

North Central Forest Landowners Association, Inc.
General Membership Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2011

The General Membership Meeting and Annual Banquet was held at the Fire Hall, North Broad Street, Emporium, Pa. with 37 members and 12 guests in attendance, including the following:

Officers:

Tim Pierson, President
Walt Petrick, Vice President
Marie Petrick, Treasurer
Verda W. Knowlton, Secretary

Advisor:

Tim G. Pierson, Ph.D., McKean Co. Cooperative Extension

Service Foresters:

Stan T. Hess, Potter/McKean Co. DCNR Bureau of Forestry

Directors:

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

Call to Order & General Announcements:

The meeting was called to order by the President, Tim Pierson, at 12:25 p.m. Tim announced that this is the 13th year that we have held the Annual Banquet and we will be celebrating some of the people who founded the Association in 1998.

After the dinner, there will be an excellent presentation on "Wind Energy and It's Impact on the Forests" by Michael Barton, Consulting Forester.

Tim announced that Larry Schultz is selling chances for the door prizes which will be drawn after the speaker is finished.

Approval of Minutes:

As the minutes of the Annual Picnic & Demonstration Day informational meeting held on July 9, 2011 appeared in the program, only highlights were read by the Secretary. Motion made by Carol Crew, seconded by Claire Head to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Reports of Officers & Committees:

President's Report:

NCFLA, Inc. Powerpoint Presentation:

Tim indicated the NCFLA presentation that is currently running on the screen was presented at the first Forest Fest at the Penn State Arboretum during which over 1,000 people viewed it and visited our display booth.

Treasurer's Report:

Marie Petrick reported that after the expenses for the dinner, the current balance in the checkbook is \$2,558.13. She said that since we do not have fund raisers, all of our money comes from membership dues. Marie thanked all of the officers and board members who donate their time to the Association as well as the members who hold woodswalks on their properties.

Marie Petrick said that most of the door prizes were donated by members and thanked them for their help.

Property Tax Committee:

Jim Herzog reported that the purpose of the Committee (consisting of himself, Larry Schultz and Dave Lombardo) is to help the forest landowners keep their property taxes at a reasonable level. There are two values the county assigns to your property—one is a fair market value and the other is a Clean & Green value. In McKean County, out of 625,000 properties, only 360,000 have applied for Clean & Green valuation which actually represents 57% of the tax base. Potter County has 278,000; Elk—100,000; and Cameron has 72,000 in Clean & Green. The per acre taxes paid vary by county—Cameron--\$4.00; McKean--\$7.00; and Elk--\$2.00. Forest landowners get 5% benefit for every \$1.00 paid in taxes; homeowners get \$1.10 back for every \$1.00 paid in taxes. The amount of benefits forests give back to the public in a year equals \$2,000 per acre and include: water quality, carbon sequestration (one tree provides enough oxygen for one person for a year), along with recreation and wildlife values.

In McKean Co., the Clean & Green value ranges from \$94.00 to \$255 per acre with the majority paying the higher rate. The law says that if one person gets a lower rate, then everyone gets the lower rate. Jim has a lawsuit asking that everyone get the \$94.00 per acre which is before the Appeal Board and the Commonwealth Court.

Jim also worked to get non-productive land (roads, trails, power lines, pipelines etc.) a lower use value which could save 8% per year in taxes. Dave Lombardo reported that he was able to save landowners in Clean & Green in Cameron county \$120,000 by stopping any tax increases from coming to pass last year.

Newsletter Committee:

Walt Petrick said that if anyone has any articles they want to contribute to the Newsletter, they should contact him or Marie. Marie said they could also use help with proofreading the Newsletter.

Website:

Walt Petrick said he needs to update the last articles on the website. All Newsletters are archived on the website and there are links to other sites for information. Dave Lombardo said it is a good website and is easy to navigate.

Program Committee:

The Program Committee will be meeting on December 6, 2011 to set the Calendar of Events for 2012.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Election Results:

Larry Schultz, Chairman of the Nomination Committee, reported that he and Roy Knowlton opened the ballots on October 25th. The two-year terms of officers and directors expire at the end of this year. There were a total of 95 ballots received but not everyone voted for every office.

President:

Tim Pierson --91
Don Crew—2 (write-in)

Vice President:

Walt Petrick--92
Jim Herzog—2 (write-in)

Secretary: (write-ins)

Verda Knowlton—10
Marie Petrick—2
Marilyn Jestes—2
Judy Stratton—1
Matt Miller—1
Pam Goodrich—1

Treasurer:

Marie Petrick--92
Walt Petrick—1 (write-in)

Directors:

Elk Co.—Lynda Pontzer—88
Cameron Co.—Dave Lombardo—84
McKean Co.—John Stratton—86
Potter Co.—Verda Knowlton—54
Matt Miller—35
Ken Comstock—1 (write-in)
Don Crew—2 (write-in)

Larry Schultz said the ballots are available for review if anyone wants to see them. Tim Pierson congratulated those coming onto the Board and recognized Ken Comstock and Rick Smith who did not run for Director positions.

Ken Comstock said we should recognize Verda Knowlton for doing an outstanding job as Secretary for the past 6 years.

Door Prize Tickets:

Larry Schultz announced that Door Prize tickets are available until the time of the drawing. He reminded everyone that the NCFLA, Inc. is a 501©(3) charitable organization, so that any donations to the Association are tax deductible.

Presentation of Lifetime Memberships:

Tim Pierson said that the Association was started in 1998 with a core group of people putting together the first Board of Directors and the Association has been successful because of this initial group. The Board felt that they would like to recognize them by giving them a Lifetime Membership to: Al McCullough who

is recovering from a very serious illness and could not be here today; Jack & Jean Culver; Ken & Jane Cogan—Ken is back in the hospital again and they were not able to attend; and Merle “Bud” Zetler who was Tree Farmer of the Year and could not be here today.

Tim presented the Culvers with the Lifetime Membership and he will see that the other recipients receive their Memberships.

NEW BUSINESS:

Penn State Extension Update:

Tim said that the Extension Service still exists.

D.C.N.R. Update:

Stan Hess said that next year there will be even more sugar maple decline. He also passed around a container with actual adult larvae of the Emerald Ash Borer.

Gas Leasing:

Dave Lombardo announced that about a year ago, Cameron County property owners got together to discuss gas leasing—some had leases that were about to expire and other were interested in leasing. Anyone with property in Cameron or McKean County who would be interested in joining such a gas leasing group, please see him. Tim said that landowners who join together to negotiate gas leases are able to get better prices.

Audit Committee:

Tim asked for three members to volunteer to audit the Treasurer’s books during the meeting today which will serve as the annual review required by our bylaws. Matt Miller, Alvin Jackson and Don Crew agreed to serve on the Audit Committee; upon completion of the review of the Treasurer’s records, the audit was signed and dated.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 1:05 p.m. by Matt Miller, seconded by Rick Smith. Motion carried.

Submitted by,

Verda Weder Knowlton
Secretary

Cc: Walt Petrick, Webmaster

