

# Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee Minutes

3 December 2014

Members Present: Steve Doyen, Chair  
Rocky Caffarella, Vice Chair  
Ken Anderson  
Art Kunde  
Willy Otterpohl

Others Present:

John Gagnon, CF, Forest Administrator  
Justin Meier, Assistant Forest Administrator  
Constance Valkenaar, Administrative Secretary  
Martha Milanowski, Corporation Counsel  
Mary Sowinski, Assistant Corporation Counsel  
Holly & Tom Tomlanovich, Sno-Eagles  
Pat Weber, ER Baseball  
Anthony Drew, Vilas County News-Review  
Dale Ayers, Steve Ingram – Vilas County Fair  
Jeff & Ann Currie, Great Headwaters Trails

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 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 Forestry, Recreation, & Land Department Adm Secretary Con Valkenaar.

- 1) Motion by Mr. Otterpohl, seconded by Mr. Caffarella to approve the agenda in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) Motion by Mr. Kunde, seconded by Otterpohl, to approve the minutes of the 5 November 2014 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3) Tamarack Flowage Dam: Corporation Counsel advised that recently a Lake District was formed at the Tamarack Flowage, and the Lake District intends to assume ownership of the dam. Attorney Milanowski advised that in the past, the County had certain easements (ownership rights) with respect to the water flow and the dam. In light of this, Milanowski advises that it is in the best interest of the County to Quit Claim any ownership interest it may have in the dam, to the Lake District. Attorney Milanowski will prepare the necessary resolution for the Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee to sponsor, as well as a quit claim deed. Motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Kunde, to place this item on the January agenda for action. Motion carried unanimously.
- 4) Tax Deed Redemption Policy: Assistant Corporation Counsel Sowinski reviewed the proposed policy. Sowinski asked whether the Committee wishes to have some discretion by requiring the former property owner to demonstrate good cause for failure to pay their taxes, or if the Committee would rather be bound by the policy with no consideration given to good cause on the part of the former property owner. Discussion. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Otterpohl, to place the property redemption policy on the January agenda with a resolution ready for the Forestry,

Recreation, & Land Committee's approval. The resolution shall adopt the policy which requires that in order to redeem the property, the former property owner must request in writing within 60 days of the County taking title, said requester must be the recent property owner, and must pay all taxes (prorated, back, and current year), interest, special assessments, penalties, and all expenses, in full, within 30 days of the date the petition is granted by the FRLC. Payment must be made by certified funds, cash, cashier's check or money order. Motion carried unanimously.

- 5) Tax Deed Lands: A sealed bid was opened for #12-653-01. However, no bid was enclosed within the bid envelope, only the \$100 deposit check and a brief note. The bid envelope, deposit check, and note will be returned to the sender, a Mr. Schwitz.
- 6) Land Acquisition: The County closed on the Jackson property on 21 November and now owns the property. A closing date of 5 December 2014 is set for the Johnson property.
- 7) Timber Sales Contracts/Forest Management: Meier gave his report, a copy of which is attached.
- 8) Fairgrounds Softball Fields Lighting: Pat Weber addressed the Committee. Weber said he disagrees with the Committee's previous decision that the softball field lights remain in place at the Fairgrounds. Weber said he feels the lights should be moved to the new location at OSP. Discussion. Motion by Otterpohl, seconded by Kunde, to table this item until the January meeting to give the Committee time to make a more educated decision. Motion carried unanimously. The Committee directed that Department staff compile past Committee meeting minutes and account reports and a copy of the current lease and provide this to the Committee for their review.
- 9) Committee Reports: Caffarella gave the Recreational Trails Safety Committee report; Anderson gave the Recreational Trails Ad Hoc Committee report and advised that the next meeting of that Committee is set for 12 December at 10 a.m.
- 10) 2013-2014 Snowmo Program Supplemental Maint Final Payment: Motion by Caffarella, seconded by Kunde, to pay the Alliance the \$41,522.34. Motion carried unanimously.
- 11) Letters & Communications: The Chair asked that Mr. Caffarella place an item on the Vilas County Snowmobile Alliance agenda; concerning a presentation for a motorized trail map app for smart phones. Caffarella said he would place the item on the agenda. The subject of Snowmobile Trail Opening Date Policy was also brought up, and will be discussed at another time. In regard to proposed County campground at Torch Lake, Gagnon advised the Committee that pursuant to the County Forest Law, the designation of the property will need to be changed to "Special Use." The DNR will assist in this process.
- 12) Committee Consolidation: Motion by Anderson, seconded by Kunde to remove this item from the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
- 13) Monthly Budget Summary: No problems noted.
- 14) Next Meeting Date: The next regular meeting of the Forestry Committee will be 7 January 2015, 10:00 a.m. at the Courthouse Conference Rooms.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

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