

FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2013 TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: COMMITTEE ROOM #1, 2ND FLOOR, COURT HOUSE, RHINELANDER, WI

PRESENT: Chair Baier; Committee Members: Martinson, Rudolph, Shidell, Sorensen
Forestry Staff: Bilogan, Bradley, Fiene.

OTHERS: Lester Felbab, Bill Welsh, OCATVA. Bob England, Guy Hansen, RASTA.
Jon Leith, DNR.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER— At 9:00 a.m. Chair Baier called the meeting to order, noting that it had been properly posted in accordance with the procedures set forth by the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.

APPROVE CURRENT AGENDA WITH THE ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS AT CHAIR'S DISCRETION— It was moved by Sorensen, seconded by Rudolph, to approve the current agenda with the order of agenda items at Chair's discretion. Motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 6, 2013 FORESTRY COMMITTEE MEETING— It was moved by Martinson, seconded by Shidell, to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2013 FLR Committee meeting. All aye. Motion carried.

FOREST MANAGEMENT:

- a) Fiene reported Year-to-Date Timber Stumpage Revenue is \$293,668.90.
- b) **TIMBER SALES FOR DISPOSITION**—It was moved by Shidell, seconded by Sorensen, to act on the following timber contract as follows:

Contract # 1525 held by **Graap Logging** was **closed** as satisfactorily completed, and return Letter of Credit deposit in the amount of \$13,828.34
All aye, motion carried.

- c) May 2013 Timber Sale bids will be awarded at the May 1 committee meeting.

2013 COUNTY FOREST SUMMER TOUR (OCONTO COUNTY) JUNE 26-28, 2013. It was moved by Martinson, seconded by Rudolph to allow Forestry staff and committee members to attend the 2013 summer tour. All aye, motion carried.

APHIS AT PERCH LAKE PARK, WED JUNE 5, 2013. The organization (USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service) requested waiver of the rental fee for their meeting. Martinson moved to permit fee waiver, Sorensen seconded. All aye, motion carried.

ALMON PARK SHELTER UPDATE. Bilogan reported that MSA was the lowest of four bids to provide the design and specifications for the new pavilion at Almon Park. The plans are due by 4/10/13. Once plans are received, we will put out a request for bids for construction. The plan is to award the construction bid at the June committee meeting.

Shidell stated that the County has just wasted \$5000 to get plans drawn up before the construction can be bid out. There was discussion regarding the reason the County no longer allows design/build proposals.

RASTA

First quarter Ski Trail Maintenance Report – Ski season is over for the most part. RASTA provided a report of the first quarter since they took over the grooming duties from the County. They saved a large amount of labor dollars by purchasing a roller to pack the trails and using volunteer labor. Those are positives. Next year there will be budget adjustments

to address this savings. Extra money can be put into a non-lapsing fund for future trail development. There needs to be clarification on procedures for purchasing equipment as they spent money earmarked for repairs and maintenance to purchase the roller. Bring future purchase requests to the committee.

Bilogan stated that some complaints were received about Nose Lake trails not being well groomed. He feels that RASTA performed as well as the County would have, considering the amount of snow and time of the year. Overall RASTA did a good job of grooming. He endorsed renewing the contract again next year.

New Trail Development Request / Existing Trail Reroutes & Improvements

Bilogan gave a brief overview of current trails. The bike trails, located south of Hwy K in the Washburn Silent Sports area, were all constructed by private individuals and eventually became the responsibility of RASTA. It has always had a verbal agreement that the County is not responsible for developing and maintaining these trails. RASTA would like to obtain an RTA (Recreation Trail Aids) grant to add beginner/ intermediate mountain bike trails, as well as reroute some current trails. The Forestry Dept would need to be the requesting party and this committee would direct RASTA to complete all work related to this. Bilogan addressed his concern that the (RASTA) RTA grant may affect the Department's eligibility for its own RTA maintenance requests. Secondly, since the County has its name on the RTA grant, if RASTA would disband, the County would be responsible to maintain the trails in perpetuity, just as the issue arose with the Townline Park closing.

Shidell asked if it is possible to get a copy of the contract for Corp Counsel to evaluate future responsibilities. Bilogan replied that the grant requests have a deadline of May 1, 2013. Hansen (RASTA) responded that if the grant were approved, the committee would still have time to examine the language; and if necessary, the award could be returned.

Bilogan recommended RASTA put together a long-range plan so there is no need to rush applications for future requests.

Sorensen moved that the committee direct the department to make application for the grant. If there is a problem with the grant, that can be dealt with at that time.

Martinson asked whether hunting is still allowed with all these bike trails. Bilogan said hunting is not forbidden but as more trails are created, there will likely be some conflict with bikers. At this time, the bikers are aware and wear orange during hunting seasons.

Bilogan's last concern is how the increased trail density will affect timber sale revenue. The entire area is scheduled to be harvested within the next ten years. The department is willing to adjust the timing and size of sales and put some additional harvest regulations on the sale to lessen the impact of logging on the bike trails, however that will lead directly to decreased revenue as loggers bid less on small jobs with more constraints. Rudolph agreed that timber revenue will definitely be affected, but added that has to be balanced with the additional tourism dollars the trails will bring into the County.

Shidell expressed concern that if the RTA money is used on portions of existing trails, will that lead to the state regulating that entire trail? If we reject the grant, would that affect our future applications? Bilogan did not feel it would affect Oneida County negatively to return the award, but was unsure of the answer to the first question. He suggested RASTA could use their own funding to do the reroutes to prevent the issue from becoming a problem.

Martinson asked whether expansion of the landfill will impact the trail system. Bilogan confirmed it would be likely as the trails run on three sides of the landfill.

Rudolph seconded the motion. Aye: Sorensen, Baier, Martinson, Rudolph. Abstain: Shidell
Motion carried.

VOUCHERS & LINE ITEM TRANSFERS—Moved by Rudolph, seconded by Martinson to approve payment for the listed vouchers. All aye. Motion carried. Shidell requested copies of

the voucher list be provided with pre-meeting packets, understanding that late vouchers may not be on the advance copy.

PUBLIC COMMENTS— Felbab asked about bike trail signs. Hanson replied that the ski trails are signed, but the bikers don't care if they get lost, they would rather not see signs.

Hanson addressed the timber revenue item. He and Bilogan have worked together to assure cutting impacts is lessened. He agrees there must be a long-range plan posted to show how and when timber is called out to be cut.

ADJOURNMENT—With business completed, it was moved by Shidell, seconded by Rudolph, to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. All aye. Motion carried.

GARY BAIER
CHAIR

JILL BRADLEY
RECORDING SECRETARY