

Langlade County Public Property Committee Minutes

Date of Meeting: August 8, 2011; 7:00 p.m.

Place: Clover Room, Multi-purpose Building, Fairgrounds, Antigo

Members Present: Chairman Douglas Nonnenmacher, Robert Benishek, David Solin, Vernon Cahak, and Jeffrey Zalewski

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Robin Stowe, Nate Heuss, Arlene C. Bonacci, Judy Karpf, Jack Pavek, Jerry Duns, Ron Nye, James R. Jansen, Jack Jilek, Keith Wilson, Norman Shestak, Don Schroeder, Jerome Keen, Rick Schuessler, Mary Schmoll, Holly Luerssen, Orlene Pavek, Dwaine Packard, Daniel Zupon, Tom Anderson, Ed Resch, Dennis Klement, Jason Nagel, Carlene Nagel, Jerrold Burns, Marcus Schroepfer, Pete Pennington, Tim Spiegl, George Shinnors, Fred Berner, Abby Michels, Tony Koss, Shelby, Robby, and Michael Hagerty, and Terry Poltrock

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Nonnenmacher at 7:00 p.m., in the Clover Room, Multi-purpose Building, Fairgrounds, Antigo.

Public Hearing:

Robin Stowe, Corporation Counsel, and Nate Heuss, Director of Facilities Management, provided some background on the repairs that are needed for the cattle barn and the options under consideration by the Public Property Committee. Stowe stated that \$160,000 was originally budgeted for this project for the purpose of repairing the roof. After it was discovered that the foundation of the cattle barn was also in need of repair, the Committee solicited bids for repairs to the roof and foundation. No action was taken on these bids. Subsequently, the County received \$85,000 from the insurance company for the wind damage to the roof. With a total project budget of \$245,000, the Committee is now able to consider other options and has received some comments from the public at Committee meetings. To date, these comments have ranged from asking the Committee to consider repairing the cattle barn to preserve its unique historic features to razing the barn and constructing a new multi-use building. Stowe stated that the primary use of the cattle barn is for showing and marketing animals during the annual 4H youth fair with a secondary use of storage for County equipment for the remainder of the year. The Public Property Committee has also received comments from concerned citizens regarding the value of repairing the existing cattle barn given its current condition and limited use. The Committee has called this public hearing to gather additional information from the public regarding the options that are available for the Committee to consider.

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Heuss stated that the cattle barn was constructed in 1924 for \$5,000. The east and west wings have had some structural work done and are in decent condition. Heuss stated that when the project was bid out for the foundation and roof repairs that the low bid was \$150,000 and with contingency would probably use the \$160,000 budgeted. With the additional insurance money, there are additional items that could be taken care of; such as, replacing the lighting and electric, replacing the water heater in the milk house, resolving the drainage issues around the cattle barn, and replacing the windows with a fan or louvers. Heuss stated that there are four options to consider:

1. Retain existing barn - \$160,000
2. Keep center pavilion and east/west wings; Demolish and replace north and south wings with new wood or pole barn construction - \$180,000
3. Keep center pavilion; Demolish and replace all four wings with new wood or pole barn construction - \$220,000
4. Demolish cattle barn and replace with rectangular clear span structure - \$25/sq. ft.
5. Prices are estimated only. It is difficult to estimate the cost of a new structure until some of the decisions have been made and prices can vary depending on the quality of the construction. State approval would be required; which will mean greater snow load design than a typical pole building and mechanical ventilation if storage of vehicles with internal combustion engines is desired.

The following questions, comments and recommendations were received during the public hearing from the following individuals:

Tim Spiegl: Questioned what kind of structure the County was looking for but stated that a pole building could be built that would retain the qualities of the current cattle barn by using wood siding or wainscoting. He stated that you could pour a cement slab floor, which would raise the floor by 1’.

Ed Frisch: Questioned whether it is feasible to build a multi-use building and asked what these other uses would be. He stated that a spot for an archery range or shooting sports would fill a need.

Keith Wilson: Stated that the standing water problem and drainage problems need to be addressed.

Jason Nagel: He stated that he is a member of the Market Animal Committee and that the water issue and manure are very big problems. A few years ago when methods to alleviate these problems were investigated, costs would have run \$25,000, which the Market Animal Committee and 4-H could not afford. Water that has run through manure cannot go into the storm sewer system. Another problem with the current cattle barn is that air does not move in the barn and it is not a good environment for animals. Also, this year because of the heat they kept blowing breakers attempting to keep the animals cool. They have also had to add sand and wood chips to help alleviate the water. Several years ago they were given permission to add clay to the stalls and more clay is now needed.

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George Shinnars: He stated that it is possible to restore a building without taking a building down, but he stated that in this case, he inspected the cattle barn and the roof joists are cracked, the ridge line goes up and down and boards are rotted. The walls are bowed and the trusses need to be reinforced. Should the building be repaired due to the deterioration? He stated that the electrical is inadequate. He also stated that he believes that it is against code to store gas vehicles in a wood building. There are 48 stalls in the building, which are anchored down. He feels that there should be more uses for the building and that it should be used more than five days out of the year. If a new building was built, there could be removable stalls that could be stored after the fair.

Jason Nagel: He stated that another issue is that whitewash holds onto bacteria and the air quality is very poor after the cattle barn is closed up for a year. He stated that Waupaca, Marathon County and Marshfield have very good facilities.

Eli Schroeder: Questioned whether the milk house would be changed. Heuss stated that he would not recommend replacement as the milk house is structurally sound and they would only plan to replace the water heater.

Holly Luerksen, interim 4-H agent: She stated that if there could be a place for archery and rifle shoots that would fill a need for 4-H. Also, if there was a newer, larger structure then Langlade County would be able to host State events for beef, rabbits, etc., which would cut down on travel time. The current cattle barn also raises safety issues. The stalls and aisles are not wide enough for safe clean up or wide enough for the animals, 4-Hers, and the public. The show ring area is not large enough nor is it comfortable for bidders. In order to save some of the structure, could the rotunda be used for something else, such as, a pavilion picnic area on the fairgrounds. The fairgrounds facilities in Amherst are also very nice.

Judy Karpf: She stated that a public hearing was a very good idea and that it was a good idea to study ideas from the community.

George Shinnars: He stated that a new structure should be used for more than just 4-H and other sites should be visited before a decision is made. He would be willing to make a donation for a new structure if it is needed.

Arlene Bonacci: She stated that another building is needed in Langlade County. A site for senior citizens is needed and a new building could be rented for other events.

Tim Spiegl: He stated that a new structure could be built that had a similar structure to the cattle barn only with wider wings. The county should meet with 4-H and other groups to decide what other uses would be possible. If possible, the historic features could be saved.

Keith Wilson: He would be willing to drive county board members to other counties in a coach bus to tour other facilities. He also questioned having the barn whitewashed a year ago.

Mary Schmoll: She stated that the State inspector had stated that the cattle barn had to be whitewashed. She also stated that Marathon County has a very good facility.

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Bob Benishek: He stated that many years ago the County had a plan for the future, which included a new grandstand and multi-purpose building. The fairgrounds and the Wolf River are jewels of Langlade County. He stated that the project should be enhanced and look to the future.

George Shinnars: He stated that part of the reason the fairgrounds is not used as much as it could be is the rental rates are too high.

Stowe and Zalewski stated that the Fairgrounds Ad Hoc Committee is looking at the fairgrounds use policy and the fee structure.

Stowe stated that no contract was signed when the cattle barn roof and structural repairs was bid out. After a decision is made regarding renovation or building a new structure, definitive numbers for the project will be decided on.

Dwaine Packard: He stated he and his family showed cattle in the barn. During the fair, visitors from Waupaca County thought that the barn was very unique and he hopes that the structure can be preserved.

The question was raised regarding how a large structure would potentially affect parking and accessibility to the cattle barn.

George Shinnars: He questioned how often the horse barn is used.

The Committee thanked the public for coming to the public hearing and for sharing their input/comments.

Motion by Zalewski, seconded by Cahak to adjourn the public hearing at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Poltrock
Recording Secretary