

NORTH CENTRAL FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

November 2, 2008—1:00 p.m.

The annual membership meeting, held at the American Legion, Route 872, Coudersport, Pa. was called to order by the president, Larry Schultz, at 1:10 p.m. There were 62 in attendance, including the following:

NCFLA Officers:

Larry Schultz, President
John Snyder, Vice President
Marie Petrick, Treasurer
Verda Knowlton, Secretary

Directors:

Ken Comstock, Potter Co.
Rick Smith, McKean Co.
Lynda Pontzer, Elk Co.

Advisors:

Tim Pierson, McKean Co. Extension Office
Stan Hess, DCNR Bur. of Forestry, Potter-McKean Co.

Call to Order and General Announcements:

Door Prizes:

Larry thanked everyone who brought door prizes. He said that Stan Hess brought the blue bird boxes; there is a very nice GPS unit along with the chainsaw-carved bear brought by Lynda Pontzer.

Introduction of Guests:

Larry introduced Tim Pierson, Extension Forester, McKean Co. Extension Office, who is our advisor and our speaker today, and who provides service to all four of our counties. Larry also introduced Stan Hess, DCNR Service Forester for Potter & McKean Counties; and Chris Nichols, District Forester, Susquehannock State Forest. Toby Herzing, who is not here today, is the Service Forester for Cameron and Elk Counties. Larry said that it is really worthwhile to have a service forester visit your property and to see your property through the eyes of a professional.

Approval of Membership Meeting Minutes:

Verda Knowlton read the minutes of the General Membership meeting held on July 24, 2008 at the Annual Picnic. Motion made by Larry Stratton, seconded by John Snyder to approve the minutes as read. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Marie Petrick reported that since the beginning balance on April 1, 2008, was \$1,452.22; there were deposits of \$3,204.00 and disbursements in the amount of \$2,065.08 for an ending balance of \$2,591.14. (copy attached).

President's Report:

Larry Schultz reported the following events have been held during the year:

- a general membership meeting on February 21, 2008 at the Courtyard Restaurant in Smethport on the subject of "Woody Biomass and Bioenergy";
- the Central Region Forest Landowners Conference at Penn State University on March 8th;
- a May 18th Woods Walk at Larry Schultz's property;
- a Property Tax Committee meeting with Senator Scarnati on June 5th;
- the July 12th annual picnic and membership meeting at Ken and Jane Cogan's;
- Larry and Tim co-chaired the program committee for the Pa. Forestry Association's annual meeting held in St. Mary's on September 12-13, during which Larry presented a brief history of the NCFLA; and
- a woodswalk was held at Walt and Marie Petrick's on September 21st.

Committee Reports:

Property Tax Committee:

Jim Herzog, tax committee member, reported that each year they contact the county commissioners since they deal with property taxes. Property taxes are based on the assumption that landowners get income each year from forested property, which is not the case. Currently, Jim is part of a group that is pursuing a tax appeal in McKean County on this issue. If the appeal is successful, it will set a precedent. Landowners can also ask for the non-productive areas of their land, such as roads and power lines, to be assessed at a lower rate. However, many people do not apply for this reduction.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Incorporation:

Larry Schultz reported that on March 11, 2008, we met with attorney Steve Minor to incorporate the NCFLA. The two main reasons: to give protection to the personal assets of officers and board members in the event of a lawsuit; and as a non-profit organization, we can receive gifts which would be free of tax for the donors. One-time costs have been \$1,000.00 in attorney's fees so far.

The incorporation required a complete rewrite of our bylaws, mostly to conform to the non-profit corporate language. The Corporate Bylaws Committee, which consisted of myself, Walt and Marie Petrick and Verda Knowlton, re-wrote the bylaws and presented them to attorney Steve Minor for review. We are basically doing things right but we will have to change the election procedure to have nominating ballots available at the July membership meeting, with ballots sent out in September and the new slate of officers announced at the Annual Membership meeting in November. All officers and directors' 2-year terms will expire at the end of 2009.

When the corporate bylaws are finalized, we will schedule a special membership meeting in 2009 because the new bylaws will have to be approved by the members. We still have to complete Federal and state tax forms to obtain tax exempt status which will require a meeting with a CPA.

NEW BUSINESS:

Audit Committee:

Larry Schultz asked for three volunteers to serve on an Audit Committee to meet with Marie Petrick, Treasurer, at the end of the meeting to review her records. This annual review is required by our bylaws to make sure that finances are being handled properly. Alvin Jackson, Don Crew and Fred LeVan agreed to serve on the Audit Committee.

Service Award:

Larry Schultz said that earlier this year, Jean Culver resigned as Treasurer. Larry presented Jean with an engraved wooden clock thanking her for her many years of service to the NCFLA since the beginning of this organization in 1998. Jean thanked everyone and said she has enjoyed her many years as treasurer, but felt it was time to let somebody else take over.

Tim Pierson remembers the meeting in Port Allegany in 1998 during which a few people—including Jean Culver, Jane Cogan, Al McCullough, Stan Hess, Sandy Lyon and he--agreed to try to put a landowner's association together. They had 5 separate meetings to write the bylaws. This Association is the largest in the state, with great leadership and outstanding programs for our landowners.

Penn State Extension Update:

Tim Pierson reported that Linda Finley, PFA, thanked the NCFLA, Larry Schultz and Tim for putting together a really good program and tour for their annual September meeting.

Tim mentioned that there is a Penn State "Natural Gas Exploration" booklet available here today; be sure to pick one up. The NCFLA's Oil, Gas and Mineral Rights meeting in Port Allegany on February 22, 2006 was the beginning of Penn State's involvement in this issue.

Tim reported that 25 people attended the "Ginseng Plant Production Workshop" held in Eldred on September 6th and all participants received seeds to plant.

North Central Woodland Owners Conference:

Larry Schultz and Tim Pierson raised the issue of whether we should return to having a four-county North Central Woodland Owners Conference again. For the past four years, we have been one of the many sponsors of the Central Region Forest Landowner's Conference which alternates meetings between Penn State and a site in our area. Very few of our members attend the meetings held at Penn State and none of the members from that area attend the conferences held in our area. In the past, Stan Hess said that 50-60 people attended our 4-county conferences which were held in Emporium. After a show of hands, it was agreed to return to holding a four-county North Central Woodland Owners Conference.

Websites:

Walt Petrick reported that the NCFLA website is: <http://www.orgxites.com/pa/ncfla/index.html> and since it is sponsored by a site for non-profits, it does not cost us anything. The website is also listed on our new membership brochure.

Stan Hess reported that there are two websites for aerial photographs of your property: www.pasda.psu.edu and www.pennpilot.psu.edu which has aerials photos from the 1940's.

Stan Hess also reported the www.iConservePA.org website by DCNR is an effort to get people involved in conservation and it would be good for some forest landowners to participate. There are iConservePA seed packets containing native Pennsylvania wildflowers on each table—be sure to take some home to plant.

Larry Schultz reminded everyone that following the buffet dinner, Tim Pierson will be speaking on the topic, "Utilizing Woody Biomass for Energy Independence in Austria and Smethport, Pa." Drawings for the door prizes will be held at the conclusion of Tim's presentation.

Motion made by Don Crew, seconded by Tony LeVan to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 p.m. Motion carried.

Submitted by,

Verda Weder Knowlton
Secretary

Attachment:

Treasurer's Report
Annual Meeting Attendees

Cc: Walt Petrick, Webmaster