

## FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

**DATE:** April 7, 2021

**TIME:** 3:30 p.m. County Board Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Court House, Rhinelander, WI

**PRESENT:** Committee Members: Sorensen, VanRaalte, Almekinder, Mott, Pence  
Forestry Staff: Fiene, Rady, Tischendorf  
Steigerwaldt Land Services: Forrest Gibeault; RASTA: Guy Hanson  
Via Zoom: DNR Liaison – Manny Oradei, John Gillen

### **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Sorensen called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. due to a room availability conflict with a public hearing. The meeting has 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**

Motion by VanRaalte to approve the current agenda with the order of agenda items at Chair's discretion. Second by Almekinder. All aye, motion carried.

### **APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Pence to approve the minutes of March 3, 2021 meeting. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None at this time.

### **FOREST MANAGEMENT – YTD STUMPAGE REPORT**

*YTD Stumpage Report* – Fiene reported updated county forest stumpage for March was \$189,358.07 bringing the year-to-date total to \$581,360.94.

*Timber Sale Expirations* – Fiene explained that contracts #1658 Fisher Logging and #1660 Marshall Logging are contracts that have already been extended to a 5<sup>th</sup> year with the understanding that was the final extension. Offered the loggers the opportunity to attend the meeting if they wanted to speak to the committee. Recommendation to close the contracts, retain the bond and try to re-sell in the fall. If re-sold, we will retain any difference in stumpage rates from the bond.

Motion by Mott to accept Fiene's recommendation. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

*Timber Sale Extensions* – Remaining six sales are set to expire in early May. Most of these would be the 1<sup>st</sup> extension and given the timber markets, etc., the recommendation is to provide a one-year extension with 0% increase in stumpage rates.

Motion by VanRaalte to approve Fiene's recommendation. Second by Pence. Discussion regarding contract #1686 Marshall Logging and the number of extensions previously approved. All aye, motion carried.

*Timber Producers Cooperative Solicitation of Investment* – Timber Professionals Cooperative has provided a survey to help determine potential available equity to acquire the Verso mill. This was a discussion topic at the Wisconsin County Forests Association spring conference.

Mott discussed the topic with Henry Schienebeck and inquired as to when someone could present information to the Forestry committee. Schienebeck's response was June. Also inquired with Jeff VerDoorn of the Economic Development group, if the County would be able to use some of the federal funds for this

purpose. VerDoorn was uncertain of the answer and planning to look into it further. Mott also questioned the legality of the County investing in the cooperative.

Motion by Mott to table the discussion of this issue until June. Second by Almekinder. All aye, motion carried.

*Carbon Credit Project Proposal – Forrest Gibeault, Steigerwaldt Land Services* – Gibeault presented a powerpoint presentation to help educate the committee on carbon credits and how they could benefit the County with potential revenue.

The committee directed Fiene to further research carbon credits and provide some recommendations to the committee at the next meeting (if possible).

### **FORESTER I RECRUITMENT UPDATE**

Fiene introduced Caity Lucas as the new County Forester and Snowmobile Coordinator.

### **BURROWS ATV TRAIL REHAB CONTRACT UPDATE**

At the previous direction of the committee, forestry staff met with the low bid contractor (Rynders Corporation) to confirm the bid price and project scope. Contractor and staff confirmed in writing and the project should begin within the next couple months with departmental oversight.

Informational update only.

### **COUNTY GRAVEL PITS**

*Enterprise Gravel Pit Crushing* – Fiene handed out bid specifications for gravel crushing of approximately \$50,000. Test holes were favorable.

Motion by VanRaalte to approve the gravel crushing bid specifications for the Enterprise gravel pit. Second by Mott. All aye, motion carried.

*Highway Request to Stock Pile Chips at Burrows Pit for County Y Chip Sealing Project* – Fiene explained prior reclamation of the pit by the Town of Little Rice. County Highway has a large chip sealing project and has requested to utilize the pit for stock piling of chips.

Motion by Mott to approve the highway department's request. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

### **AWARD FORESTRY TRUCK BID**

One bid was received from Brickners of Antigo. With the trade-in, the cost would be \$26,717.00 and without the trade, the cost would be \$31,717.00. Recommendation to accept the bid with the trade-in.

Motion by VanRaalte to accept the bid for a new truck from Brickners of Antigo with the trade-in for \$26,717.00. Second by Almekinder. All aye, motion carried.

### **FRIENDS OF TOWNLINE LAKE PARK UPDATE**

Dave Schmitz provided a handout from the Friends of Townline Lake Park.

Fiene provided an email handout from Joel Knutson, the town chair-elect for the Town of Crescent expressing support for the Friends of Townline Lake Park.

Mott inquired about the status of the transference of federal encumbrances. Fiene stated he has not moved forward with this as he was waiting for the County Board's decision of whether or not to sell the property. Sorensen recommended holding off until a decision is made by the County and the state.

Kelby Scheel, treasurer of Friends of Townline Lake Park provided an update. A formal citizens group has been formed with over 350 active participants, developed first year goals and budgets, and moving forward with a couple of events. A clean-up day has been planned for May and a Father's Day fishing event in June. Primary goal is to preserve and maintain the park. Secondary goal is to develop the park.

*Question:* For these events do we need our own liability insurance or are we covered by the County?

*Answer:* It is Fiene's understanding from Corporation Counsel that the group would need their own liability insurance similar to RASTA, snowmobile clubs, ATV Clubs, etc.

*Question:* Do we need permits or is there a sign-up or a formal process to follow to hold the events in the park?

*Answer:* Fiene stated (from Corporation Counsel) if the group is just picking up trash or sticks, permits are not needed similar to people picking up trash along county/state roads do not require a permit. The fishing event does not require any permits as Townline park is a public park and this event falls under approved use of the park although it is not able to be reserved for an event at this time.

*Question:* Is it possible for the Forestry Department to mow the park grounds on a regular basis or before a scheduled event?

*Answer:* Fiene stated the County could do an initial mow; however, it would be difficult to add the park for regular mowing with the current maintenance schedule of other County parks.

*Question:* Any issues if the citizens group did subsequent mowing?

*Answer:* That is where we would need to have a volunteer maintenance contract and according to Corporation Counsel would require some type of incorporation of the group with adequate insurance.

*Question:* Is it possible for the Forestry Department to provide a few picnic tables?

*Answer:* Fiene explained that we do not currently have extra picnic tables and there isn't money in this year's budget to purchase any.

*Question:* Is there an issue is the Friends of Townline provided picnic tables?

*Answer:* Fiene stated this would be a committee decision. This would need to be placed on a future agenda.

*Question:* Can the Forestry Department provide regular trash service or trash service for each event?

*Answer:* There isn't anything in this year's budget to place a dumpster; however, if the committee approves the department to pick up a couple bags of trash after an event, we would do so.

*Question:* Would there be an issue with the Friends of Townline Lake Park coordinating trash service?

*Answer:* Fiene asked for clarification of a few garbage cans, a dumpster, etc. Scheel stated a couple of garbage cans and use would dictate further needs. Fiene said this would be another committee decision and should be added to a future agenda.

*Question:* Can the Forestry Department open the 2<sup>nd</sup> gate to the parking area?

*Answer:* Fiene stated this would be a committee decision and should be added to a future agenda.

Mott suggested Fiene include an agenda item for the next meeting to look at alternative ways to raise money to offset the initial \$143,000 we had.

Public comment: You are not selling the entire park, but looking to sell the most usable part of the park. I don't understand the need to recoup the money from the park if you were planning to use the funds to buy Gillette-Wickham, but found other funds to complete the purchase over a year ago.

David Walters, Chairperson Townline Lake Park, correction that there are 1,600 signatures on the petition and membership continues to grow. Newbold and Crescent Town Boards have both expressed support in keeping the park. The group is doing a lot and the community does not want to sell the park. We hope to work with you guys to grow and maintain the park. We oppose the sale in its entirety.

Jim Winkler, read a letter from David Kroll, Chairperson of the Town of Newbold stating opposition to the sale of Townline Lake Park on behalf of the Town Board and their constituents. Winkler stated he will stand with them and vote against selling Townline Lake Park.

**REVIEW/APPROVE RESOLUTION TO PURCHASE CLEMENTS PROPERTY**

Fiene stated that the county was approved for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant in the amount of \$17,380.00 to cover 50% of the purchase price. Resolution is for final approval from County Board to purchase the property and move forward with closing and finalizing the sale.

Motion by Mott to support the resolution to purchase and enter into County Forest the Clements Property, LR-38 Town of Little Rice. Second by VanRaalte. Resolution correction to change line 4 from Town of Lynne to Little Rice. All aye, motion carried.

Public questions regarding the purchase of this property and how it will be used.

**REVIEW/APPROVE RESOLUTION SUPPORTING KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP GRANT FUNDING**

Sorensen requested Fiene draft a resolution for continued support of Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant funding of \$50 million annually. The bill may require a percentage limit for public lands owned within the state.

Mott suggested drafting a letter to Senator Felzkowski and all the members that represent us, outlining how much this has brought in to Oneida County coffers with forest purchases and associated stumpage revenue to attach or include with the resolution.

Motion by Mott to forward the resolution in support of Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant to County Board. Second by Almekinder. All aye, motion carried.

**REVIEW/APPROVE REMOTE CAMPING PERMIT**

Remote camping was approved by the committee during the revisions of the 15-year plan. Permit language was tailored after other county permits.

The committee may want to discuss a future agenda item creating a recreational boundary for Gillette-Wickham property.

Motion by VanRaalte to approve the camping permit as presented. Second by Pence. All aye, motion carried.

**REVIEW/APPROVE CHRISTMAS TREE PERMIT**

Christmas tree permit was approved by the committee during the revisions of the 15-year plan. Permit language was tailored after other county permits.

Motion by Pence to approve the Christmas tree permit as presented. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

**REVIEW/APPROVE CHAPTER 14 CODE AMENDMENT RESOLUTION**

During the revision of the 15-year plan, it was noted that numerous ordinances were outdated or incorrect and new ordinances were needed. The committee was provided the ordinance amendments, but would prefer to review the resolution as well.

Motion by Sorensen to table this item until the May meeting. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

**CDBG – ADA PARK SHELTER GRANT UPDATE**

Fiene informed the committee the Forestry ADA projects (Almon shelters and walking path, Gillette-Wickham parking lot and access path) were approved. Corporation Counsel and finance are working on

the contract. Very complex requirements and reporting. Request for bids may come in higher than expected due to wage scale regulations. Need to clarify if engineering fees are reimbursable under the CDBG grant.

Informational update only.

### **VOUCHERS/LINE ITEM TRANSFERS**

Vouchers presented totaling \$10,089.65 which includes \$4,335.00 to USDA-APHIS for beaver control contract and \$1,775.00 to JW Austin Associates for a boundary line survey in the town of Lynne that was approved last month.

Motion by VanRaalte to approve the vouchers as presented. Second by Mott. All aye, motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Kelby Scheel would like to revisit item #11 – Clements Property Purchase. Would like more information regarding this purchase. Purchase has been in process for 6+ months. Funds are from a specific account that can only be utilized for land purchase. The property helps block in the county forest and the purchase has been approved by County Board and partially paid by Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant. Don't understand the rationale behind buying this property when trying to sell Townline Lake Park when so many are opposed to the sale.

David – confusion regarding the purchase of the Clements property while trying to sell Townline Lake Park.

Guy Hanson – Knowles-Nelson has also helped RASTA fund trail development and buildings. Sometimes grant money utilizes more time and effort than the financial gain.

Jeff Fisher, Fisher Logging, due to logging market, mill closures and Covid, it has been difficult to sell timber and would hope to get an additional extension for contract #1658.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/MEETINGS**

- Next meeting – May 5, 2021
- Friends of TLLP
  - Request for picnic tables, trash pickup, open 2<sup>nd</sup> gate
  - Fundraising update
  - Proposal/recommendations
- Resolution to withdraw Townline Lake Park
- Alternative funding \$143,000 from sale of Townline Lake Park Parcel
- Gillette-Wickham Recreational Boundary Designation
- Knowles-Nelson Summary to Include with Resolution to Legislators
- Carbon Credit Recommendations

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With business completed, Chair Sorensen adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

---

JACK SORENSEN  
CHAIR

---

TANYA TISCHENDORF  
RECORDING SECRETARY