Meeting called to order by Chair Liebaert.

ROLL CALL: Present – Mark Liebaert, Terry White, Robert Mock. Absent – John Robinson, Mary Lou Bergman. Others present – Jon Harris, Jane Anklam, John Lawle, Hans Stopinski, Mike Ron, Al Makela, Eric Shaffer, Mark Schroeder, Bruce Bergsten, Greg Jensen, Mike Bodeen, Judy Nicoski, Steve Olson, Don Luebbe, Dan Corbin, Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by White, second Mock, to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2014, regular meeting. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Forest Management Operations: Golembieski reported 8 active sales; with 1 hauling.

Parks and Recreation: Schroeder reported recruiting staff for upcoming park season; recreational trails in poor condition due to lack of snow; and ruffed grouse society project completed.

ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS:
Conditional Use Permit #16266 Non-metallic Mine on County Forest Land: Correspondence in packet – Town of Wascott requesting approval of transferring Conditional Use Permit #16266 from Douglas County Highway Department to Town of Wascott; and also approval to expand the gravel pit to the north and/or the south of current location. County Forestry and Highway Departments would still have access to any aggregate or mined material resulting from town crushing/mining operations. (Highway Department has no objections.)

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Mock, second White, to support transfer of Conditional Use Permit #16266 Non-metallic Mine on County Forest Land from Douglas County Highway Department to Town of Wascott, and refer to Zoning Committee. Motion carried.

Expansion of Non-metallic Mine (Town of Wascott): (See above.)

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Mock, second White, to approve Town of Wascott’s request for pit expansion to the north and/or south as deemed necessary, allowing the option for the Forestry and/or Highway Department to utilize the site and/or have access to mined/crushed material in the future; all mining and related activities must fully comply with all pursuant waterway and wetland regulations provided by local, state and federal agencies, and refer to Zoning Committee. Motion carried.

WISDOT Snowmobile Trail Crossing Memorandum of Understanding (Brule River Riders Snowmobile Club): Correspondence in packet – Brule River Riders Snowmobile Club requesting Douglas County Forestry Department enter into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) on their behalf, with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WISDOT) for the construction of a snowmobile trail under US Highways 2 and 53 (see map). Construction and maintenance of the trail to be performed and funded by the Brule River Riders.
**ACTION:** Motion by White, second Mock, to enter into a MOA with the WISDOT on behalf of the Brule River Riders Snowmobile Club for construction of a snowmobile trail across US Highways 2 and 53 as identified on the map. Motion carried. Similar MOA to subsequently be established between Douglas County Forestry Department and Brule River Riders Snowmobile Club.

**WISDOT Summer ATV Trail Establishment Memorandum of Understanding (Northwest Trails Association):** Correspondence in packet – Northwest Trails Association requesting Douglas County Forestry Department enter into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WISDOT) on their behalf, to establish a summer ATV trail connecting two existing trails, opening County Highway BB from School Forest Road to Breitzmans Lake Road and County Highway A from Milchesky Road to Tri-Lakes Road (see map). Northwest Trails, Inc., to be responsible for all trail construction and maintenance activities and costs.

**ACTION:** Motion by Mock, second White, to enter into a MOA with the WISDOT on behalf of Northwest Trails Association, to establish a summer ATV trail connecting two existing trails (see map). Motion carried. Similar MOA to subsequently be established between Douglas County Forestry Department and Northwest Trails Association.

**County Forest Entry of County Owned Parcels:** List of straight-owned parcels (24) reviewed. Parcels are not being held from sale and are adjacent to existing County Forest Land. Forestry Department interested in enrolling parcels into county forest management. Prioritizing list suggested.

**ACTION (REFERRAL):** Motion by Mock, second White, to refer (prioritized) parcel list to Land and Development Committee for potential County Forest entry. Motion carried.

**Amnicon River Pines Land Conservation Project (The Conservation Fund):**

**Property Acquisition:** Parcel is 720 acres, located in the Town of Oakland, adjacent to County Forest Land (map in packet). WDNR stewardship grant funding potential to pay for half of the appraised value, with other half to be county-funded, utilizing straight-owned county parcels being entered into County Forest as potential match balanced with direct land acquisition reserve funding not to exceed $330,000. Acquisition would be assisted and facilitated by The Conservation Fund.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by White, second Mock, to approve partnering with The Conservation Fund, move forward with property acquisition, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**Contract for Sale of Real Estate Purchase Agreement or Option Agreement:** Approval of either option requested to best facilitate transaction with The Conservation Fund.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Mock, second White, to approve entering into either a contract for sale of real estate purchase agreement or option agreement with The Conservation Fund and forward to County Board. Motion carried.

**WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Land Acquisition Grant Application:** Requesting approval to move forward with WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Land Acquisition Grant application.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Mock, second White, to approve grant application and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously. Purchase of property is contingent upon awarded grant funding.
Release of Capital & Disaster Recovery Reserve Funding (Land Acquisition): Requesting release of an amount not to exceed $330,000.

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by White, second Mock, to approve release of capital and disaster recovery reserve funding (land acquisition) in an amount not to exceed $330,000, and refer to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Application for County Forest Law Entry: Requesting approval of application for county forest law entry of property if acquired.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Mock, second White, to approve application for County Forest Law for regular land entry of Richard and Mary Jurmain property located in the Town of Oakland (720 acres), upon purchase of property, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

2015 Annual WDNR Recreational Trail Grant Program Participation: Annual approval required by state for WDNR Recreational Trail Grant participation.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Mock, second White, to approve participation in 2015 Annual WDNR Recreational Trail Grant Program and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Open 2015 Tree Hand Planting Bids: Bids received as follows:

Express Forestry Service   $26.70 per acre
Superior Forest Service  $27.90 per acre
Northwoods Forestry    $42.26 per acre

ACTION: Motion by White, second Mock, to approve bid from Express Forestry Service, LLC, in the amount of $26.70/acre, upon meeting all bid specifications. Motion carried.

2014 Budget:
Carryovers/Reserves: Summary of 2014 budget carryovers reviewed (updated reports distributed).

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by White, second Mock, to approve 2014 carryovers and reserves as presented, and forward to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Year-end Transfer of Excess Revenue to the General Fund: Year-end summary of transfer of excess revenues to the General Fund reviewed.

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by Mock, second White, to approve year-end transfer in the amount of $1,000,000 of excess revenue to the General Fund, and forward to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Release of Reserve Funding and Budgetary Transfers: Summary reviewed.

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by White, second Mock, to approve release of reserve funding and budgetary transfers in the amount of $452,958 for projects identified, and forward to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Timber Appraisal Parcels: #08-808-09684-00; #TS-030-02264-00; #TS-030-02265-00; #TS-030-02488-00; #TS-030-02489-00; #TS-030-02490-00; #TS-030-02599-00; #TS-030-02609-00; #TS-030-
ACTION: Motion by Liebaert, second White, to approve timber appraisals (with four parcels removed as identified above). Motion carried.

ACTION: Motion by White, second Mock, to recommend to Land and Development Committee that Parcels #TS-030-02599-00, #TS-030-02609-00, #TS-030-02610-00, and #TS-030-02623-00 held for Forestry Department (refer to 3/25/13 minutes of this committee and 4/30/13 minutes from the Land and Development Committee). Motion carried. (Note: Aforementioned parcels were removed from potential sale.)

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/CORRESPONDENCE:

Hank Land Protection Project (West Wisconsin Land Trust): Jane Anklam (West Wisconsin Land Trust) still in pursuit of attaining funding for this project.

Bird Sanctuary Estates Land Protection Project (West Wisconsin Land Trust): Knowles-Nelson funding has been acquired – awaiting contact from land owner to proceed.

St. Croix Valley National Heritage Area Designation: Wisconsin County Forest Association (WCFA) has recently gone on record objecting to this designation for all counties involved due to substantial concerns over the lack of mention of sustainable forest management and the significance of the timber industry to local economies in the proposed feasibility study. Douglas County Board passed Resolution #45-14 supporting this designation without referral from this committee. Concerns exist about local land manager’s ability to manage forest lands in the future, increased litigation risk, and the intentions behind designation.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by White, second Mock, to refer item to County Board for review and potential rescinding of resolution, per WCFA and Washburn County recommendations. Motion carried unanimously.

ACTION: Motion by Mock, second Liebaert, to extend meeting beyond two-hour time limit. Motion carried.

2014 Annual Department Law Enforcement Report (Sheriff’s Department): Steve Olson provided annual report to committee, noting that $15,000 enforcement monies from Forestry Department for additional patrolling utilized for three major holidays and deer season. Parks have been relatively quiet as far as problems.

Proposed 2015-2017 State Budget (WDNR): Proposed budget identifies three key issues of departmental concern: suspension of stewardship land acquisition grant program until 2028; the County Forest PILT payments’ increase not included; and elimination of a portion of the forestry administrator grant program.


2014 Timber Sale Revenue Record: Reviewed.

2014 Town Severance Payment Record: Reviewed.
Park Creek Pond Dam Failure Analysis: WDNR assigned the hazard rating set as Low Hazard as there are no affected residences and property downstream is a county park. A low hazard dam is required to pass the 100-year flood without overtopping. The dam as currently configured is not able to safely pass the required flows before overtopping of Business 53 occurs. This situation needs to be remedied within ten years as per WDNR order.

March 3, 2015, Timber Sale: Reminder to attend March 3, 2015 (6:00 p.m.) timber sale meeting.

Reports:
Wisconsin County Forest Association: No updates.

WDNR County Forest Liaison: Luebbe to attend statewide WDNR administrative meeting in Minocqua tomorrow, and provide proposed budget updates to Harris.

Future Agenda Items: Northern Long-Eared Bat in Wisconsin.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by White, second Mock, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk