

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – February 28, 2005**

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Joe Allen

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Pete Garwood

Others Present: Mike Meriwether and Dave Howelman

**1. Meeting called to order** at 9:03 a.m. by Bernie Blackmore.

### **2. Public Comment**

- None.

### **3. Ambulance Authority**

Mike Paradis and Marna Robertson, from Meadow Brook Medical Care Facility, joined the meeting as well as Terry Smith, Supervisor of Forest Home Township, and Mike McCann, Architect. Mr. Smith showed the Committee plans for placing an ambulance barn on the County owned property across from Meadow Brook Medical Care Facility. Mr. Smith presented the reasoning for placing the facility across from Meadow Brook and the specific location on the property.

Peter Garwood, Coordinator/Planner indicated the sewer line is not where it is shown on their preliminary plan and that they should check with Tony Marshall, the excavator, for the exact location.

The concept of a long term lease for the property (between the County and the ambulance authority) was discussed.

The Meadow Brook representatives expressed concerns about the location being directly across the road from Meadow Brook, because of the potential of additional traffic as well as the noise from the sirens. Mr. Smith pointed out this is the alternative location after Meadow Brook expressed concerns about the original proposed location next to the Northwestern Bank on the same side of M-88 as Meadow Brook.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the plan for the Ambulance Facility on the property across from Meadow Brook Medical Care Facility, modifying the site plan so the development is closer to the setback line. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **4. Oil & Gas Drilling - Airport**

Scott Baty and Steven Dzierwa (Jerva), from SRW, Inc., presented a request to drill a gas well on County owned property and to enter into a lease arrangement with the County for gas extraction on Antrim County Airport property.

The proposed drilling would take place on the north part of the airport property. The State owns the minerals under the south side of the property

and has already entered into a non-development lease with a gas and oil company.

The Committee asked for additional information for their next meeting on April 4.

## **5. Orchard Hill Road Property Update**

Terry Smith, Supervisor of Forest Home Township, and Todd Vigland, from the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), reviewed the new developments regarding the possible purchase of the property, through a joint effort by Forest Home Township and Antrim County, from the Sevald family.

A conservation buyer has agreed to purchase 350 acres of the Sevald property and hold it while the County, Township and Conservancy work out the funding details. Once the property is purchased by the Township and the County, it would be split up into two separate parcels; the Township owning one and the County owning the other. The property will be selling for \$2,200 an acre.

Mr. Smith had to leave the meeting.

An application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund would have to be submitted in August. The current projected match amounts are as follows:

Forest Home Township	\$100,000
Antrim County	\$100,000
The Conservancy	\$ 40,000

The County's portion would come from the Forestry Fund.

Mike Meriwether will conduct a review of the timber on the property. Todd Vigland will check with Forest Home Township to see if they would agree to allow the County to manage the timber on all of the property in return for the revenues timber sales would generate over the decades.

## **6. Forestry Report**

Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee he will be reviewing the performance of the timber company that is under contract with the County to conduct a timber harvest on the Alba Highway parcel (corner of Alba Hwy. and M-66). Mr. Meriwether has concerns that they may have cut more trees than they should have.

Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee a gas and oil Company has asked for an easement on the Alba Highway property. The requested easement would co-exist with an easement currently being used by a different gas and oil company.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to authorize Mr. Meriwether to have two parcels of property surveyed: The Frog Hollow parcel and the Alba Highway parcel. Funds to come from the Forestry fund. Motion carried – unanimous.**

## **7. Sands Condominium Request**

The Committee reviewed a letter from Arnold Taddia (attached) requesting an "End of Public Beach" sign at the north boundary of the County owned property, next to the hydro dam facility in Elk Rapids. The Village of Elk

Rapids leases the property from the County, but sent Mr. Taddia to the County as they were unwilling to put the signs up.

The Committee discussed a Record-Eagle newspaper article that indicated the State of Michigan Supreme Court will be taking up the issue of whether or not the public has the right to walk on the Great Lakes beaches in front of private property or not.

The Committee decided to take no action on the request at this time.

## **8. Communications**

### Upper Manistee Natural River Zoning

The Committee reviewed a letter from Dan Pearson, Natural Rivers Zoning Administrator through the Department of Natural Resources, regarding the effective date of the Upper Manistee Natural Rivers Zoning Ordinance. The Committee acknowledged the communication but realized no action was required (attached).

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – April 4, 2005**

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Joe Allen  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Pete Garwood and Elizabeth St. Pierre  
Others Present: Mike Meriwether, Russ Blasdell, Al Lurtsema, Terry Smith  
Heidi Lang, Scott Baty, John Strehl, and Jim Ferguson,

**1. Meeting called to order** at 9:01 a.m. by Bernie Blackmore.

### **2. Public Comment**

- None.

### **3. Ambulance Authority**

Terry Smith, Supervisor of Forest Home Township, showed the Committee plans for placing an ambulance barn on the County owned property across from Meadow Brook Medical Care Facility. The potential effects of power lines on the landing zone were discussed. It was decided that the wires would not be a problem and that helicopters could land safely on the grass since there are no loose stones there.

### **4. Orchard Hill Road Property Update**

Mr. Smith also reported for Todd Vigland, of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. He said that the Olson Foundation is ready to close on the purchase of 350 acres of the Sevald property very soon.

Mr. Smith will review information on long range strategic planning that the Township may implement in order to maintain a variety of resources on the property.

He also indicated that Forest Home Township would agree to allow the County to manage the timber on all of the property in return for the revenues timber sales would generate over the decades. He thought it was a good idea to manage the forests as a block and would be willing to pay the ACD forester for this work.

Mr. Smith had to leave the meeting after this report.

### **5. Oil & Gas Drilling – Airport**

Scott Baty, from SRW, Inc., presented a request to drill a gas well on County owned property and to enter into a lease arrangement with the County for gas extraction on Antrim County Airport property.

The proposed drilling would take place on the north part of the airport property. The State owns the minerals under the south side of the property and has already entered into a non-development lease with a gas and oil company. Antrim County owns the land and the minerals on north side of the property.

Mr. Baty explained various terms of the lease.

- SRW trying to connect units and would like to cross under Intermediate Lake. He recognized concerns about fresh water but did not foresee

problems.

- A clause states that there will be no sub-leasing.
- SRW is only asking to drill one well on the airport property.

John Strehl said it is conceivable to have the pipeline under the airport because of other similar situations at other airports. SRW would pay Antrim County by the rod for such a pipeline.

Charlie Koop will review information compiled by the Antrim County Airport and SRW before next board meeting on Thursday April 14.

Al Luurtsema was concerned about odors from gas extraction. This should not be a problem according to Mr. Baty.

## **6. Proposed legislation for Conservation Districts**

Jim Ferguson updated the committee on the new legislation for conservation districts. A proposal was put into a house bill to have Antrim and Delta counties take over the Michigan DEQ's current function of permitting certain "minor" activities (e.g. boardwalk construction, shoreline stabilization projects and other developments in wetlands). This change would allow Heidi Lang to give permits whereas now she just recommends activities. Other counties may follow this 3-year pilot project.

The proposed legislation was developed after a subcommittee made up of staff, board and others from Delta, then Antrim Counties lobbied their state representatives (Kevin Elsenheimer and Tom Kasperson). Janet Person and others then met in Lansing March 15 to discuss the first draft with additional legislators. The content of the revised bill should be completed ready in 2 weeks, according to Mr. Ferguson.

Advantages of this proposal include fees from permits that would go to Antrim County. Pete Garwood wanted to know why these fees have to go through the county rather than the Antrim Conservation District. Bernie Blackmore questioned whether Antrim County's financial obligation would increase in the future if funding to the Conservation District were cut.

Other advantages, according to Mr. Ferguson, are that the rules will be less stringent than what was written in the previously proposed county ordinance and that the legislation will provide more local control for expediting the review process on permits.

Mr. Ferguson is now asking for county support to help take this further but is looking for support in concept only. He will make a presentation at the next meeting of Antrim County Board of Commissioners.

## **7. Forestry Report**

Mr. Meriwether listed several points requested for survey from Lennox Engineering that together cost a total of \$2500.

A vote is needed by the current set of County Board members to update a 1997 agreement regarding easements on lands owned by the County and by Al Lamerson from Gaylord.

**MOTION: by Eugene Dawson seconded by Bernie Blackmore to recommend**

**that the County Board trade the 33-foot-wide easement on land owned by Al Lamerson for an easement across Antrim County land so that Mr. Lamerson can get an easement for access to public and forestry activities. Carried unanimously.**

Mike Meriwether has conducted a review of the timber on the Sevald property and reported that it will be tough to manage these forests due to the hilly topography. The cutting would be spread out over 20 years on the 700+ acres so that the forests would not be dismantled and can be used for recreation and other values. Mr. Meriwether expects the land to have plenty of ruffed grouse habitat. Intervals between logging will range from 10 to 15 years, depending on the tree species. Small trees will be removed first. Costs will include expenses for tree planting.

DTE has paid a \$10,000 bill for damage to timber during construction of the well and flow line. The timber was sold as well.

DTE (a gas and oil Company) has asked for an easement on the Alba Highway property on 66. DTE is leasing 40 acres of non-developable land near Alba Road, but must purchase additional acres in order to be able to develop it. DTE would also like to purchase an easement from Antrim county for a line that would result in a 30 foot wide area where all trees would be permanently removed. A motion by Joe Allen to deny this request was tabled.

The idea of selling the easement and then charging a set percentage from DTE's gas income for use of the land was discussed. DTE has already contacted Heidi Lang to observe DTE install the line in wetlands and under rivers so that she can make sure the pressure does not create cracks in the pipes.

## **8. Communications**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – May 2, 2005

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Joe Allen

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Pete Garwood

Others Present: Mike Meriwether and Janet Person

**1. Meeting called to order** at 9:00 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Legislation for Conservation District**

Janet Person, Executive Director for the Antrim Conservation District, explained the proposed legislation which would allow the County Board of Commissioners give the conservation districts authority to administer the "minor" environmental permits the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) would typically handle. The DEQ would retain responsibility for all "major" projects. Ms. Person will be at the Board of Commissioners meeting to explain the new legislation to the Board of Commissioners.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Board of Commissioners support the legislation that would give the County the authority to appoint the Conservation District to enforce the minor environmental permits the DEQ currently administers. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**4. Funding for Cedar River Natural Area (CRNA)**

Ms. Person requested the County appropriate \$3,500 from the forestry fund for improvements and maintenance at the CRNA.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve appropriating up to \$3,500 from the forestry fund to the CRNA for improvements and maintenance. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**5. Forestry Report**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, informed the Committee the Lamerson easement swap, approved at the last Board of Commissioners meeting, is in the process of being constructed.

Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee that it looks like Leon Beal may be willing to convey an easement to the County for a landlocked county-owned parcel in Echo Township. He asked if the Committee had an idea of how much the County would pay for the easement. The Committee directed Mr. Meriwether to ask Mr. Beal what he thinks is fair.

\* Lewis Road Parcel

Mr. Meriwether gave an update to the Committee regarding the County-owned parcel on Lewis Road, on which a gas company is locating a gas well. The trees are down and the well pad has been cleared. The County has received payment of \$10,000 for the loss of the trees.

**6. Land Review Status**

Peter Garwood, Coordinator/Planner, informed the Committee the State of Michigan is doing a review of State owned properties and may be selling some parcels in the near future. Antrim County is in the category of counties that are the next group of counties to be reviewed. On any parcels targeted for sale by the State the local units of government will have first right to purchase the parcels.

**7. Communications**

Mr. Garwood informed the Committee of a letter received from Wellmark International, a company that sells a product (chemical) that can be used in a mosquito control program.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – May 31, 2005**

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Joe Allen

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Pete Garwood

Others Present: Mike Meriwether

**1. Meeting called to order** at 9:00 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

- None.

**3. July Meeting Date**

- July meeting will be held on July 5th at 9:00 a.m. as the regular meeting would fall on July 4th, a holiday.

**4. Forestry Report**

- Mike Meriwether, District Forester informed the Committee that he discovered that the County has a legal easement to County property off Lewis Rd. in Chestonia Twp. Previously it was thought that there was not an easement to the property.

Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee the timber harvest on the parcel at Meadow Brook has been completed (thinned).

**5. Ambulance Barn**

- Terry Smith, Forest Home Township Supervisor, presented the preliminary drawings for the proposed ambulance barn. The Building dimensions are 88' by 40'. The Committee requested that Mr. Smith Ambulance Authority's attorney to draft an agreement. Once the draft agreement is complete, it must be reviewed by County legal counsel.

**6. Orchard Hill Property Update**

- Terry Smith presented the proposal for the purchase of the Orchard Hill (Sevald) property with the help of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant.

- The proposal is that the County and the Township would work together to obtain a Trust Fund grant. The Township would be the sponsoring governmental unit for the grant application. The plan calls for the County to put in \$100,000 the Township to put in \$100,000 and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy to put in \$41,000 – all to be used as match dollars.

Mike Meriwether informed the Committee that Janet Person has submitted a grant application to WalMart for the purchase of the property, also.

**7. Communications**

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- Tax Foreclosed Properties

The Committee reviewed the list of tax foreclosed properties provided by the

County Treasurer. The Committee directed Mr. Meriwether to review the list for any properties that might provide an easement to County property that is currently land locked.

- State Sale of Land

The State of Michigan is currently in the process of evaluating all property they own and proposing the sale of some that may not meet their ownership criteria. Mike Meriwether informed the Committee that it appears the State listed some of the County-owned Grass River Natural Area property as State owned property that should be sold. The error has been pointed out to the Department of Natural Resources and we are awaiting reply.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – July 5, 2005

Members Present: Gene Dawson and Joe Allen  
Members Absent: Bernie Blackmore  
Staff Present: Peggy Kole  
Others Present: Stan Moore, Laura Sexton, Russ Blasdel, Laura Stanek, and Peg Comfort

1. **Meeting called to order** at 9:00 a.m. Joe Allen chaired the meeting in the absence of Bernie Blackmore.

2. **Public Comment**

- None.

3. **Meadow Brook Walking Path**

- Janet Person, Executive Director for the Antrim Conservation District, updated the Committee regarding the Meadow Brook Walking Path. The District has been working with Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for a walking path for the seniors. Just recently, MDOT agreed to stripe and put up signage, but no light. MDOT needs to know where the path connects, which will be right up to the Little League field. Ms. Person said she would be getting the preliminary plans and will be able to submit them at a future CLAF meeting.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the striping and signage of the Meadow Brook Walking Path. Motion carried - unanimous.**

4. **Forestry Report**

- None.

5. **Antrim Conservation District Appropriation**

- Janet Person, on behalf of the Antrim Conservation District, made the following appropriation requests: \$19,000 for the District; \$10,000 for Forestry; and \$12,000 for Water Quality Technician.

The Committee had questions regarding the Soil Erosion request. Janet explained that this would be requested at the Public Works Committee on Wednesday.

Also, there were questions regarding the Water Quality Technician position. Ms. Person indicated that the remaining dollars for the position will be made up by grant dollars such as restoration grants and the grant proposal to do a watershed plan for the Antrim Creek watershed. There was also some discussion regarding Mitchell and Roberts Roads Grant position.

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**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve the Antrim Conservation District appropriation request of \$19,000 for the District, \$10,000 for Forestry and \$12,000 for the Water Quality Technician, for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**6. MSU Extension Budget Request**

- Stan Moore, County Extension Office Director, presented the MSU Extension budget request. There was some discussion and questions.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve the MSU Extension budget request for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**7. Elk River Chain of Lakes (ERCOL) Steering Committee Appropriation Request**

- Peg Comfort gave an overview of what the Chain of Lakes Steering Committee has been doing over the years. Ms. Comfort indicated that in the past the Conservation Resource Alliance has acted as the facilities and administrative assistance for the Chain of Lakes Committee. Ms. Comfort indicated that the CRA will be relinquishing those duties to the Grass River Natural Area (GRNA).

Thus, Ms. Comfort presented an appropriation request of \$1,000 for the ERCOL Steering Committee, from which they will pay GRNA to provide administration services. Peg Comfort will continue to serve as chair of ERCOL Steering Committee.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve the ERCOL appropriation request of \$1,000 for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried - unanimous.**

Ms. Comfort also updated the Committee on the Elk River Chain of Lakes Watershed CMI grant.

**8. Antrim County Fair Appropriation Request**

- Theresa Cole, President of the Antrim County Fair Board, presented the Fair appropriation request of \$6,000.

Ms. Cole updated the Committee on what is happening with the County Fair. There was some discussion regarding the State involvement.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve the Antrim County Fair appropriation request of \$6,000 for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried - unanimous.**

**9. Watershed Center Appropriation Request**

- Anne Brasie presented the Watershed Center Appropriation request of \$1,000. Ms. Brasie also gave an update regarding the Watershed Center.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve the Watershed Center appropriation request of \$1,000 for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried - unanimous.**

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## 10. Orchard Hill Property

- Terry Smith, from Forest Home Township, and Todd Vigland, from the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), updated the Committee on the Orchard Hill Property.

- GDO Investments (Oleson Foundation) is going to purchase the Orchard Hill Property at a total cost of \$759,000. GDO Investments is the “step-in” conservation buyer and will hold the property until all other factors are in place (such as the grant dollars). The MNRTF grant application is being completed at this time and is due to the State on August 1.

The Committee made it clear that the grant agreement should be reviewed by County legal counsel prior to signing.

- The property will not be held jointly, but the township will own half and the county will own half, which generated further discussion. Mr. Smith explained that the township may wish to do more than passive recreation and having the ability to do that without requesting permission from the County, and vice versa. Also, the forestry aspect comes into it in regards to the demarcation line. The timber management on either side will remain the same.

Mr. Smith explained to the Committee that the naming of the property – Glacial Hills Pathway and Natural Area – came about by a very recent consensus of the Township Board.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the attached resolution of support for the acquisition of the Glacial Hills Pathway and Natural Area. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Terry Smith complimented the GTRLC for their work with this project.

## 11. Public Comment

Ambulance Authority

Terry Smith showed samples of the base, accent and roof colors of the new ambulance facility as well as the floor plan. He also indicated that he will be attending the Board of Commissioner meeting to update them.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – August 1, 2005

Members Present: Gene Dawson, Joe Allen and Bernie Blackmore (joined the meeting at 9:35 a.m.)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Pete Garwood and Joe Meyers

Others Present: Russ Blasdell and Janet Person

1. **Meeting called to order** at 9:10 a.m. Gene Dawson chaired the meeting in the absence of Bernie Blackmore.
2. **Public Comment**  
- None.
3. **Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) - Orchard Spraying**  
- Peter Garwood, Coordinator/Planner, indicated he had talked to Glen Chown, Executive Director of the GTRLC, to relay the Commissioners concerns about how the Conservancy has been managing the orchard land they now own. Mr. Chown acknowledged the concerns and indicated that the fruit trees on the property owned by the Conservancy are scheduled to be pulled out very soon. He also indicated the Conservancy is going to meet with the farmers in the area to inform them of the Conservancy's plans and listen to the farmer's concerns.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to direct staff to send a letter to the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) regarding the concerns of the orchard growers. Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### 4. **Communications**

Memorandum from the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) regarding the Great Lakes Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement  
Mr. Garwood informed the Committee that he had received a copy of the Great Lakes Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement from the NWMCOG. The Coordinator/Planner Office staff will review the draft and report back to the Committee.

##### Sevald Property

Mr. Garwood informed the Committee that the grant application to the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund (MNRTF) has been submitted by Forest Home Township for the purchase of the Sevald property.

##### Cedar River Natural Area (CRNA)

Janet Person, Executive Director for the Antrim Conservation District, informed the Committee that the horse riding stable across the road from the CRNA is using the CRNA trails for their horse back riding business. The constant use by horses is tearing up the trails. Discussion took place about the possibility of charging a trail use fee to any business using the trail for business purposes.

##### Wetzel Lake

Ms. Person updated the Committee on Wetzel Lake.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – August 29, 2005

Members Present: Gene Dawson and Joe Allen  
Members Absent: Bernie Blackmore  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers and Mike Meriwether  
Others Present: Russ Blasdell

1. **Meeting called to order** at 9:04 a.m. Joseph Allen chaired the meeting in the absence of Bernie Blackmore.

2. **Public Comment**

- None.

3. **Forestry Update**

- Mike Meriwether updated the Committee on two easements the County is trying to obtain so that some of the landlocked parcels the County owns can become unlandlocked. The Allan Lamberson property easement has been secured and the Lewis Road property is almost complete but was held up due to some clerical errors. Mr. Meriwether also noted that one of the surrounding property owners has cut 14 trees on the County's property, off Skinkle Rd. Arthur Lennox, the County Surveyor, is surveying the property to make sure that the property line is where it is supposed to be. Mr. Meriwether also noted that the access road to get to the property is deteriorating and some minor repairs, such as graveling, will need to be done.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve Mike Meriwether to obtain quotes for the graveling and award the low bidder with the job. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether informed the committee that he cut some trees down at Noteware's Landing, at the request of Commissioner Howelman, and wanted some clarification on the Conservation District's responsibilities with the County parks. Mr. Allen recommended to Mr. Meriwether to bring this issue up to the Parks Committee because there needs to be clarification on the responsibility of the parks. Mr. Meriwether also noted that he was hoping to have the woodchips on the Cedar River trail done by the end of the week.

4. **Cedar River Natural Area**

Joe Meyers informed the Committee about the six notices sent to the County by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the ownership of the mineral rights on the property and the kind of lease that would be desirable. Investigation showed that the DNR owns 75% of the mineral rights on some of the property and the County owns the rest. Mr. Meyers also noted that in speaking with Amy Keusch, from the DNR, that due to the fact that the County owns 25% of the rights, that any company would have to contact both the DNR and the County if they want to drill for oil.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to inform the DNR that on the portion of mineral rights they own in the Cedar River Natural Area, that it needs to be**

**classified as a Leasable Non-development so if drilling happens, there would be no surface use or development. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**5. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy Spraying Update**

Mr. Meyers gave the Committee a copy of the letter sent, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners and the Committee, to the Conservancy speaking of the disapproval of the Conservancy's inaction on keeping up with an orchard that they purchased, costing the surrounding farmers thousands of dollars in extra pesticide spraying.

**6. Great Lakes Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement Update**

Mr. Meyers reported to the Committee about the updated agreement and informed them that they could view the document or receive a copy if needed.

**7. Elk Rapids Harbor**

Mr. Meyers presented a letter from Elk Rapids Harbor and explained that they want to place gazebo pods on the Antrim County property located in front of the Elk Rapids Hydro Dam. He also explained to the Committee that due to the contract with Elk Rapids Harbor, they need to get the Committee's approval.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to approve the plan for placing gazebo pods around the Elk Rapids Dam at the Elk Rapids Harbor. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Meeting Adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

# *County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee*

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – October 3, 2005**

Members Present: Joe Allen and Bernie Blackmore  
 Members Absent: Gene Dawson  
 Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
 Others Present: Jack White, Russ Blasdel, Janet Person, Mike Meriwether and Bob Robinson

**1. Meeting called to order** at 9:00 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

- None.

**3. Ball Fields**

- Trish Drollinger and Ann Walsh joined the meeting, to discuss the improvements to the ball fields by the new animal shelter. They are proposing a block dugout and would also like to pursue the installation of a sprinkler system on the field. The material will be donated or at a significantly lower price. They also have volunteers willing to donate all of the labor for both projects. Jack White, Chair of the Board of Commissioners, inquired about building a wood structure to make it less permanent. Ms. Walsh noted that she would look into all of the possibilities and report back to the Committee next month.

**4. Forestry Update**

Bid Opening

Bernie Blackmore opened the bids for the timber sale in section 24 of Echo Township.

	<b>Paris Sawmill</b>	<b>Fahl Forest Products, Inc</b>
Sugar Maple, 343	\$45,600	\$72,030
White Ash, 76	\$3,740	\$1,520
Beech, 61	\$560	\$350
Basswood, 52	\$1,245	\$2,080
 Total	 \$51,145	 \$76,200

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Bernie Blackmore, to accept the bid for the timber sale of 80 acres in section 24 of Echo Township, from Fahl Forest Products for the amount of \$76,200 (attachments). Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether will draft a contract for Mr. Blackmore to sign.

Mr. Meriwether also would like to separate the park space in Barnes Park from the forest space. Mr. Meriwether recommended that the Parks Committee and the County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee come together to proceed on this project because Barnes Park is his next timber project.

Mr. Meriwether also noted that he has reviewed Barb Bradford’s Master Plan sectoral assignment and noticed that some things were not what he feels to be accurate. Joe

Meyers informed Mr. Meriwether that the Master Plan is in the preliminary stages and should be revisited at a later date because the Planning Commission has not yet received a copy of the assignment.

Mr. Meriwether also informed the Committee that the state has put a developmental oil and gas lease on Del Mason Road and the Frog Hollow properties.

**5. Feasibility Study**

Mr. Meyers informed the Committee about a memo that he received from the County Clerk regarding a feasibility study for the Soil Erosion Control to be administered by the County. Mr. Meyers informed the Committee that the memo is just informational.

**6. Township Ambulance Authority**

The Committee decided to postpone this subject until the next meeting. The Committee would like someone from the Ambulance Authority to attend and comment on the memo from the County's legal counsel.

**7. Member/Public Comment**

Janet Person, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District (ACD), explained to the Committee, why the Soil Erosion Control Department should be administered by the Antrim Conservation District. She also explained about how her funding has not changed for the position and the ACD has been compensating for the necessary raises and insurance premiums. She also indicated that due to this she normally has to lay off the Soil Erosion Control Officer in the winter but due to extra funding the district was able to keep her on full time.

Ms. Person also gave an update on the Wetzell Lake improvements. She noted that there was a hole in one of the floats in the raft. Ms. Person noted that there will be a Wetzell Lake meeting at the end of the month, when Robin Pearson from the DNR returns from Russia.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

Joseph Allen

Bernie Blackmore Chairman

Eugene Dawson

## Minutes – October 31, 2005

Members Present: Joe Allen, Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Joe Meyers

Others Present: Janet Person

**Meeting called to order** at 9:00 a.m.

### Public Comment

Eileen Wallick entered the meeting, inquired about the timber cut at Barnes Park and if the County knew where the line for the parkland and forestland exactly are. She also informed the Committee that Art Lennox, the County Surveyor, will draw the park/forest boundaries for \$400. Janet Person, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District, informed the Committee that the Barnes Park Forestland is part of the 50 year forestry plan, currently on year 18. This matter was tabled for a further meeting.

### Ball Fields

Trish Drollinger and Ann Walsh joined the meeting, to discuss the improvements to the ball fields by the new animal shelter. Bernie Blackmore informed the Committee that the Commissioners are worried about the permanence of any structure because of the short lease on the property. There is also concern about the contract stating that the County would have to pay for any improvements done on the property.

**Motion made by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the Village of Bellaire and the Bellaire Little League put a block dugout with a concrete slab and bleachers on the County property leased to them pending the Village absolves the County of any/all costs associated with the project and future projects if the lease is broken early and amend the contract to state that. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Township Ambulance Authority

Terry Smith, Chair of the Township Ambulance Authority, entered the meeting and explained that his legal counsel has revised the lease to what Charlie Koop, Antrim County's legal counsel has asked of them. Mr. Smith also noted that he has resubmitted the agreement to Mr. Koop's office and is waiting for a response. Mr. Smith also informed the Committee of the activities at the Township Ambulance Authority.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the lease for the Township Ambulance Authority pending the authorization of County Legal Counsel. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Oil and Gas Lease Update

Mr. Meyers informed the Committee of the contract with Quick Silver for the enlargement of the slurry pit. He noted that all of the requests have been granted and the County will be paid \$1000.00 for the use of the existing pit. Mr. Meyers also noted that all of the County property the Commissioners asked to be classified as leasable non-development was granted.

### Water Quality Technician Feasibility Study

Mr. Meyers informed the Committee of the feasibility study that is to be conducted on the continuation of funding for the Water Quality Technician for 2007. Mr. Meyers explained that the Finance

Committee requested the County Lands Agriculture and Forestry Committee generate a list of duties to be performed by the Water Quality Technician on behalf of the County. The Finance Committee will then decide on continuing to fund the position for 2007.

Ms. Person explained that Cory (Water Quality Technician) is not a County employee and the County could not dictate what his job description is. She further noted that the Antrim Conservation District has no Water Quality Technician and has never had the position. Ms. Person noted that if the Finance Committee wanted any information that they should contact the Antrim Conservation Districts Finance Committee.

**Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – November 28, 2005**

Members Present: Joe Allen, Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Janet Person, Mike Meriwether, John Hanson, Trish Drollinger, Stan Moore

**1. Meeting called to order** at 8:55 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Mohrmann Park**

Joe Meyers informed the Committee that he was notified by Richmond Brown that he would not be able to attend the meeting. Mr. Meyers informed the Committee that Mr. Brown had attended the last Parks Committee Meeting asking for the land contiguous to Mohrmann Park to be considered part of the park. Mike Meriwether informed the Committee that he has been in contact with Mr. Brown about this situation and felt that Mr. Brown is satisfied with the result. Mr. Meriwether further felt that there needs to possibly be a joint meeting with the CLAF Committee and the Parks Committee about identifying what is County parkland and what County forestland is.

**4. Ball Fields**

John Hanson, President of the Village of Bellaire, and Trish Drollinger entered the meeting and explained to the Committee the situation regarding the ball fields. Mr. Hanson noted that he would like something more long term for the property. Mr. Hanson also expressed concern about investing in a piece of property that could be taken away from the Village. He wanted to know what can be done as well as open a line of communication with the County and Village.

The Committee informed Mr. Hanson and Ms. Drollinger that the village knew the constraints when this property was leased. The Committee further noted that they had some concerns that this would become an issue in the future.

Mr. Hanson noted that the Village would possibly be up for a trade of some of the properties that the Village currently has possession of for control of the ball fields.

Mr. Blackmore directed Mr. Meyers to inform Pete Garwood of this and bring back more information on some of the Village properties next meeting.

**5. Water Quality Technician Feasibility Study**

Janet Person, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District, informed the Committee that she spoke with the Chair of the Finance Committee and was informed that she would like to have an itemized list of the priorities for the budget for the 2007 year.

**6. Communications**

None.

**7. Member/Public Comment**

Mike Meriwether, Antrim County Forester, informed the Committee of the Forestry activities that have been taking place throughout the County.

Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee that the gas well on the Del Mason Road property has been

drilled. Mr. Meriwether further noted that the Orchard Hill Road Property, in Forest Home Township, is having the mineral rights classification of leasable non-development changed to a leasable development by SRW. They want to classify where the oil well and the flow lines would be placed as a leasable development. Mr. Meriwether also informed the Committee that there is a need for a road at the site but could cost upwards of \$20,000 and also thinks that there could be a trade of the gas company building a road for us giving up the development rights. Mr. Allen noted that the road would be a plus.

Gene Dawson noted that he was at a Central Lake Township Meeting and informed the Committee that one of the residents was explaining that we have an Autumn Olive bush problem. Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee that they are a great shrub but can over power other plant species. Mr. Meriwether further noted that they tend not to stay in a place for very long and help create hardwood forests.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 a.m.