

Parks, Tourism and Economic Development Committee Minutes

Joint Meeting with Executive Finance Committee

Tuesday, July 5, 2016

1. **Call to Order:** The Parks, Tourism and Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 9:12 AM in the County Board Room of the Trempealeau County Courthouse located at 36245 Main St, Whitehall, WI by Jon Schultz, Chair. The Executive Finance Committee called their meeting to order at 9:07 AM by Tim Zeglin and both meetings were run simultaneously in a joint session.
2. **Certification of Open Meeting Law Requirements:** Kirstie Heidenreich certified that the Open Meeting Law Requirements have been met.
3. **Roll Call:** Members present: Jon Schultz, Jeanne Nutter, Jean Galasinski, Chuck Walek, Curt Skoyen, and Sarah Ecker. Also present were Department of Land Management staff Kevin Lien, Becky Arneson, Kirstie Heidenreich, Ann Hempel and Tess Thompson.
4. **Adoption of Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda by Jeanne Nutter; seconded by Chuck Walek. Motion carried.
5. **Public Comment Period:** There were no public comments.
6. **Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a Potential Private Land Donation:** Ann Hempel, Land Records Modernization Coordinator, stated that she was invited to be at the meeting to use GIS software to portray the land to be potentially donated on a large screen for the Committees to view. There are several parcels in the Towns of Unity and Chimney Rock. The first property is in Chimney Rock near County Road Y and Steffenson Valley Lane and is 160 acres. Ann stated that the elevation ranges from 872 feet by the stream to 1058 feet, so there are both ridges and wetlands on the property. Jon Schultz stated that with this type of land he would envision the possibilities of primitive camping, hiking, other trail use activities, or some type of county forest. Tim Zeglin stated that there is one working farm directly west on County Road Y, which is unique because there are very few working farms left in Chimney Rock. He also said that the two DNR wildlife areas/public lands are nearby as well. Next, Ann presented several parcels in Sections 14 and 15 in the Town of Unity, about three miles east of Strum, along the Buffalo River Trail and the Buffalo River. She stated that the parcels are flat, in the riverbed and are primarily pine plantations. Jeanne Nutter stated that there is lots of great public hunting land in this area as well. Ann stated that the further east parcel is 96 acres and the west parcel is 104 acres. Dick Miller stated the land donor is willing to donate one of the three areas and the County would have to choose between the Chimney Rock location, or the east or west Unity parcels. Kevin Lien asked Ann what the accessibility for public access is to the Unity parcels, other than the Buffalo River Trail. Ann stated that all parcels are accessible via Prairie Road. Travis Mossman arrived to the meeting and stated that mountain bike trails are one of the fastest growing summer and winter activities, along with fat-tire biking in the winter. He said that Levis Mounds near Neillsville has seen tremendous income from their bike trails. Jon Schultz stated that he fails to see how the Unity parcels would be exciting to a visitor. Becky Arneson stated that many of her incoming calls are visitors questioning

where ATV usage and tubing opportunities exist in Trempealeau County. Jon Schultz stated that ATV trails can be problematic and ATV usership is changing and clubs are greatly limiting trail use throughout the year. He also said that with ATV trails, all other trail users need to find other space because other users don't want to hear ATVs. Jon Schultz made a motion that future investigations and interest be made only to the Chimney Rock parcel at this time. Jeanne Nutter seconded. Motion carried. Tim Zeglin asked that before the Committees make decisions, that all adjoining landowners be notified so that they can provide input as well. Kevin Lien stated that his department can notify landowners similar to how it is done when there is a mine proposal, etc. Dick Miller said that this should continue to be a joint effort between Executive Finance and Parks, Tourism and Economic Development Committee and that the Parks Committee should focus its efforts on the research and logistics. Another joint meeting between the Committees is scheduled for Monday, August 1st at 9:00AM in the County Board Room.

7. **Adjourn:** While the Executive Finance Committee adjourned, the meeting of the Parks, Tourism and Economic Development Committee did not adjourn at the end of the joint meeting, as it continued on in to its regularly scheduled meeting at 10:00 AM (minutes for the regular meeting can be found in a separate document).

Submitted by: Kirstie Heidenreich, recording secretary