

FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: August 6, 2014

TIME: 4:00 p.m. Committee Room 1, 2nd Floor, Court House, Rhinelander, WI

PRESENT: Chair Sorensen; Committee Members: Mott, Rudolph, VanRaalte, Zunker.
Forestry Staff: Bilogan, Fiene, Bradley.

OTHERS: Manny Oradei, DNR; Jeff Viegut, Lynne 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 Rudolph, seconded by Mott, to approve the current agenda with the order of agenda items at Chair's discretion. VanRaalte objected to item #5 being on the agenda, referring to failed Resolution 59-2012. Corp Counsel stated at the time that if the resolution failed, then the direction of the County Board is that mining should no longer proceed as a policy goal for Oneida County. Van Raalte moved to strike the item from the agenda. Zunker seconded. Roll call vote: Mott, NO; Rudolph, NO; Sorensen, NO. Motion failed. Motion to approve agenda as it stands: Mott, Rudolph, Sorensen, Aye; Van Raalte, Zunker No. Motion carried 3-2.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE JULY 2, 2014 FORESTRY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Rudolph moved to approve minutes of the July 2, 2014 FLR Committee meetings. Van Raalte seconded, with the correction of a typo on the last paragraph. All aye. Motion carried.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Year-to-Date Timber Stumpage Revenue \$878,812.

Timber Sale #1572, Biewer completed satisfactorily. Van Raalte moved to return the Letter of Credit and close the contract. Mott seconded. All aye, motion carried.

Timber Sale #1592. Fiene reported this sale will be reassigned to PCA, who agreed to take it over because the original contractor passed away. Prices convert from whole tree to 4" but the bottom line remains the same. Mott moved to close #1592 and return deposit to DeBoth when the contract with PCA is signed and their deposit is received. Van Raalte seconded. All aye, motion carried.

Temporary Logging Permit. Request for access to a private parcel through the County Forest. There is an existing road that would serve. They expect to be in there for about a week. Van Raalte moved to approve the temporary permit. Rudolph seconded. All aye, motion carried.

Proposals and award contract for Oak Release Project. The project is to hire a herbicide applicator to spray the red maple sprouts in an oak regeneration plot. Two proposals received. 50% of the cost will be paid by a County Conservation grant. Mott asked about the chemical. Fiene responded that it is a commonly used chemical, and is applied directly to the maple sprouts, so will not affect any other plants or trees. Van Raalte moved to accept the lower bid, Mott seconded. All aye, motion carried.

LYNNE MINERAL EXPLORATION REQUEST

Sorensen read a letter from Mr. Prochnau expressing interest in re-evaluating the Lynne zinc project. Sorensen stated that though he discouraged the person, Mr. Prochnau still wished to address the issue with Oneida County. Sorensen stated like to hear what he has to say.

Mott agreed that there is not enough information to make a decision. He would like more information about what exactly is being considered.

Rudolph felt that the committee should talk to Mr. Prochnau face to face. The height of ignorance is to reject something we know nothing about.

Van Raalte noted that although he is not completely opposed to mining, the area in question is too environmentally sensitive to mine. The three companies previously interested in mining were not viable companies, but at least they were public companies and their financials were available. This company, Carolina Gold Resources, is private, so the financial status is not available.

Yes, these are public resources, but a perceived benefit to the county should not come at the expense of the citizens of the 19th and 20th districts.

Mott agreed that the financial and environmental impacts would require investigation. He does not advocate going ahead blindly. He considers himself an environmentalist. Certainly, the \$180 million Oneida County receives in tourism has to be considered. He still would like to hear the proposal from this particular company or any other company that may come forward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Karl Fate – Two summers ago, Lac du Flambeau offered technical expertise to the Mining Oversight Committee. The answer was no. The committee was instructed to look into having hearings on the matter that might bring out more information. The committee said no. The committee was instructed to seek more public input. The committee said no. We have no reason to believe that if we go through this again, that we won't see that same thing. We want the information.

I think you should politely reject this based on what we went through over the last five years. This committee must perform an environmental assessment from the surface down to the bedrock. It is the only way that this committee and the entire board will understand this issue. It must be open, objective, seeking public input, reaching out to the tribes, UW extension and others, reaching for assistance. I believe that this clear picture will result in the County Forest being closed to metallic mining.

Mark Pflieger – Has anyone ever been to the Lynne mine site? You actually thought it would be possible to mine that safely?

Rudolph – I have been to the site many times. I can tell you that what was turned down by the county board was for exploration, it wasn't for mining at all. In the best scenario, mining would not take place for many years.

Barbara Logan – I went on the mine tour as well. But they said we couldn't ask any questions. I was not snowed by that presentation on that mining site. I am concerned water safety, wells, the lakes, keeping them safe. It's our most precious resource. I don't think we should brush it off, we should hold it sacred for the people of Oneida County.

Tom Neale – I talked with members of the Iron County board who were impressed by GTEC too. You're talking about a project that's going to have to be watched over. Those tailings are going to be stacked up there for perpetuity. Those companies will be gone. You can't just listen to GTEC. You got one side of the picture. Without hearing from other experts you aren't getting the whole picture. Mr. Rudolph believes anything a mining engineer tells him evidently. He'll sign the lease just like the

supervisors in Iron County did. They don't care. Talk to Ashland County Board before you made a decision. Compare notes.

Rudolph – I think there's a mistaken impression about my position. I would be the first to vote against mining if it would do all these things you are concerned about. But at this point we have no idea what we are talking about. I am interested in getting more information, making a decision based on sound information. I hope we would gather a lot more information before we would agree as a committee or the county board, before we would agree to mining. The only way there could be any mining in the town of Lynne, as far as I'm concerned, is if it can be done in an environmentally acceptable manner. At this point I don't know if that's possible or not.

Kriste Strasburg – The only information that seemed to be validated by the prior committee was that which came from the mining companies. If you are going to start this again, you have to be willing to accept the information presented to you from people like me, like Karl. We spend years doing research on this. I ask the committee be open to hearing everything.

Tom Neale – Bad information comes from many sources. We are not getting honest answers from these supposed scientists who are not using science.

Jane Schrameyer – We have a \$4 billion tourist industry in Wisconsin. Most of it's up here. Do you think those people that come and spend their money and keep our businesses going are going to come if our water's polluted, if their kids can't swim, or if we can't have fish in the waters or if the trees don't grow?

– Are you as a committee actively engaged in getting accurate, truthful, unbiased information?

Sorensen – This committee is composed of mostly new members. This man sent a letter. I tried to discourage him but he was positive and upbeat and I said I would listen. In the 90's I was on the County Board. During that time, I authored the Oneida County Board resolution in support of ORW status for the Willow Flowage. The fact is, I am pro-mining if the Dept of Natural Resources permits it and the Corps of Engineers permits it. We talked about listening to other people and gathering information. I was at that meeting at Lac du Flambeau. The tribal environmentalist consortium told how the Ladysmith mine site was a disaster, polluting the world. The Federal Court decision by Judge Barbara Crabb ...”it remains unclear to me why they expended so much time and litigating against a company that seems every bit as committed as they are to preservation of the environment and water quality.” She fined them \$25 on seven violations and said she would have thrown it out if she could.

Mott – I attended the mining tour and forum as well. There were over 400 people and it was very civil. The experts all essentially said that many of the questions could not be answered because they didn't have the exploratory information yet that was being done at Penokee. I spoke with the president of the company and the geologist, and I found them quite open and did not have any questions go unanswered. You have to understand they are painting the best picture possible there, but to believe we would just take what is fed to us from that type of company, that would not work with me. Public hearings, public information, public debates, are terrific and I would support that. But if you don't ask questions and allow some of the other information to come forth, that's a disservice as well. You can't just say no mining, no time, no where. I just don't believe that.

Fate – I remember when Tamerlane thought this was going to be their deal. So what's going to happen with this individual. He comes out how many times and then oh, we have to put this out for bids.

Sorensen – That's just business. I did nothing to encourage the man. I would hope you give the gentleman the opportunity to speak. There's nothing wrong with that.

WOMAN – Yes, there is something wrong with it! You say, you can't say no mining ever. That's exactly what the County Board did say over a year ago. You are going against the County Board right now. You can't just open things up and get things all riled up on your own without first going to them and saying is that a possibility.

I find we should not be discussing this. The County Board said that is the way it should be and you just over rode it and I am amazed.

Tourists are what keep us having good schools, roads, we have a new police station. You are not be in the business to promote mining. Your business here is to protect and regulate. Mining in the Lakeland counties is detrimental. If you want to exchange mining for tourism, you have to decide.

Mott moved to send this request contained in the letter to Corporation Counsel to see if it violates the intent of the County Board. Rudolph seconded. Roll call vote Mott –aye, Rudolph – aye, Sorensen – aye, Zunker – nay, Van Raalte – nay. Motion carried by a majority vote, 3-2.

STAFF TRAINING, MEETINGS, AND POSSIBLE OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

Bilogan asked for approval for staff to attend an overnight conference by the DNR for recreational trails. Sorensen moved that selected staff and committee members be approved for travel and per diem to attend. Mott seconded. All aye, motion carried.

2015 BUDGET

STAFFING REQUEST

Bilogan requested 4 LTE positions be submitted to LRES. Three positions are unchanged from previous years; 2 Parks and 1 Forestry LTE. Van Raalte moved to approve the two County Parks LTEs and 1 Forestry LTE for 2015. Zunker seconded. All aye, motion carried.

Although not a new position, the Forestry LTE has been funded by an SFI grant in recent years. It appears likely that funding will not be available for 2015, so if approved, it will likely be a levied position. The committee felt that the increased establishment of timber sales utilizing this LTE position would justify the expense. Van Raalte moved to approve the Forestry LTE request. Mott seconded. All aye, motion carried.

PARKS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Bilogan felt the big item for 2015 is expansion of the Perch Lake Parking Lot. The estimate from the Highway Dept came in higher than anticipated. Almon is almost done with seal-coating. All that is left is a small lot and adding speed bumps, about another \$5000.

Sorensen asked whether the parking lot project can be put out for bid. \$21,000 seems high for pushing a hill to a low spot and cutting a few trees. Bilogan agreed. There is a possibility of using labor and equipment from the DNR and gravel hauling and spreading from the Highway dept. The DNR may be available to do that work for much less using their equipment and operators in a training exercise.

The committee will not increase the budget for this category.

LAND PURCHASE ACCOUNT

Bilogan asked whether the committee wants to include something towards this account or forego it. Sorensen felt it would be difficult to pull out extra money. Van Raalte suggested if stumpage was over the goal, perhaps a percentage of the excess could be moved to the account. Mott agreed. Sorensen directed Bilogan to bring that concept resolution to the next meeting. Bilogan noted that he needs to know what percentage because next month is the last before budget is turned in.

LONG-RANGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Bilogan included a quote from Highway to replace the main parking lot in Almon Park. That needs to be done within 5 years. The committee agreed to forward all items on the list.

SEVERANCE PROPOSAL (SUPERVISOR VAN RAALTE) Mott moved to table this item until next meeting, as it will likely be a long discussion. Van Raalte seconded. All aye, motion carried.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 14.10 AND 14.13

Bilogan presented a resolution to amend the Forestry ordinances to include language and fines for dumping household trash in park dumpsters. He also cleaned up the language in the two sections and removed the references to amenities at Townline Park. Van Raalte moved to forward the Resolution to the County Board. Zunker seconded. All aye, motion carried.

WILLOW ROAD TRAFFIC COUNT UPDATE

From July 23-29, cameras were used to view traffic on Willow Road. Of all the trucks recorded, approximately 50% were related to the timber industry, of which 12% can be accounted by the OCFD. The majority of OCFD logging is done in winter, but I recommended the traffic count be done again in late fall when we are starting to ramp up. I also think we should count the late fall travel right before the freeze and again in winter.

It was discussed whether S Turcott Road would be useable with some major repairs. Everyone agreed that in general that the Town of Lynne has been doing a good job maintaining the roads.

MEETING REQUEST BY TOWN OF LYNNE RE: WILLOW ROAD MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

The Forestry committee will attend the town meeting scheduled for August 20, 2014 at the Lynne Town Hall in Tripoli, starting at 6:00 p.m.

WILSON ROAD GRAVEL PIT (NMM #14)

- a. Estimate to secure ingress/egress to pit – postponed until convenient to create berm.
- b. Agreement with Town of Lynne – Bilogan will redo the agreement per discussion.
- c. Royalty fees for pit run, stone, crushable material, etc. – all same price .65/ton
- d. Sale of existing screened rocks – is not allowed under any circumstances.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 2015 Budget
- Van Raalte severance proposal
- Consult with Corp Counsel whether the County Board has to approve any whether it is possible to proceed with exploration talks/requests by the committee or such discussion.
- Resolution to reopen the Land Purchase Account

VOUCHERS AND LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

Expenses totaling \$29,303.51 were presented to the Committee. Van Raalte moved to approve the expenditures and transfers, Mott seconded. All aye, motion carried.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Bilogan thanked the ATV club for the luncheon.

Mott thanked Bilogan for the excellent tour.

ADJOURNMENT. With business completed, it was moved by Sorensen, seconded by Mott, to adjourn at 6:35 p.m. All aye, motion carried.

JACK SORENSEN
CHAIR

JILL BRADLEY
RECORDING SECRETARY