

## FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

**DATE:** June 4, 2014

**TIME:** 4:00 p.m. Committee Room 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Court House, Rhinelander, WI

**PRESENT:** Chair Sorensen; Committee Members: Mott, Van Raalte, Zunker  
Forestry Staff: Bilogan, Bradley.

**OTHERS:** Les Felbab, OCATVA. Manny Oradei, DNR. David Schatzley, Lynne Town Chair, Sherry Tischendorf, Woodboro Town Chair

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**— At 4:00 p.m. Chair Sorensen 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 Mott, seconded by VanRaalte, to approve current agenda with the order of agenda items at Chair's discretion

**APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MAY 7 and May 21, 2014 FORESTRY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**—

Van Raalte moved to approve minutes of the May 7 & May 21, 2014 FLR Committee meetings. Zunker seconded. All aye. Motion carried.

### FOREST MANAGEMENT:

Year-to-Date Timber Stumpage Revenue \$27,813.79 for May. Year to date is still far above previous years. No timber sales for distribution. The 2014 spring Timber Sale had 11 tracts sold for a total of \$827,658.05. Cloverland was the only new contractor and had good references. Bilogan recommended awarding all high bids. Van Raalte moved to accept the high bids, Mott seconded. All aye, motion carried.

**FISTA TRAINING** Bilogan explained that it is training program for safely using chain saws. There is a fee involved He felt it is a good idea, but cannot compel the clubs to attend.. Of the 12 motorized clubs, only one showed an interest, and that would probably be for an advanced course. RASTA is interested.

Joel felt this is a good opportunity to have interaction between volunteer groups who maintain recreation trails. It is \$1200 for a one-day, eight hour course. Sorensen asked Joel to provide brochures to John so he can send them to the clubs and find out what the interest is, if the county pays a portion of the cost.

**DISCUSSION OF SEVERANCE PAYMENTS** Zunker requested an increase in severance to 20% because the Town of Lynne's 80 miles of roads are heavily used by logging trucks. David Schatzley, Town Chair spoke. He stated that he had requested help from the county last fall. The road is only eight years old but needs repair. In order to put some money away for matching grants, Lynne requires the County increase payments to 20%. This will be used for all the roads, which are all used by logging. He asked that the committee forward the recommendation to increase to the next County Board meeting. If there is no movement on it, Lynne's plan is to designate Willow Road as a class B highway.

He acknowledged that Chair Sorensen has said he felt like Lynne is holding a gun to the committee's head. Schatzley stated that the county makes millions of dollars in revenue and using the Town's infrastructure is taking advantage of Lynne. The town feels 20% is more fair for all the towns who have County Forest. They would be willing to set some of that money aside into a savings account for Willow Road.

Sherry Tischendorf, chair of the Town of Woodboro, agreed with Schatzley. They get no real estate taxes from the county land and should get more severance. They receive PILT of \$8000/year but that is far less than private property taxes would bring in.

Mott asked whether Schatzley is asking for an increase for all towns or Town of Lynne only. Schatzley replied he is asking for his town.

Mott stated that 3 of the 5 committee members are new. He cannot vote today on the issue. As a new committee member, he does not feel he has the background information or knowledge to make a fair assessment.

Bilogan is willing to bring the new committee members up to speed on the background and history of this issue. State and industrial loggers are coming from the north, not all is County logging and to be fair, what will those other entities pay? A lot of the lumber contracts in Lynne can be winter jobs which does not impact the roads. The northern jobs are summer wood due to soil changes. There are a lot of subtle details. Additionally, discussion at the ad-hoc was: what condition is the road truly in, what is the expert opinion of what needs to be done and when. What would the fix be and what is the cost. Would this go away after that or is it a long term thing? These are important questions that need to be answered and discussed.

Schatzley reiterated that 80% of Town of Lynne is County Forest, so other logging impact is very minimal. The state does pay its way with these grants. The only player who is not, is the County, to the level that we feel is fair.

Mott asked what other counties pay in severance. Bilogan replied that of 29 counties, 25 counties are at 10% including Oneida. There are two that are at 30%, Polk & Barron, whose county forests are 16,000 acres and 17,000 acres. Chippewa County is at 12% but discussing returning to 10%. Eau Claire and Washburn are at 15%. Schatzley said that is nothing like what the Timber Association reported to him.

Mott asked how long this has been under discussion. Schatzley said he brought it to the committee last fall. Sorensen added that when the Town decided to impose load limits, there were two ad-hoc meetings. He assumed that County Highway people were going to go out there, DOT people would go out there and do some weight limit measurements and traffic counts.

Schatzley stated that nothing ever came to any fruition. Freeman Bennett from County Highway has been wonderful but only has information on what's always been available. Nothing in addition. Anyone can drive out there and can see the road needs repair.

Van Raalte asked whether other parameters are considered when severance is determined. Is there a way to work in the formula, the number of county roads and the number of private parcels with assessed valuation for each town? Bilogan explained the mandated formula is 10% of gross stumpage is taken and distributed according to the percentage of county forest in each town. It doesn't matter where the logging occurs, severance is based on amount of County Forest in the town. Lynne receives 42% of the severance. After the mandated 10% formula, if the County Board wants to, it can raise the percentage using their own formula.

Mott asked Schatzley what happened to make the road deteriorate. Schatzley said the soil base is not sandy as in the rest of the county, and the base is much more susceptible to weather changes. This is causing ruts and when water collects, hydroplaning occurs, so it is a safety issue.

Bilogan noted that shortly after the road was constructed, the DOT increased the standards for road building. He also feels the projected weights and number of axles was not calculated correctly. It failed as a result of poor engineering.

Schatzley responded that it's irrelevant now. The town gets \$40,000 to maintain 80 miles of road. The county is making hundreds of thousands of dollars in profit using the Lynne infrastructure. "I have to do what I have to protect the taxpayers of the Town of Lynne. I will not put the burden of a \$2 million road on their tax bills. I need more assistance, we need a plan and we have one, and if it's not going to work out, I am going to have to make Willow Road a class B highway."

Joel commented that there is a similar discussion going on in Southern Wisconsin regarding agricultural vehicles damaging roadways. The WTA published some papers about how it's being resolved in towns and counties who don't yet have state guidance.

Van Raalte felt that assessed valuation of parcels and how many miles of roads should be considered in the formula. Bilogan agreed that extra money could be distributed in a variety of ways.

Mott moved the department provide a summary of arguments for and against, based on discussions over the last six months to give committee member background and second, find a formula that better serves the towns with a high percentage of town roads. No second, motion failed.

Zunker moved that severance be increased from 10% to 20%. No second, motion failed.

Van Raalte moved that Forestry Dept summarize the discussions and give the current committee members some background, particularly with problems the Town of Lynne has vis a vis Willow Road and to determine how best to increase severance for those towns that have the lowest proportion of county and state roads as well as the lowest assessed valuation. Mott seconded. Sorensen, Mott, Van Raalte voted aye. Zunker voted no. Motion carried 3-1. Sorensen commented that the new committee members should have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the process. Schatzley stated that the history is irrelevant. The problems are heavy trucks. I ask the committee to look forward instead of living in the past.

Sorensen noted that even if the committee did increase severance, it would not take affect until the 2015 budget year. He asked whether it would help if the County took back these roads from the town to maintain it properly. Schatzley felt that would not be helpful, but added that he would like the formula to look at the number of county and town roads.

Freudenberg asked Schatzley how he arrived at a 20% figure. Schatzley responded he would like to set 10% aside in a fund to have available to match grant funding.

Sorensen said there will not be time to get anything on the County Board agenda this month. He would like a special meeting along with Freeman Bennett, Timber Producers and DOT to bring the new committee members up to speed. I am not trying to dodge the issue but I am not going to ram something through. Schatzley stated that looking back is a waste of time.

**LUND CREEK BRIDGE TRANSFER CONTRACT.** Bilogan presented the contract approved by the committee previously, drawn up by Corporation Counsel. Chair signed. No motion needed.

**ADVENTURE 180 PERCH LAKE REQUEST** The organization is requesting the use of the Perch Lake Shelter as a starting and ending point for their two adventure races, one

12 hours, and the other 30 hours. Much like RASTA races, some County ordinances will need to be waived. The County Risk Manager said no insurance is needed. Any revenue after costs could be donated to local trails. Tischendorf stated that the Town of Woodboro was never notified and they are using Woodboro roads to park. Bilogan noted that there is a green area they can use to park under the view of the Land Info Dept. Mott felt it is a great tourism opportunity for Oneida County. Tischendorf stated that the parking lot at Perch is too small. Mott moved to approve the request subject to approval of parking and Land Information Dept. Van Raalte seconded. All aye, motion carried.

**SEAL COAT-CRACK REPAIR ESTIMATES** Bilogan received two proposals, from Benson and Pitlik & Wick for seal coating, crack repair and striping. Based on the bid amounts, Bilogan recommended accepting the bid from Benson. Mott moved to accept the bid, Zunker seconded. All aye, motion carried.

**FIELD TRIP: MINING THE PENOKEE RANGE** Mott asked to attend the evening session Thursday and all day Friday. Van Raalte moved to reimburse Mott for attendance, Zunker seconded. All aye, motion carried.

**VOUCHERS AND LINE ITEM TRANSFERS** Mott moved to approve the vouchers, Zunker seconded. All aye, motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Joel Flory suggested a standardized contract be developed for groups who want to use the County Forest for recreational events.

Manny Oradei offered DNR training hours and equipment to widen the parking lot area at Perch and the DNR is working with Town of Lynne to improve Turcott Road.

**ADJOURNMENT.** With business completed, it was moved by Mott, seconded by Van Raalte, to adjourn at 5:45 p.m. All aye, motion carried.

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JACK SORENSEN  
CHAIR

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JILL BRADLEY  
RECORDING SECRETARY