



---

## MEETING MINUTES

---

**Committee:** Forestry and Water & Land Use Planning Committees  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021  
**Time:** 8:00 AM  
**Location:** Forestry Office Conference Room, Fairgrounds, Antigo, WI

The following discussion was held by the Committee at the meeting detailed above:

1. Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Curran.
2. Roll call was conducted.

Forestry and Water & Land Use Planning Committee		
Name	Role	Status
Robert Curran	Chairman	Present
John Medo	Member	Present
Joseph Novak, III	Member	Present
John Breske	Member	Present
Reinhardt Balcerzak	Member	Present
Non-Committee Members Present		
Name	Interest	
Erik Rantala	Forest Administrator	
Tom Lazars	Park Director	
Jason Hilger	County Manager	
Robin Stowe	Corporation Counsel	
Wes Phillips	WI DNR, by phone	
Keri Beck	Assistant Economic Development Director	
Joe Jopek	Citizen	
Robin Stowe	Corporation Counsel	
Judy Nagel	County Clerk, recording Secretary	

3. The Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **Approve previous meeting minutes:** Motion by Medo, second by Breske to approve the February 11, 2021 Water & Land Use and Forestry Committee Minutes. All ayes, motion carried.
5. **Public comment on agenda items, and consideration of request for items to be added to future meeting agendas.** Motion by Medo, second by Breske to approve Joe Jopek address the Committee. Jopek, former Langlade County UW Extension from 1971 to 1991, shared concerns on selling county land, focusing on wetlands, giving consideration before selling. Jopek shared that 93 years ago, 1928, the County Forest land was established over cutover land, the first in the State. Jopek requests the Committee sustain Langlade County Assets: Wetlands.

Medo requests for future agendas: A change of name for Scout Camp and dividing the Forestry and the Water and Land Use Committees.

**FORESTRY AND RECREATION AGENDA ITEMS:**

- 6. Discuss proposed Permanent Part-Time Assistant position for Forestry/Maintenance Departments:** This was referred to Personnel, Finance and Public Property. Medo stated that Finance Committee approved the position, pending a funding source, as this position is 70% Maintenance and 30% Forestry. Hilger stated that Personnel also approved, giving Department Heads the ability to find the funding within their Departmental Budgets or coming from the General Fund.
- 7. Scout Camp Update:** Rantala stated that Scout Camp is on track to open for Spring/Summer 2021. Lazars distributed a proposed expansion plan for Scout Camp, looking to apply for grants and matching fund grants. Lazars explained the three-phase long-range plan, developing key areas, determining costs per phase using estimates from contractors, with approval from the State on the sites. Discussion held on camp grounds and State funding in Vilas County and ATV routes and trails on Scout Camp property.
- 8. Review proposed County Forest and Parks Ordinance Changes:** Rantala distributed proposed Forestry and Park Ordinances that need updates or changes, as there will be a county ordinance meeting on March 17, 2021. No action taken.
- 9. Approve timber sale contract extensions:** Rantala discussed the ending dates for the contracts as Summer contracts scheduled to be completed December and Winter contracts to be completed April 1. Rantala is requesting to extend Winter contracts until April 1, 2022. Motion by Novak, second by Balcerzak to approve the Winter timber sale contracts be extended until April 1, 2022 with no additional costs. All ayes, motion carried.
- 10. Discuss/Approve Resolution #2-2021 regarding Land Sale Policy and Land Buy Account Cap, subject to public comment:** A copy of the resolution was distributed to the Committee. Discussion held. Stowe reviewed the authority to sell public lands owned by Langlade County, conveying property and signing authority as directed by the County Board. Stowe discussed delegating authority to Forestry Committee with specified limits in a resolution. Rantala discussed the county forest boundaries. Discussion on cap on Land Buy Account, currently \$250,000, proposed \$800,000, agreed upon \$500,000 and putting a cap on the Recreation Fund, proposed \$300,000. Motion by Balcerzak, second by Medo to changes to proposed Resolution #2-2021, putting caps of \$500,000 for the Land Buy Account and \$300,000 for the Recreation Fund. All ayes, motion carried.
- 11. Discuss Resolution of Support of the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Program for the next 10 years:** Curran explained that the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Program will be reviewed by the State again in 2022, Langlade County sending affirmation to the State in support of the program. Motion by Novak, second by Breske to approve the proposed resolution and forward to the County Board. All ayes, motion carried.

- 12. Discuss procedure for Offers to Purchase for lands listed with Real Estate Agents:** Rantala explained that there needs to be a mechanism in place to approve/counter offers to purchase on lands that are listed with Real Estate Agents. Discussion held. Motion by Medo, second by Breske to approve giving the Forest Administrator, Forestry Committee Chair and County Manager approve/counter, finalize the offers to purchase for lands listed with Real Estate Agents. All ayes, motion carried.
- 13. Approve ATV Trail Rehabilitation Grant:** Rantala stated that Langlade County has 101 miles of funded ATV trails, mainly on county owned land, receiving maintenance funds from the State, Rantala request improving the infrastructure on two sections, one on private lands and one on county owned land. Rantala has drafted a 5-year agreement with the landowner on improving the trail on their property. Rantala stated that this grant will be fully funded by the DNR. Motion by Balcerzak, second by Novak to approve Rantala applying for the ATV Trail Rehabilitation Grant. All ayes, motion carried.
- 14. Policy Development:** No action taken.
- 15. Economic Development Report:** Beck addressed the Committee on the activities of Economic Development. Beck discussed the Welcome Center, updating brochures and maps, Discover Wisconsin video, updating the Economic Development site from winter to spring. Beck stated that Travel Wisconsin will be changing/adding hiking and biking on their site. Beck also explained the Everbridge Notification, stating Heartbeat Newsletter be available next month. Information only.
- 16. DNR Liaison Report:** Phillips, by phone, updated the Committee on DNR activities: timber sales, preparing for fire season, preparing a burning restriction map that notes the blowdown area, stating that the DNR will be more restrictive on burning permits. Discussion on DNR opening back up the Antigo Office.
- 17. Forest Administrator Report:** Rantala discussed the letter from the WI Forest Association to gauge the interest of each County with County Forest Lands. Discussion on this letter. Rantala will be attending the spring Forest Administrator Conference, discussing the letter. Rantala stated that the snowmobile trails in Langlade County were open 25 days, shortest season on record since 1981. Rantala reviewed the current timber sales and bid opening in April. Rantala is working with DNR and other parties on the Wolf River Snowmobile Bridge. Rantala is working with NCWRPC on the survey question; assisting on the ATV maps. Rantala also discussed carbon credit on county forest. Curran would like to discuss the Wolf River State Trail that is closed to ATV/UTV.
- 18. Closed Session – At approximately 8:45 a.m., consider moving into closed session pursuant to Section 19.85 (1)(e), Wisconsin Statutes, deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons required a closed session, to discuss offer to purchase of County property listed for sale.** Not needed as the procedure has been determined in Agenda #12.

**19. At approximately 9:00 a.m., return to open session with possible action taken on any matters discussed in closed session.** Not used.

**20. Budget Summary for Forestry and Recreation:** Discussion held. Information only.

**21. Schedule next meeting:** Forestry Committee Meeting: April 6, 2021 @ 8:00 a.m. in the Forestry Conference Room.

**22. Adjourn meeting:** Motion by Novak, second by Breske to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 a.m. All ayes, motion carried.

Minutes transcribed and submitted by:  
Judy Nagel, County Clerk/Recording Secretary.