

Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee Minutes

8 January 2014

Members Present: Ralph Sitzberger, Chair
Sig Hjemvick, Vice Chair
Leon Kukanich
Charles Rayala, Jr.
Maynard Bedish

Others Present: Lawrence Stevens, CF, Forest Administrator
Constance Valkenaar, Administrative Secretary
John Gagnon, Assistant Forest Administrator
Dale Mayo, Recreation Administrator
Stephen Favorite, County Board Chair
Ken Anderson, Media; Holly Tomlanovich, Sno-Eagles
Gene Nackers (Pickleball)
T. Christensen, Allen Clemmensen, Jim Wendt- BoBoen
Rocky Caffarella, VCSA; Joe Fath, Sheriff
Mark Rogacki, James Behling, Lorin Johnson, Erv
Teichmiller, Vilas County Board Supervisors
Carolyn Scholl, Lake Conservationist
Martha Milanowski, Corporation Counsel
Jerri Radtke, County Treasurer

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Sitzberger, 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, FYI Wisconsin, Radio Stations WRJO and Coyote 93.7, and the Northwoods River 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 Rayala, seconded by Bedish to approve the agenda in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) December Minutes: Bedish advised that regarding #5, it is his recollection that he had voted nay to the motion to “authorize construction of the new Hwy 155 snowmobile trail contingent upon successful resolution of the lawsuit and upon approval of legal counsel.” The 4 December 2013 minutes reflect that the motion was carried unanimously. Motion by Kukanich, seconded by Rayala, to approve the minutes of the 4 December 2013 meeting as presented with the correction to be made at Bedish’s request if, upon review of the notes from the December meeting, the correction is appropriate. Motion carried unanimously. Subsequent review of the tape and notes from the 4 December 2013 meeting revealed no indication that Bedish voted “nay” to said motion. As such, the minutes of 4 December 2013 will stand as presented and approved.
- 3) Closed Session: Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bedish to adjourn into closed session pursuant to §19.85(1)(e), Wis. Stats. for the purpose of deliberating the purchase of

- public property located in the Town of Arbor Vitae. Roll Call Vote: Bedish, Rayala, Hjenvick, Kukanich, Sitzberger all voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.
- 4) Return to Open Session: Motion by Hjenvick, seconded by Bedish, to adjourn closed session and return to open session. Roll Call Vote: Bedish aye, Rayala aye, Favorite nay, Hjenvick aye, Kukanich aye, Sitzberger aye. Motion carried.
 - 5) Action re Closed Session: Motion by Hjenvick, seconded by Kukanich, to cause an appraisal done on the property located at 1190 Highway 47 West, Arbor Vitae, WI. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 6) Snowmobile Trail Relocation – Highway 155: The Chair advised that he was contacted by a County Board member, Jim Behling, who asked that this matter be placed on the agenda for discussion purposes. Behling advised that all County Board supervisors were provided with a letter from Tom Martens regarding this project. Behling advised that as a result of receiving that letter, Behling & other County Board supervisors made an on-site visit to the subject snowmobile trail relocation project. Behling advised that he has taken the time to review the issue thoroughly, including interviews with trail coordinator Mayo and Forestry Chair Sitzberger. Behling advised that even after project completion, he thinks Martens' concerns will still be an issue. Behling stated the County Board is not really familiar with the issue, and he asked that the Committee put the construction of the trail on hold until the County Board can look at the situation. Mayo advised that he is very comfortable with the decisions that the Forestry Committee and Snowmobile Trail Safety Committee have made, as well as the input of the DOT engineers with regard to safety, and Mayo said he feels that "we have done our due diligence on this." Mayo said public safety was the focus in this process. Behling advised that as this is a controversial issue, he and at least 5 other County Board members are requesting that the County Board be given more information and have the opportunity to provide input. In closing this agenda item, the Chair said that he's been involved in snowmobile trail crossings since 1970 with both the state and many snowmobile clubs and that these are issues for the snowmobile committees & forestry committees. He advised that there have been multiple opportunities for public input. Chairman Sitzberger stated that it is the decision of this Committee, which voted on it, that the project is moving forward and construction will be started on that particular trail crossing. Sitzberger advised that this is a precedent-setting statement that the Forestry Committee is going to be making, for every type of trail to be put in on a road tight-of-way. Behling asked for clarification, if the Chair would be taking a vote on Behling's request to get this in front of the County Board, and Sitzberger answered: "no."
 - 7) Tax Deed Land Sale: A bid was received from Doug Schultz on parcel #20-944-05 in the amount of \$12,000.00. Motion by Hjenvick, seconded by Bedish, to accept this bid. Motion carried, with Rayala voting nay.
 - 8) Camp 12 Lake Tax Deed Parcels: Parcel #20-1171-01 on the west side of Camp 12 Lake West was acquired via tax deed in 1994 and kept to provide public access to the lake, as no public access existed prior to the County taking the tax deed. Parcel #6-1191, on the south shore of Camp 12 Lake West, was taken on tax deed in October 2013, and provides better public access than #20-1171-01. Discussion. Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bedish, for Vilas County to retain ownership of parcel #6-1191 for public access. Motion carried, with Hjenvick voting nay. Motion by Hjenvick, seconded by Rayala, to sell parcel #20-1171-01 and make it available for the public. Motion carried unanimously.

- 9) Land Acquisition Opportunity: Gagnon advised that per Committee directive, he was in contact with Ron Jackson, one of the property owners of SENW, Sec. 32, T.41N. – R.10E., Town of Conover, who had asked if the County has an interest in acquiring this parcel. Jackson indicated that he would be willing to accept the appraised value of the property as the sale price. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Kukanich, to cause an appraisal of the property to be completed. Motion carried unanimously.
- 10) Pickleball Court: Nackers addressed the Committee. He indicated that it is possible the pickleball people might be interested in OSP as a possible location. The Committee advised him to work with Mayo on this.
- 11) Outdoor Recreation Plan: At the 4 December 2013 meeting, a resolution was approved by the Committee to adopt the new Outdoor Recreation Plan; this resolution will go to County Board on 28 January 2014. Fred Heider of NCWRPC had advised the Committee that the final draft is complete, and no additional changes would be accepted to this draft without Committee authorization. Once the plan is adopted by the County Board, amendments to the plan can be made at any time. The City of Eagle River has indicated that they will submit changes to the portion of the plan that applies exclusively to the City. This will be done at their meeting on 8 January; Heider will be in attendance and will incorporate the changes into the plan with Committee approval. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Rayala, to allow the City of Eagle River to amend their portion of the Outdoor Recreation Plan. Motion carried unanimously.
- 12) Tax Deed 26-2885 Redemption Request: The Chair received a letter from former owners, Frank & Sandra Rodgers, asking for his “consideration in allowing us to regain the property” known as Tax Deed #26-2885. Discussion. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Rayala, that upon payment by certified check within 7 days of today’s date of the taxes, penalties, interest, fees in the total amount of \$6,520.43, a Motion to Vacate the Judgment for parcel #26-2885 will be filed with the Circuit Court. Motion carried unanimously. Radtke asked if the Committee would like for her to provide them with information regarding other counties’ procedures for handling tax deed redemptions so that Vilas County could form a policy. The Committee declined.
- 13) Timber Sales Contracts & Forest Management: Gagnon gave his report, a copy of which is attached.
- 14) Little Tamarack Lake District Petition: Land & Water Conservation advised the Department that the Tamarack Flowage group has requested that Vilas County sign a petition for the creation of a lake district. Vilas County owns eleven 40 acre tracts (440 acres) of the property involved. Milanowski and Carolyn Scholl both answered questions from the Committee, and advised that there should be no resulting issues with forest management, the County is not subject to taxation. Milanowski advised that she does not think the County is liable for any dam construction or maintenance costs. Motion by Hjemvick, seconded by Bedish, to direct the Chairman to prepare a resolution in support of the creation of the Tamarack Flowage Lake District. Motion carried unanimously. Milanowski will prepare a County Board resolution for the Chair’s signature.
- 15) Monthly Budget Summary: No problems noted.
- 16) Next Meeting Date: The next regular meeting of the Forestry Committee will be 5 February 2014, 8:30 a.m., Courthouse. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:35 a.m.

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

