

Forestry and Recreation Committee

August 23, 2012

8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Chairman Ronald Nye, David Solin, Michael Klimoski, and Rick Bina

Members Absent: Richard Olsen

Others Present: Steve Jackson, Tammy Kubiaczyk, Ted Ave'Lallemant, Tom Lazars, Terry Poltrock, Dave Peterson, Joe Hermolin, Renate Bromberg, Angie Close, Representative Jeff Mursau, Lisa Haefs, Dan Griffiths, Channel 9; Liz Hayes, Channel 7; and 72 ATV enthusiasts (list attached to official copy of minutes)

Location: Conference Room, Forestry Office, Fairgrounds, Antigo

1. Call to Order – Chairman Nye called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Motion by Klimoski, seconded by Solin to excuse Olsen. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.
2. Minutes – A motion was made by Klimoski, seconded by Solin, to approve the amended minutes of the July 19, 2012, meeting. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.
3. Sally Mulhollan request to address committee regarding Wolf River State Trail – Due to the large crowd, who was in attendance for the meeting, motion by Klimoski, seconded by Solin to move this agenda item outside. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.

Robin Stowe, corporation counsel, addressed the crowd regarding the history of the Wolf River State Trail and the Master Plan. On March 29, 2005, a letter was received from Tim Miller, NOR Park, Trail and Recreation Manager, stating *“As we also discussed, the grade runs through a large portion of the Wolf River State Fishery Area and in accordance with our departments policy no summer motorized use is permitted in that area. As you develop the masterplan for the trail you will have to prohibit ATVs from the trail at least during the time of the year when there is no snow. We are checking on winter use in accordance with federal funding restrictions.”* On May 11, 2005, a letter was received from Scott Hassett, Secretary of the DNR, to the Honorable Michael Ellis stating *“The rail grade from Crandon to White Lake is owned by the department and*

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developed, managed, and maintained by the counties. The decision to allow ATVs on the segment from Lily north but not Lily south was based on several factors:

- *The grade from Lily south runs through the Wolf River State Fishery Area. The primary use of this area is stream fishing, and it has an established user group with a significant presence. In some areas, the river is 200 feet from the trail surface.*
- *Steep slopes in this area pose a concern for user safety and resource protection. Erosion of the steep slopes due to off-trail ATV use (based on experience on other department-owned ATV trails) is a significant concern.*
- *The Langlade County Forest Administrator has advised the department that he has received more unsolicited input opposing ATVs than in favor of the use.*
- *The Langlade-Oneida-Lincoln County ATV Club has indicated they will forgo requesting the grade from Lily south be developed for ATV use because of the State Fishery Area.*

Stowe reminded the crowd the Wolf River State Trail is owned by the State of Wisconsin and that Langlade County has not received anything in writing to refute the information that was received in early 2005 and upon which the Master Plan was written.

Sally Mulhollan addressed the committee regarding the reasons that segment of the Wolf River State Trail should be open to ATV use. She stated that it would be a boon to businesses in the area and the taxpayers of Langlade County. She stated that the county needs tourism.

John Brantmeier of Townsend addressed the committee regarding the Nicolet Trail, which is multi-use and stated that there have been no conflicts.

Richard and Carol Horneck addressed the committee stating that segment of the trail should be open to ATV use.

Larry Schisel, who owns and operates a business on the ATV trail system, addressed the committee regarding his concerns about Langlade County providing enough ATV trails for enthusiasts. Jackson stated how the county board has allowed County Highway S to be opened up for a trail connector. He also stated Langlade County has 86 miles of funded ATV trails stretching from White Lake to Parrish.

Rus Cook stated that trails that dead end accomplish nothing.

Joe Spice addressed the committee and stated that the committee and forestry department should investigate ways to connect all trails in Langlade County and to other surrounding counties.

Tony Ramer questioned if the Master Plan can be amended.

Mike Richling stated that Langlade County is not providing enough ATV opportunities.

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Steve Jackson, forest administrator, addressed the crowd and stated that 85% of the county forest is open to motorized travel, which includes ATVs. ATVs are allowed on any forest road or trail that is normally open to other vehicles, except on road or trails that are gated, bunkered, or posted as closed.

Andy Kostelny of the White Lake ATV Club addressed the committee regarding advocacy and its definition and his concerns regarding maintenance funding sources as ATV trails receive maintenance dollars from the DNR and non-motorized trails do not receive maintenance funding unless the trail is maintained by a Friends group and then the funding is a 50-50 split, if you are fortunate enough to receive a grant for the area.

Comments were again reiterated to the crowd that Langlade County does not own the Wolf River State Trail. It is owned by the State and until a definitive answer is received from the DNR stating that the policies that were in place in 2005 have been amended that the hands of the forestry and recreation committee and the county board are tied.

Chairman Nye thanked the crowd for their comments and the meeting returned to the forestry conference room for the additional agenda items.

Dave Peterson stated that Langlade County needs more non-motorized trails and that State Natural areas have certain limitations.

Ted Ave'lallemant stated that logging cannot be done within 300' feet of the Wolf River and had been stated previously the Wolf River State Trail in some places is within 200' of the Wolf River.

4. Review Draft of Updated Access Permit – Jackson provided the committee with an updated draft of the access permit, which included language from the Jackson County access permit.

ACCESS TO PRIVATE LANDS

Applications by private parties to build or improve access roads through county forest land will be considered by the committee on a case-by-case basis. The following stipulations will be adhered to before an "Access Permit" is granted.

1. Access across County Forest lands must be demonstrated by the applicant as the route of last resort. Proposed uses must be documented by the applicant.
2. No legal easement will be granted, just permission to cross county lands.
3. The permit is non-transferable. New landowners must apply to continue the land use agreement. The County reserves the right to cancel the permit with cause.
4. Road improvements and upgrading must be approved and will be supervised by the forestry department staff. Prior notification of three (3) days is required before work starts. Width of road that crosses County lands shall not exceed 16.5 feet.
5. All wood cut is the property of Langlade County.
6. Roadway must be opened to the public through County land. No restrictive signs, gates or barriers may be placed on County land by the permittee.

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7. The County continues full ownership of the improved roadway; however, it shall not be liable for maintenance or upkeep of the road.
8. Permittee waives any rights to any declaration of ownership or interest in the road on County land. The access permit is granted upon the signature and any fees being received by Langlade County Forestry Department.
9. Requests for private utility service lines that cross County forest land will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
10. The Permittee is responsible for all permits that are required to connect the roadway to a town road, county or state highway.
11. The Permittee agrees to indemnify the County and to hold the County harmless in regard to any and all liability.
12. The fee for an Access Permit is \$100.00 to cover administrative costs.
13. The standard Access Permit is included as an exhibit in Chapter 900-38.

Klimoski stated that he had concerns regarding #4, road width of only 16.5 feet. He stated that in the winter when the road would be plowed and have snow banks that the width would be quite narrow. Klimoski suggested a width not to exceed 20'. Motion by Bina, seconded by Klimoski to approve the amended access policy with a road width not to exceed 20'. 4 ayes, one absent. Motion carried.

5. Discuss Outside Work Policy – Stowe informed the committee that there had been some concerns regarding Langlade County employees and secondary employment, which has been discussed at the last two Personnel Committee meetings. The current policy stated that no private work shall be performed during normal working hours and that no County equipment, facility or property shall be utilized for private work. Also, any private work performed by the employee shall not disrupt County government operations and the employee's private work shall not compromise his/her ability to fully perform and execute all of the responsibilities of the position. Stowe stated that concerns had arisen when employees had taken off a part of day for private and the line was not clearly delineated whether the employee was still working for Langlade County or had taken vacation. Stowe stated that the new policy will state that an employee must take a full day of vacation in order to perform private work, and that they will no longer be able to take a few hours off for private work. Also, the oversight committee will have the ability to add additional requirements, if they feel they are needed. The Personnel Committee may approve the final draft of the outside work policy at their next meeting. Information only.
6. Approve MOA for Stewardship Grant on County Forest – Jackson informed the committee that the State in updating their application process for a stewardship grant for a land purchase is requesting that counties approve a Memorandum of Agreement for Stewardship Grants for land purchases. The MOA will be held on file by the DNR and does not obligate the County to a land purchase. The MOA must be approved by both the forestry committee and county board. Motion by Solin, seconded by Bina to approve the MOA for Stewardship Grant on the County Forest subject to review by the corporation counsel. 4 ayes, one absent. Motion carried.
7. Update on SFI Audit of County Forest – Jackson informed the committee that a SFI (Sustainable Forest Initiative) audit of the Langlade County forest was conducted on

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Thursday, August 9 by third party auditors. The audit went very well and no corrective action was required. Three opportunities for improvement were identified in the Wisconsin County Forest Association system. There were no Corrective Action Required (CAR's) found this year during the audit.

The three opportunities included: *1) There is an opportunity to improve processes for monitoring natural regeneration. This could prove useful in dealing with expected trends in deer populations and the increasing impacts of deer browse on natural regeneration that are being reported in some areas. 2) There is an opportunity to improve efforts to take into account forest cover types, age or size classes, and habitats across the landscape, for example with respect to Aspen habitat conditions on county forestland within the context of surrounding lands. 3) There is an opportunity to improve by ensuring that the WDNR Silvicultural Field Trial reporting system is utilized effectively.*

Jackson thanked his staff and DNR for the great job that they did preparing and participating in the audit. Jackson stated that he would provide a copy of the official report to the committee when it is received.

8. Review and Approve 2013 Budget and 2014 Plan - The committee reviewed the 2013 budget and 2014 budget plan. Jackson reviewed projects planned for 2013.

FORESTRY AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

REVENUES/EXPENDITURES SUMMARY

	<u>2013 Budget</u>	<u>2014 Proposed Budget</u>
<u>Revenues:</u>		
County Park Fees	99,400.00	99,500.00
Forest Crop Stumpage (85%)	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00
Forest Land Purchase (5%)	75,500.00	75,500.00
Misc. Income (Non-FCL, Wood & Bough Permits)	2,000.00	2,000.00
Interest Income	1,000.00	1,000.00
Forest Administrator Grant	49,354.00	49,354.00
Cell Tower Revenue	15,014.00	15,014.00
 Total Revenues	 \$1,742,268.00	 \$1,742,368.00
 <u>Expenditures:</u>		
Forestry Department Expenses	497,632.00	509,654.00
Forestry Management	68,500.00	69,000.00
Tree Planting	500.00	500.00
V.M.P. Expenses	146,293.00	147,625.00

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Recreation Program/Facilities (Range & Post Lake Dam)	21,384.00	21,384.00
Total Expenditures	\$ 734,309.00	\$ 748,163.00
Total County portion tax levy/(County Revenue)	\$(1, 007,959.00)	\$ (994,205.00)

Motion by Bina, seconded by Klimoski, to approve the proposed draft 2013 forestry budget and proposed 2014 plan as presented and forward to the Finance Committee. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.

Motion by Bina, seconded by Klimoski, to approve the proposed draft 2013 parks budget and proposed 2014 plan as presented and forward to the Finance Committee. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.

9. DNR Liaison Report - Ave'lallemant updated the committee on the upcoming wolf hunt. There will be 201 tags available with 85 being set aside for the tribes, and the season will be run similar to the sturgeon season so when the 201 wolves have been taken, the season will be over. The permit is \$100 plus \$10 application fee. Ave'lallemant stated that there is a lawsuit pending so it is unknown at this time if it will have any effect on the season. As this is the first season, it will be a learning experience. Wyoming only had a 2% success rate.
10. Review Payment of Paid Bills - A motion was made by Klimoski, seconded by Bina, to approve the paid Forestry and Recreation Department bills. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.
11. Review Budget Summary Report - Jackson reviewed with the committee the budget summary report of the forestry department revenues and expenditures through July 31, 2012. Motion by Klimoski, seconded by Bina to accept the budget summary as presented. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.
12. Set Next Meeting Date - The next meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, September 26, 2012, at 8:00 a.m., in the forestry office conference room, Fairgrounds, Antigo.
13. Adjournment – Motion by Solin, seconded by Bina to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m. 4 ayes, 1 absent. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Poltrock
Recording Secretary