Mayo, Parks & Recreation Administrator

Constance Valkenaar, Administrative Secretary

Rollie Alger, Phelps

Kelly Kraetsch, Lanny Studdard, Blizzard Blast

Jeff & Ann Currie, Lauri Gerlach

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Doyen, who advised that this was a public meeting and that notification of the meeting with the agenda was properly posted. This notification was verified by Mrs. Valkenaar.

- 1) Motion by Mr. Kunde, seconded by Mr. Otterpohl, to approve the agenda to be discussed in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) Approval of Minutes: Motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to approve the minutes of the 3 September 2014 meeting of Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3) Land Sales Bid Opening: Bid on Tract #28-1415 was received from Watersmeet Partners LLC in the amount of \$300.00. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Otterpohl, to accept the bid. Motion carried unanimously.
- 4) Tax Deed Redemption Policy: Mr. Gagnon presented a draft policy to replace the present policy. Discussion. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to change time limit in #3a to 60 days. Motion carried, Doyen voting no. For #3c, motion by Caffarella, seconded by Kunde, to delete the last sentence beginning with "If petitioner is delinquent..." Motion carried, Doyen voting no. As to #3d: Motion by Anderson, seconded by Otterpohl, to delete #3d altogether. Motion carried, Doyen and Mr. Caffarella voting no. Regarding #5, Committee directed Gagnon to work with Corporation Counsel to add clarifying language including statutory cite(s).
- 5) Review & Action re Current Tax Delinquent Properties: Gagnon went through the list provided by the County Treasurer of the tax parcels which will go to court in October for foreclosure action. Gagnon based his recommendations upon the Phase I Limited Environmental Assessments provided by AECOM, along with Committee past practice. The Committee moved as follows:

2-693-17 Subdivision road. Motion by Caffarella, seconded by Kunde, to not take.

2-1130 Condemned structure/didn't pass Phase I EA. Motion by Caffarella, seconded by Otterpohl, to not take. Motion carried with Anderson voting No. 4-763-05 Vacant lot. Passed Phase I EA. Motion by Doyen, seconded by Kunde, to take.

10-383-03 Lot w/structure. Passed Phase I EA. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to take.

10-880 Lot with structure/didn't pass Phase I EA. Motion by Doyen, seconded by Kunde to not take. The Town of Lac du Flambeau has expressed some interest. Also the Tribal Concerns Committee will be informed about this parcel, per Anderson's request.

18-20 Vacant lot. Didn't pass Phase I EA. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to not take.

18-107-03 Vacant lot. Didn't pass Phase I EA. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to not take.

18-107-11 Alley/road. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to not take.

18-1391 Contaminated site. Didn't pass EA. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Otterpohl, to not take.

22-1185 Lot with structure. Passed Phase I EA. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to take.

26-2152 & 26-2164-008 2 vacant lots, passed Phase 1 EA. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to take.

All motions passed unanimously except for #2-1130.

- 6) WPS Underground Utility Access Request: Gagnon informed the Committee that he has been contacted by Wisconsin Public Service, which wants to bury some overhead power lines across County Forest land in 3 locations, in order to service homes. He will keep the Committee advised.

- 7) Conover Ski Trail Request: The Conover Blizzard Blast Committee has approached the County with a request to improve the new cross-country ski trail which was constructed for the first Blizzard Blast earlier in 2014. With prior Committee permission, this trail utilizes County Forest land adjacent to the Conover Town Hall. Mr. Mayo advised the Committee that the Town of Conover is interested in working with the County. The Town has restroom facilities at the Town Park, the Town will do the winter snow plowing; they would like for the Forestry Department to do the grooming of the ski trail. Forest Technician Jim Jefferson does the cross-country ski trail grooming for the Department, using an apparatus he fabricated. Discussion. Motion by Kunde, seconded by Anderson, to approve Conover's request for the County's assistance with this ski trail, specifically that the Department will work with the Town of Conover to get the DNR to bulldoze the existing trail, the County will do the grooming on the trail, the Town of Conover in turn will provide the heated bathrooms and plow the parking area. Motion carried with Caffarella voting No.

- 8) Bid Opening – Conover Fence: This is for the construction of a visual block fence to enhance the privacy of a private landowner who has given permission for the

snowmobile trail to cross his property. The project is reimbursable through the State. Bids were opened as follows: Conover Sno-Buddies \$2,985.00; Cloverland Logging \$1,350.00. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to accept the low bid from Cloverland Logging. Motion carried unanimously.

- 9) Snowmobile Trail Supplemental Maintenance Advance Payment 2013-2014: Motion by Anderson, seconded by Otterpohl, to pay the \$60,400.00 to the Vilas County Snowmobile Alliance. Motion carried unanimously.
- 10) Eagle Lake Park Pavilion Contract: Due to excessively rainy weather, this project is delayed. Motion by Doyen, seconded by Caffarella, to approve an extension of the contract until 15 November 2015. Motion carried unanimously.
- 11) Parks/Highway Split Position: Mayo advised that the Committee approved the resolution for this position at the 3 September 2014 meeting, pending comments from Corporation Counsel. Comments have now been received from Corporation Counsel, Finance Director, and Human Resources. Mayo presented the resolution for signature, and the Committee signed it.
- 12) Forest Management: Gagnon gave his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.
- 13) Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant: Gagnon advised that the County has submitted the check to BCPL for the acquisition of the Denton Lake 40. BCPL will issue a Patent and Vilas County will own the property. Gagnon will continue to keep the Committee informed as to the progress of this project.
- 14) Land Acquisition – Johnson: Gagnon reported that per Committee direction, he is working with Corporation Counsel to submit an Offer to Purchase. Gagnon will keep the Committee apprised.
- 15) Land Acquisition – Jackson: Gagnon advised that Corporation Counsel drafted Offers to Purchase, and all three sellers have signed the acceptances of those offers. Gagnon presented a resolution authorizing the acquisition. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to approve the resolution and forward the same to the full County Board for their consideration. Motion carried unanimously.
- 16) Land Acquisition – Bennett: As directed by the Committee, Gagnon ordered an appraisal on this Torch Lake parcel. The appraised value is \$15,000.00. Motion by Caffarella, seconded by Kunde, to extend an offer in the amount of \$15,000.00. Motion carried unanimously.
- 17) Land Acquisition Opportunity – Comiskey: Beau Comiskey notified the Department that he is contemplating sale of this Lac du Lune lakefront Land O'Lakes property adjacent to County Forest. Due to the extremely high dollar value of the property, this item is information only.
- 18) Assistant Forest Administrator New Hire: Gagnon advised that the new employee, Justin Meyer, will start work on 13 October 2014.
- 19) Parks Budget 2015 Review/Cuts: Finance Director Jason Hilger joined the meeting to answer questions regarding his suggested budget cuts. Discussion.
- 20) Forestry Budget 2015 Review/Cuts: Discussion of Hilger's suggested cuts for 2015 Budget. Timber Stand Improvement line item was discussed in particular, with Gagnon advising that the requested \$40,000.00 is a "bare bones" number necessary for timber growing operations. Gagnon explained in some detail what the money is used for. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to increase Timber Stand

Improvement, 100.34.56103.0296 from \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00. Caffarella asked why the line item should be increased, and Gagnon pointed out the fact that the Variable Acreage Loan (approximately \$20,000.00/year) is no longer applied for by Vilas County, which means that the amount budgeted for the TSI line item must be increased to make up the difference. The Committee directed that an item be placed on the agenda for the Variable Acreage Payment (50 cents/acre) resolution for the **November meeting**. Chair called for the vote on the motion. Motion carried, Caffarella voting No. The County Forest Road maintenance line item was also discussed. Motion by Caffarella, seconded by Kunde, to move \$7,600.00 to the Highway Road & Bridge Fund, leaving \$12,000.00 in County Forest Road Maintenance. This will be a one-year trial. The Highway will be responsible and accountable for performing the \$7,600.00 worth of work for the Forestry, Recreation & Land Department. Motion carried unanimously.

21) Meetings/Education/Travel: Mayo advised that the Fairgrounds re-zoning will be on next Zoning Committee's agenda. As that meeting will be posted by Zoning, no additional postings are necessary. Gagnon mentioned that at the WCFA Fall meeting on 26 September it was announced that a County Board Supervisor who serves on a Forestry Committee is needed to fill a spot on the Executive Board. Anderson indicated he may be interested.

22) Monthly Budget Summary: No problems noted.

23) Next Meeting Date: The next regular meeting of the Forestry, Recreation & Land Committee will be 5 November 2014, 1:00 p.m. at the Courthouse Conference Rooms.

24) The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:05 p.m.

Minutes reflect the recorder's (Valkenaar) notations and are subject to approval by the appropriate board or committee.