

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – January 30, 2006**

Members Present: Joe Allen, Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Joe Meyers

Others Present: Janet Person and Mike Meriwether

**1. Meeting called to order** at 8:57 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, gave an update on projects relating to forestry in the County. Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee that the Memorandum of Understanding for Administration of County Forest Lands has expired and needs to be updated. Janet Person, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District, informed the Committee that she will retype the agreement and bring it to the next Board of Commissioners meeting.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners renew the Memorandum of Understanding for the Administration of County Forest Lands. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Discussion ensued about the trail at Barnes Park. The Committee inquired about who was paying for the trail. Ms. Person described that it will be paid for by the grant that she had wrote and received for the County. Mr. Meriwether also asked if the Committee would recommend to the Parks Committee that he be allowed to do some timber cuts in the park.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to allow the County Forester to proceed with the forest management in the Barnes Park forestland and proceed with the hard trail throughout the forestland also, recommend the Parks Committee allow the forester to cut within the park. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether noted that the Lewis Road timber cut is proceeding today. Mr. Meriwether further noted that the Antrim Conservation District will be constructing timber bridges over Mitchell Road and Roberts Road. Ms. Person noted that she is waiting on prices.

**4. Ball Fields**

Discussion ensued over the ball fields that the Village of Bellaire is leasing.

The last CLAF meeting the Committee tasked Mr. Meyers with finding out potential properties the county could want as a trade for the ball field site. Mr. Meyers informed the Committee that the two things that Mr. Garwood could think of would be the parking lot next to the Red Cross building and annexation for Meadow Brook and Meadowview.

Further discussion ensued over the “pros” and “cons” over each property. Mr. Dawson indicated that he would feel better if we did not make any decisions on the property until we decide where the future site for the jail will go.

**5. Township Ambulance Authority**

Mr. Meyers indicated that Terry Smith, Forest Home Township Supervisor, had completed his tasks

and the rest is in the hands of the Antrim County Legal Counsel.

**6. Communications**

None.

**7. Member/Public Comment**

None

Meeting Adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – February 27, 2006

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: Joe Allen  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Todd Vigland, Janet Person and Mike Meriwether

1. **Meeting called to order** at 9:02 a.m.

2. **Public Comment**

None.

3. **Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, gave an update on projects relating to forestry in the County. Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee that the Alba Road and M-66 property in Chestonia Township would be receiving \$5,000 in damages very soon. Mr. Meriwether also noted that the Lewis Road timber sale in Echo Township is ongoing.

Discussion ensued over the 340 acre parcel off Orchard Hill Road in Forest Home Township. Mr. Meriwether noted that the oil company, SRW, Inc., obtained a non-developmental lease with the State of Michigan for those county owned properties. Currently, SRW would like to have the property re-classified as a leasable developmental. SRW would like to have three to five wells on the property and the development sites would be the parts classified as leasable developmental. Mr. Meriwether noted that they would be willing to put in a road that could be used for timber management at their expense. Mr. Meriwether further noted that the road is a high priority but very expensive. Mr. Meriwether presented a letter regarding the County supporting the reclassification.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve signing and sending a letter to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources supporting the reclassification of the above stated property. Motion carried – unanimous.**

4. **Sevald Property**

Mr. Meriwether and Todd Vigland, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, addressed the Committee about the Sevald Property. Mr. Vigland informed the Committee that the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund seemed uneasy with the County/Township application last year and further noted that the Township would try for another grant for a smaller portion of the land without the County. Mr. Meriwether noted that it could be in the county's best interest to purchase 180 acres of the land to connect the 438 acres of land the County currently owns that is fragmented. Mr. Vigland noted that the asking price for the property is \$2,200 an acre and the land is appraised at \$2,522. The price would be \$396,000 and Mr. Meriwether gave a few options on how to supplement that price tag.

1. Cut every tree over 12 inches on the property.
2. Have the County buy the property out right if Mr. Meriwether figures out a way to bring that much revenue back to the county.
3. Potentially work with a company to have them buy the property and deed it over to us for 396,000 in timber.

Bernie Blackmore indicated that Mr. Meriwether work on this project and continues to report back to the County Lands , Agriculture and Forestry Committee.

## **5. Forestry Contract**

Mr. Blackmore informed the Committee that the Board of Commissioners asked them to review the Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Blackmore indicated that the Commissioners would like to know how much the forestry program costs the County.

Mr. Meriwether informed the Committee that the Antrim Conservation District (ACD) receives a \$50,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Agriculture for his wages. Mr. Meriwether further noted that the 75% of revenues from timber sales was given to the ACD to protect the funds. Mr. Meriwether further noted that the ACD has been authorized to spend any of the money from the timber sales on the basic functions of the District. Mr. Meriwether also indicated that it was important to have money in the ACD's forestry budget if the grants for his position ended.

Mr. Blackmore indicated that the Commissioners were concerned about the ACD taking 75% of damages from oil and gas companies. Janet Person indicated that this was due to a motion about 1 ½ years ago. Ms. Person apologized for forgetting to put that in the contract.

Mr. Meriwether noted that 85% of his time was spent helping residents with their private forestland questions. Mr. Meriwether indicated that the County might want to consider a County Forester/Parks Manager.

## **6. Communications**

None.

## **7. Member/Public Comment**

Ms. Person indicated that this would be her last meeting and noted that she has enjoyed working with them.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## **Minutes – March 27, 2006**

Members Present: Joe Allen, Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Jack White, Todd Vigland, Mike Couturier, Christie Roman and Mike Meriwether

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

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Oil and Gas Lease**

Mike Couturier, OIO Energy presented the Committee with the plan to lease the railroad easements mineral rights in Grass River Natural Area.

Discussion ensued over the non-developmental lease of the property.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen to enter into a lease with OIO Energy over the railroad grade at Grass River Natural Area, pending Mike Meriwether's, County Forester and Charlie Koop's, Legal Counsel approval. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**4. Sevald Property**

Todd Vigland, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, addressed the Committee over the Sevald Property. Mr. Vigland informed the Committee that they were looking for a letter of support for grant that they are applying for.

Discussion ensued over the Sevald property.

Mike Meriwether informed the Committee that the mineral rights come with the property and that could be a way to help with the cost, either as a one-time sell or over time. Joe Allen indicated that he felt that mineral rights were not something to part with.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to write and send a letter of support for the Sevald Property acquisition grant with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund from the County Lands, Agriculture, and Forestry Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**5. Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, updated the Committee on activities regarding the County Forest Lands.

Mr. Meriwether indicated that the OIO Energy is interested in the County 40 acres off Stover Road that abuts Shanty Creek. Mr. Meriwether noted that the County owns the mineral rights to the property and this will be addressed at the next meeting.

Mr. Meriwether informed the Commission of the activities at Barnes Park. Mr. Meriwether noted that the trail should be paved by the Petoskey Stone Festival and the timber should be out of the park as

soon as the frost laws lift.

Discussion ensued over the value of timber management.

**6. Communications**

None.

**7. Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – May 1, 2006

Members Present: Joe Allen, Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Mike Meriwether, Janet Person, Russ Blasdel, Trish Drollinger and Charlie Koop

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

**2. Public Comment**

- None.

**3. Village of Bellaire Walking Path Lease**

- Janet Person, Village of Bellaire, informed the Committee of the changes needed to complete the lease on the walking path.

Discussion ensued over the length of the lease, the automatic renewal, and the termination clause.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners amend the lease on the Village of Bellaire walking path be for fifty years with no automatic renewal clause. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson to recommend the Board of Commissioners amend the lease on the Village of Bellaire walking path so the walking path will stay there and there is no early termination clause. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**4. Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, updated the Committee on forestry activities throughout the County.

Mr. Meriwether indicated that, in regards to the Sevald property, the lower 80 acres would be the only acreage that could be timbered for value while not clear-cutting it. Mr. Meriwether indicated that the timber value would be around \$50,000 to \$100,000 and the mineral rights could be sold for around \$50,000.

Mr. Meriwether noted that a property owner showed interest in purchasing 40 County owned acres adjacent to the Spring Ridge Condos. The Committee directed Mr. Meriwether to negotiate with the property owner to see what we could get for that property.

Discussion ensued over the Memorandum of Understanding for Management of the County Forest Lands and over the oil and gas damage payments. Charlie Koop inquired about what the 75% for the district includes and what does it go for.

Mr. Meriwether indicated that the 75% for forestry and oil and gas damages is over inflated but it goes for conservation projects and private property forestry management with no limitation. Discussion ensued over if we should earmark the money for specific purposes.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson to extend the current Memorandum of**

**Understanding month to month until a new agreement can be reached. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Discussion ensued over a County owned forty-acre parcel in Kearney Township (that we own the minerals to) that a company is looking to lease. Discussion ensued over what kind of policy we should have for oil and gas leases.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen to recommend the Board of Commissioners enter into an agreement for the 40 acres for no less than 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the royalty and no less than a \$100 per acre signing bonus. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**6. Communications**

None.

**7. Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – May 22, 2006

Members Present: Joe Allen, Bernie Blackmore and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Mike Meriwether, Russ Blasdell, Pete Garwood and Laura Sexton

**1. Meeting called to order** at 9:04 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

- None.

**3. Memorandum of Understanding – Forestry**

- The Committee discussed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Antrim Conservation District.  
Discussion ensued over the changes to the document.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approves the Memorandum of Understanding. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**4. Village of Bellaire Ballfields**

Pete Garwood noted that four dugouts have been placed on the leased County Property without permission and indicated that this is a breach of the lease. According to the lease, all additions must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Discussion ensued over what action should be taken. The Committee decided to wait for a response from the Village of Bellaire and discuss this at the Commissioner meeting.

**5. Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, gave an update on events regarding County Forest lands.

The Committee discussed the possibility of a County Lands budget fund.

Discussion ensued over what would be included in the fund.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Finance Committee create a fund for County Lands from monies generated by oil and gas royalties and easement revenues. MOTION –RESCINDED**

Laura Sexton, County Clerk informed the Committee of the current funds in place and what the process currently is.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Finance Committee create a Special Revenue Fund named the County Lands Enhancement Fund. Also, the Committee would like the revenues from the Oil and Gas Fund to be transferred into this fund and all new oil and gas royalties and easement payments go directly to this fund. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that expenditures are limited to the recommendations of the County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee on all County lands. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether indicated that the property owner interested in the 40 acres next to the Spring Ridge Condos has offered \$5,000 an acre. Mr. Meriwether indicated that the property is very developable.

Ms. Sexton noted that the Board of Commissioners should go in closed session at their June 5<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss this.

The Committee discussed their policy that the Chairman of CLAF can approve bills under \$3,000 but in the minutes, it gives that authority to the Parks and Lands Committee per a motion on April 14, 1994 and a policy on December 14, 1995.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the following motion that was passed on April 14, 1994 before the County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee was created:  
The County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee Chairman be authorized to sign timber sale contracts and the County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee as a whole be authorized to incur expenditures up to \$3,000 for forestry related projects.  
Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether indicated that we traded an easement for County access to a previously landlocked parcel. Mr. Meriwether noted that he has sold some of the timber but nothing significant for a road that the land owner is building

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen to approve the bills in amounts of \$595 and \$2,600 out of the forestry fund for improvements on the Barnes Park Trail. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether noted that he would like to work with Michigan Maps for the interpretive displays. The Committee indicated that Mr. Meriwether could proceed with the sign idea.

The Committee informed Mr. Meyers that they would like to work on the County lands identification next meeting.

**6. Tax Foreclosed Properties**

No action taken. Postponed until next month's meeting.

**7. Communications**

None.

**8. Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – June 26, 2006

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Joe Allen  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Stan Moore, Laura Sexton and Mike Meriwether

**Meeting called to order** at 1:05 p.m.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA)**

Amy Beyer, of Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA), presented the appropriation request for \$1,000.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to approve the Conservation Resource Alliance appropriation of \$1,000 for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **Antrim Conservation District Appropriation**

Christy Roman, on behalf of the Antrim Conservation District, made the following appropriation requests: \$19,000 for the District; \$12,000 for the Conservation Technician; and \$20,000 for the Employee Stabilization Fund.

The Committee discussed the Employee Stabilization Fund and felt that it should be a reimbursement fund.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to approve the Antrim Conservation District appropriation request of \$19,000 for the District, \$12,000 for the Conservation Technician, and \$20,000 for the Employee Stabilization Fund for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **MSU Extension Budget Request**

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

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

### **Antrim County Fair Appropriation Request**

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

The Committee discussed the appropriation and noted that it had not changed in a number of years. The Committee noted that if they were to raise the appropriation, what would the Fair Board use it for. Ms. Cole noted that improvements could be made that need to be made and it would help a lot.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to approve the Antrim County Fair appropriation request of \$6,000 and an additional request of \$2,000 by the County Lands , Agriculture and Forestry Committee for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried - unanimous.**

### **Watershed Center Appropriation Request**

Anne Brasie, from the Watershed Center, 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.**

### **Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether informed the Committee of a letter he wrote for the Airport regarding the oil leases and gas wells on the property.

Mr. Meriwether inquired if money had been set aside for the Forestry Trail at Barnes Park. Mr. Meriwether noted that the trail needed to be chipped and signs needed to be put up.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to approve the County Forester purchase woodchips for the Barnes Park Trail for under \$3,000. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether noted that he has purchased some gates for certain county lands.

Joe Meyers spoke on the memo regarding the County timber cut policy. No action was taken at this time.

The Committee discussed the issue of the 40 acres of County property off Batchelder Road. The Committee discussed their options on the next step to take in regards to the property.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners put the 40 acres off Batchelder Road out for bid and we also reserve the right to refuse any and all bids, also this property will be used to acquire the Sevald Property. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **Tax Foreclosed Properties.**

The Committee took no action on this item.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – July 31, 2006

Members Present: Joe Allen and Gene Dawson

Members Absent: Bernie Blackmore

Staff Present: Joe Meyers

Others Present: None

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

2. **Public Comment**

None.

3. **Ambulance Barn Plans**

The Committee reviewed the plans for the ambulance barn on the Meadow Brook site.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve of the plans for the ambulance barn. Motion carried – unanimous.**

4. **Property in Shanty Creek**

Joe Meyers informed the Committee that he was contacted by a property owner in Shanty Creek that would like to give his property to the County. Mr. Meyers noted that there is a possibility that if the County were to take ownership of the property that they would have to pay association fees. The Committee directed Mr. Meyers to look into the pros and cons of acquiring the property.

5. **Meadowview, Meadow Brook and Ball Fields**

Pete Garwood informed the Committee of the cost savings Meadow Brook would have if they were annexed to the Village of Bellaire.

Discussion ensued over sites in the Village of Bellaire that are of County and Village interest.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, for Pete Garwood to continue working on annexation of the Meadowview and Meadow Brook properties and to have the Finance Committee look into a way to help the village with the sludge removal. Motion carried – unanimous.**

6. **Memorandum of Understanding**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to have the Board of Commissioners accept the Memorandum of Understanding with the Antrim Conservation District for the forestry management. Motion carried – unanimous.**

7. **Forestry Update**

None.

8. **Communications**

None.

9. **Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – August 28, 2006

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Joe Allen and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers  
Others Present: Janet Person, Dan Ritt, Russ Blasdell, Trish Drollinger, Christie Roman, and Mike Meriwether

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

2. **Public Comment**

Mr. Ritt noted his concern for the sale of the property off Batchelder Road.

Bernie Blackmore spoke on the Batchelder Road property and the Sevald Property.

3. **Bid Opening**

The Committee opened two bids for Batchelder Road Property.

Len Strand - \$151,000

Robert S. Canniff and Mark Gerbhard - \$124,400

The Committee discussed bid amounts and they felt that it was not high enough to justify selling the property.

Mr. Strand indicated that the property should be advertised more and maybe a verbal bid would be more productive.

4. **Bonnie Brook Property**

Janet Person spoke in regards to the Village of Bellaire's dredging project. Ms. Person indicated that when she worked for the Antrim Conservation District, they tried to get a regional dredging permit from the DEQ but were denied. Ms. Person further noted that the village is now pursuing this project and other entities are more than willing to work with the village for the project. Mike Meriwether indicated that Finch Creek in the Grass River Natural Area might be a possibility for dredging.

Ms. Person indicated that the Village would be looking to dredge next October. Mr. Blackmore indicated that anyone looking to dredge ponds or rivers should contact the Antrim Conservation District.

5. **Ball Fields**

Trish Drollinger and Janet Person, Village of Bellaire, spoke to the Committee on the ball fields. Ms. Person noted that the Village will absolve the County of all costs for improvements if they are to take the property back. Ms. Person noted that she will have their attorney write the amendment to the lease and get it to the Coordinator/Planner's Office.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to have Legal Counsel look over the lease amendment to the ball fields from Bellaire and comment at the next County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee meeting. Motion carried – unanimous.**

6. **Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether indicated that the Emerald Ash Borer has been located 1/2 mile from Bellaire. This could be damaging to most of the trees in Bellaire because they are ash trees. Mr. Meriwether indicated that the Conservation District along with MSU Extension will be holding a seminar September 28, 2006, 6:30-8:30 in the Governmental Center at the Village of Elk Rapids.

The Committee inquired about the injection of infected trees. Mr. Meriwether noted that injection would work on yard trees but not in an ash forest.

**7. Timber Sale**

Mr. Meriwether noted that he will be bidding out a timber sale for a property in Chestonia Township commonly known as Bundy Hill.

**8. Barnes Park**

The forestry trails are not chipped yet but they received free chips and the park crew and Ron from the district will put the woodchips on the trails.

Gene Dawson inquired about taking the Commissioners out to the Barnes Park building for the October Board of Commissioners meeting to see the new trails and building. Joe and Mike Meriwether will set it up.

Christie Roman inquired about doing educational programs at the Cedar River Natural Area. The Committee felt that it would be a great idea.

**9. Communications**

None.

**10. Member/Public Comment**

The Committee discussed the Batchelder Road Property and our next steps.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – October 2, 2006

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore, Joe Allen and Gene Dawson  
Members Absent: None  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers, Charlie Koop, Mark Randolph, and Pete Garwood  
Others Present: Mike Meriwether

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

2. **Public Comment**

None.

3. **Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether informed the Committee of the Bundy Hill timber sale and noted that the bids were due on October 30, 2006. Mike noted that 55 companies were sent the bid sheet. Mike also noted that he has marked 100 pines on the Valley Road property to be bundled into a joint sale with one of the surrounding property owners. The Committee discussed a County lands tour for this fall but due to the short time period and other projects in the works, the Committee decided that next spring would be a better time for the tour.

Mike informed the Committee that he submitted a grant for interpretive signs for the forestry trail at Barnes Park to help offset the cost and indicated that he is continuing to work on getting wood chips for the forestry trail at Barnes Park.

Discussion ensued over spending money from the forestry fund without it being reviewed by CLAF. The Committee also discussed the Sevald property and ways to fund the acquisition.

Mike spoke on the work that he does regarding private and public property. The Committee discussed the Grass River Natural Area property that was purchased out of the forestry fund.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to draft a letter to Jack White, asking if land acquisitions should come through the County Lands, Agriculture, and Forestry Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

The Committee discussed the new law lifting forestry restrictions on County forestry lands that were acquired from the State. This matter was tabled until next meeting.

The committee discussed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for forestry services with the Antrim Conservation District. The Committee went over the changes that Charlie Koop made from the original MOU.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the Memorandum of Understanding as amended. Motion carried – unanimous.**

4. **Grass River Natural Area**

Mark spoke on the rail trail the County has a claim to but does not own. Mark indicated that the County could quit claim the trail to Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) so they could work with the landowners that own the property. Charlie advised the Committee that they could do this.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to recommend the Board of Commissioners quit claim the interest on the trail that the County does not own to Grass River Natural Area. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**5. Memorandum of Understanding**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen, to go into closed session to discuss the memo written by Charlie Koop regarding the lease amendments. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**6. Ball fields**

The Committee went into closed session at 10:40 a.m.

The Committee resumed open session at 10:55 a.m.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to not accept the lease amendments to the ball fields. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson, to send the Board of Commissioners the trail easement amendments. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**7. Communications**

None.

**8. Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – November 6, 2006

Members Present: Bernie Blackmore and Joe Allen  
Members Absent: Gene Dawson  
Staff Present: Joe Meyers and Pete Garwood  
Others Present: Mike Meriwether, Janet Person, and Trish Drollinger

1. **Meeting called to order** at 8:58 a.m.

2. **Public Comment**

None.

3. **Ball fields/Village and County Property**

Janet Person inquired about the Committee not approving the lease amendments for the ball field. Discussion ensued over the dugouts and the effect they had on the lease. The Committee agreed that they would not like to amend the lease.

Trish Drollinger inquired about putting some gravel down for the parking lot. The Committee informed her that they would need to get approval from the Board of Commissioners before doing so.

Pete Garwood inquired about exchanging a long term lease for the parking lot and the parcel in Richardi Park.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Bernie Blackmore, to pursue a long term lease with the Village of Bellaire for the parking lot and Richardi Park for a 25 year trade and direct Legal Counsel to draft the document. Motion carried – unanimous.**

4. **Timber Bid Opening**

The Committee opened and reviewed three bids for the property on Alba Road and M-66 property.

Meeder Lumber	\$4,250.00
Weyerhaeuser	\$22,338.21
Fahl Forest Products	\$30,150.00

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Bernie Blackmore, to contact Meeder Lumber to check the bid and if there are no problems with the bid amount then accept Fahl Forest Products bid for \$30,150.00. Motion carried – unanimous.**

5. **Forestry Update**

The Committee discussed the Memorandum of Understanding and recommended the Board of Commissioners approve it at their next meeting.

Mike Meriwether indicated that an oil and gas company wants to put a lease on the Bachelder Road Property and a non-developmental lease on the Cedar River Natural Area. Discussion ensued over the lease and how much revenue the County should expect from this well.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Bernie Blackmore to recommend Legal Counsel review the oil and gas lease for a recommendation at the November 9<sup>th</sup> Board of Commissioners meeting. Motion carried – unanimous.**

The Commission discussed the Barnes Park trail and the need for woodchips.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Bernie Blackmore, to have the Forester have woodchips hauled to Barnes Park for the interpretive trail. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mike spoke on the need to survey the Leonard Road Property in Custer Township. The Committee directed the Forester to get a quote for engineering for the property to submit next month.

**6. Closed Session Minutes**

The Committee reviewed the closed session minutes for the October 2, 2006 meeting.

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the closed session minutes as presented. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**7. Municipal Forestry Act**

Joe Meyers informed the Committee that the Governor had signed a bill allowing us to remove the “for forestry purposes only” clause on the properties. Mike further indicated that along with that bill, property owners can make their forest lands exempt from the 18 mill school tax.

The Committee passed these issues on to the Forester for a report at a later meeting.

**8. Communications**

None.

**9. Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

# County Lands, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

*Joseph Allen*

*Bernie Blackmore*  
*Chairman*

*Eugene Dawson*

## Minutes – December 4, 2006

Members Present: Gene Dawson, Bernie Blackmore, and Joe Allen

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Joe Meyers

Others Present: Mike Meriwether

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

2. **Public Comment**

None.

3. **Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether informed the Committee that the DNR has leased the mineral rights on County property in a nondevelopment lease. Mike indicated that because it was a nondevelopment lease the County did not need to comment.

Mike informed the Committee that the state is reviewing the changes of the property off Orchard Hill Road from a nondevelopmental lease to a developmental lease. Mike indicated that the County sent a letter of support for this.

Discussion ensued over the “Sevald Property” and potential ways to fund the purchase of this property through potential oil and gas revenues and timber.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, supported by Joe Allen to request the Finance Committee help County Lands , Agriculture and Forestry Committee find a way to purchase 180 acres of the Sevald Property at \$2,200 an acre. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mike presented three quotes for surveying the Leonard Road property in Custer Township.

Eagle Surveying	\$3,500
Ferguson and Chamberlain	\$3,290
LandTech	\$4,900

**Motion by Joe Allen, supported by Gene Dawson to request the Finance Committee approve Ferguson and Chamberlain for surveying on the County property on Leonard Road in Custer Township. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mike informed the Committee that he would like to look into hiring a consultant to inventory the County Lands for the creation of a master plan. The Committee directed Mike to get quotes for the project.

4. **Communications**

None.

5. **Member/Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.