

NORTH CENTRAL FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
January 12, 2010
9:00 a.m.

The Board of Directors Meeting was held at the McKean County Extension Office, Smethport, Pa. In attendance were:

Officers:

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

Directors:

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

Advisor:

Tim Pierson, McKean Co. Ext. Office

DCNR Bur. of Forestry, Service Foresters:

Toby Herzing, Cameron-Elk Co.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Tim Pierson at 9:07 a.m.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion made by Dave Lombardo, seconded by Marie Petrick to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2008 Board of Directors meeting. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Marie Petrick reported that \$3,150 was received in income from membership dues, \$2,258.84 in expenses were paid leaving a balance of \$4,325.75 as of December 30, 2009 (copy attached).

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Tax Committee:

Clean & Green Assessments:

Dave Lombardo reported that Cameron County raised the assessment above fair market value for forest landowners enrolled in Clean and Green. If you are assessed at fair market value, what is the point of Clean and Green? We want the assessment to be done fairly and to meet the intent of the law which is to give a lower assessment in order to keep the land in timber. The proposal which Dave sent around was discussed with Penn State, with Senator Scarnatti and has gone to John Hancock for industry support in trying to have some way of calculating forest values. He also hopes to meet with representatives of the Department of Agriculture who sets the Clean and Green values with input from the Bureau of Forestry. Dave Lombardo said that Cameron County is now allowing for different forest types and they have been trying to educate the assessors. In Cameron County, you can bring in a timber type for your property and get your assessment lowered. Currently, the taxes are based on an average.

In 2000, Keith Horn Associates went to court and won against the 100% increase in assessments because McKean County did not give notice by July 15th. Dave said he hired the attorney who worked for Keith Horn and he has sent a letter to the Cameron Co. attorney

Tim said that once forest land assessments have reached fair market value, we have an issue as an Association to carry forward since Clean and Green is a preferential assessment for doing something with the land to benefit everyone. Fair market value is not preferential assessment and many landowners in McKean Co. are already at fair market value. If the Association is going to support a formula for calculating forest values, the Committee should present it to the Board for concurrence on the methodology. If there is going to be a change, the Bureau of Forestry will make that change. Unfortunately, landowners enrolled in Clean and Green can't drop out of the program because their assessment has now reached fair market value or they will be subject to the difference in back taxes for up to seven years.

Ken Comstock stated that the law should be amended and the administration of the law should be re-worked again. Tim said that there will be a re-work of the Clean and Green legislation because of the gas development in the Marcellus shale. Tim reported that in New York, the state requires forest landowners to have a forest management plan, prepared by a forester, in order to be in Clean and Green and it has to be approved every year. Dave Lombardo feels that Pennsylvania should use a Forest Stewardship Plan to meet that requirement for its Clean & Green program.

Assessment of Forest Types:

Dave Lombardo reported that each county is assessed based on the type of timber growing in that county. Tim said that McKean county considers that there is 40% black cherry on the property for assessment purposes. If landowners get a forester to approve their forestry types, they can take that to the assessor and to get a re-assessment based on the type of timber that is actually growing on the land. Ken Comstock suggested that each forest landowner may want to go to the assessor and ask to see how their property is currently being assessed.

Program on Clean & Green:

Tim reported that in 2000, we held a program in Port Allegany on Clean and Green and how values were calculated and also held individual sessions with McKean assessors. Dave Lombardo suggested we again put on a one-hour course for the layperson—here's the summary, and here are your options. Tim said that a recommendation has been made to the Program Committee to develop a program on Clean and Green to educate landowners in the 4 counties, with Jim Herzog and Dave Lombardo as participants.

Program Committee:

Walt Petrick distributed minutes of the Program Committee meeting held on December 15, 2009. The Meeting Procedure will be: the Committee will meet 3 weeks before the event; and then 1-2 weeks before the event, an announcement will be sent to the media. After the event, there will be follow-up articles for the media and our Newsletter. Tim Pierson reported that we will be advertising twice on all of our activities to the public and following up with a newspaper article with photographs of the event. Walt reviewed the Program Committee Action List designating the responsibilities of each member for the upcoming events.

Annual Picnic-- July 17: The subject will be "Chainsaw Safety" utilizing two videos from the North East Loggers Association; since Tim is a member, he can obtain them free of charge.

“Estate Planning for the Forest Landowner”: The workshop will be held at the Coudersport Elementary School in May or June and the presenter will be Attorney Thomas M. Owlett, from Owlett & Lewis, Wellsboro, Pa.

“Indian Trail Trees”—April 15: This seminar will be held in conjunction with the Potato Creek Trail Association meeting at the Courtyard Restaurant in Smethport, Pa. Tim said that there are 3 Indian trail trees in Riley Hollow which started as an Indian trail and then became a stagecoach trail. We would like to see people bring photos of Indian trail trees on their property with GPS coordinates. Marie passed out websites for Indian trail tree locations (copy attached.) Dave Lombardo mentioned that the State Historic Information preservation Organization (SHIPO) deals with federal land.

“Property Taxes for the Private Forest Landowner”—will be held in February with the tentative location the American Legion, Port Allegany, Pa. The presenter will be Lloyd Casey.

Annual Membership Meeting & Banquet—November 7: This will be held in Cameron or McKean Co. and the subject will be “Invasive Plants” presented by Art Gover, Penn State, who works with the Pa. Statewide Roadside Program.

Newsletter Committee:

Walt Petrick said that the next e-newsletter will highlight the Ken Comstock’s woodswalk; an article on the Cogan’s award at the annual membership meeting; and a summary of the Woodland Owners Conference. An article from Tim Pierson will appear in every newsletter. The newsletters are sent electronically and by mail. In the next newsletter, we will include a notice that “you will automatically get the e-letter unless you respond that you don’t want to receive it.” There will be also be special events E-letters.

Website Update:

Walt reported that Stan Hess sent in some corrections on the article on gas well drilling—bids are now up to \$2,500 per acre; new officers were updated; and Walt added the Pa. Game Commission website link for the sale of their trees. Toby Herzing mentioned that since the state nursery is being closed, the Bureau of Forestry is only selling leftover trees.

OLD BUSINESS:

Annual Membership Meeting & Banquet:

Marie reported that the Association paid \$514.00 to cover the cost of the meal above the \$15.00 that was charged to members and guests; and that it cost \$50.00 for the back meeting room at the Red Fern Conference center.

Tax Exempt Status:

Verda Knowlton reported that the revised Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Policy adopted at the November membership meeting, along with the financial data, were given to Parente-Beard for inclusion with the tax exempt status application. The application should be ready for signature and submission to the IRS by the end of this week or early next week.

Guidelines for Educational Causes NCFLA, Inc. Will Support:

The Board reviewed and made changes to the draft guidelines prepared by Dave Lombardo. Verda will re-type the revised guidelines as adopted by the Board and e-mail to the Board along with a draft Application for Project Grant Funds form. (copy attached). Motion made by Dave Lombardo, seconded by Marie Petrick to approve the Guidelines as revised. Motion carried.

Motion made by Marie Petrick to approve the Association donating \$50.00 to each of the three school vocational programs with a forestry component which had been requested by Stan Hess last year. We will ask that they provide a brief description of how the funds were used. Seconded by Ken Comstock. Motion carried. Marie will send Stan an e-mail notifying him of the approval.

Statewide Forest Landowner's Association:

Stan Hess had put this on the agenda but he is not here today. Tim reported that in New York State, there is a statewide association, each woodland owner association is a chapter of the state association and they hold a conference every year. Tim will contact Cornell and NY DEC to find out how well that is working in representing forest landowners in New York and will report back at the next Board meeting. Tim will also bring the issue of a statewide WOA up at the Penn State Renewable Natural Resources Woodland Owners Association Work Group.

Best Practices for W.O.A.'s Conference:

Marie Petrick showed the Board the NCFLA poster which was used for the conference on November 21, 2009 at the Penn State School of Forestry. Tim will see if he can get it laminated to protect it for use in the future. Nancy Baker got it printed for us for \$10.00. The conference had 91 people in attendance, representing 21 WOA's. Marie has photographs of all the posters and will make a power-point presentation for the next board meeting. Marie also reported that the Steering Committee currently has enough members on it; that the next Pa. Forest Stewards training will be held in Somerset County on Sept 10-12 and Oct. 1-3, 2010; and that there is a new WOA called "Women in the Woods."

NEW BUSINESS:

NCFLA, Inc. Hats:

Tim shared a copy of an invoice from Endless Threads, in Emporium who did the hats for the Allegheny Hardwood Silviculturist Hats which cost \$7.00 each. It was agreed that Marie will order 200 hats, 100 with blue bills and 100 with green bills; if they can't mix the order, we will order 200 in green.

New Membership Cards:

Marie passed out six sample new membership cards and the board chose sample #6. Marie will order 500 cards printed. (Copy attached)

New Membership Brochure:

The brochure was reviewed and there was some discussion about revising it in accordance with a copy of the Bradford-Sullivan Landowner's Association brochure. A revised brochure will be presented at the next Board meeting. Tim reported that we will be printing 1,000 copies of the new membership brochure and will sent 100 copies to each of the Board for distribution. Walt Petrick added that the membership application also appears on the website.

2010 Board Meeting Dates:

Verda Knowlton passed out a draft calendar of events for the Board to use which included board meeting dates of March 16; Sept. 14 and December 14.

Youth Education:

Tim Pierson suggested that we add "Youth Education" to our woodswalk agendas and have kids bring their I-Pods along.

Forest Tent Caterpillar:

Toby Herzing said that the Bureau of Forestry feels that this year is going to worse than last year and was talking about spraying for the forest tent caterpillar. Tim said he heard just the opposite.

Lunch:

Motion made by Marie Petrick, seconded by Rick Smith, to reimburse the McKean Co. Extension Office for the pizza we had for lunch in the amount of \$52.00. Motion carried.

Motion made by Walt Petrick to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lynda Pontzer. Motion carried.
The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Verda Weder Knowlton
Secretary

Attachments (4)