

PHEASANTS FOREVER

Fox River Valley Chapter - 585

Meeting Minutes

7 December 2005

I. Call to Order Board Chairman Steve Harnitz called the regular meeting of Pheasants Forever – Chapter 585 to order at **6:40 PM** on **12/7/05** at the Oshkosh Gun Club.

II. Roll The following Board members were present:

Jack Doemel	Leo Kolaszewski	Jerry Mathusek	Steve Harnitz
Mark Lewis	Erin Heinemann	John Manion	
Jim Ryf	Rachael Busching	AL Heidl	

Others Present Included:

Josh Jackl	Brian Trebiatowski	Terry Zawacki	Paul Fowler	Tim Lizotte
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III. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Secretary Leo Kolaszewski supplied copies of minutes of the previous meeting to any members who had not received them.

M/S/C – Minutes were approved as read.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer John Manion reported a balance in checking of \$10,450.36. This compares with \$28,100 in December of 2004. The largest expense item was \$5200 for 10-gun raffle prizes. John noted we still don't have our reimbursement from the State Stewardship Fund. It is now 2 months beyond the six months allowed for payment. We closed on the property April 15th.

M/S/C – Accept the Treasurer's Report as written.

V. Guest Speakers

Matt O'Connor Matt is a Habitat Team Specialist Coordinator (Josh's boss) and this was his first visit to our chapter. Matt wanted to send Josh to southern Ohio for about a month to perform burns as there are many acres to be burned there. There was significant resistance to this idea from our Board. With Scott Christie's retirement from the Board, this move would leave the chapter without a burn boss for most or all of the burning season. Matt suggested they may be able to supply some help to replace Josh, but it did not sound like this would include a burn boss. Matt explained his primary reason for the temporary move was to get Josh's position up to a break-even point. The Board felt that this move would seriously hurt PF activities in Winnebago County. Discussion involved our significant investment in equipment and reputation. Matt's plan resulted from the assumption that our chapter wanted to keep all monies from chapter related burns within the chapter. The Board indicated that our primary goal was to get the work done. Without a burn boss, and without someone willing to become one, the chapter will not continue burning. We informed Matt that we would like to pass our burns on to Josh, and still use our own volunteers which would save PF significant expense involved in bringing in a full burn team. We have been charging \$20/acre and the Habitat Specialists have been getting about \$52/acre. We are committed to some burns for \$20, but would not have a problem increasing fees for any others. We would recommend stepping up the fees gradually. In the case of CRP and other cost sharing agreements, the landowner would not have to ante up the full amount themselves. With a plan something like this, Josh would not need to go to Ohio. The bottom line is that Josh needs to bring in close to \$75,000 to justify his position. Matt also addressed a few other issues; Matt has acquired the names of all Wisconsin CRP participants (under the Freedom of Information Act). This information should aid in targeting potential clients. In a recent staff meeting, Matt implemented a quarterly Habitat Spec reporting program to track activities. He will pass this information along to chapters. He indicated they can also provide goals and objectives for Josh, to the chapter. Matt and Josh agreed to continue to work to improve communication with the chapter. Several board members

felt this was a major weakness locally. Matt stated that Josh needs to answer to us as well as his supervisor. Matt discussed the chapter challenging Josh by turning over our burn program to him.

M/S/C – The chapter will discontinue performing burns.

(Though not part of the motion, this means that we will discontinue burns separately from the Habitat Specialist. We will continue to seek out burns to give to Josh and continue to provide volunteers for burns with Josh as the burn boss).

Matt closed by indicating he was working on plans to provide us with more and better information on Specialist activities and is starting a contact list that he will share to show us who Josh has been contacting. He suggested we continue to challenge Josh.

Tim Lizotte - Our local DNR Habitat Biologist addressed the group next at the request of Jim Ryf. He gave a general update on activities in the Glacial Habitat Restoration Area (GHRA). Since program inception in 1990, about 11,000 acres have been restored under this program. This includes not only DNR acquired lands, but also permanent easement lands and cost share lands. Currently, DNR is paying an average of \$2100/acre for fee simple land purchases. They pay \$700 - \$800 per acre for perpetual easements (no public access).

Tim noted the Nature Conservancy is liquidating assets in Winnebago County and has donated 110 acres to DNR. He detailed several other recent or pending acquisitions and/or easements. He next discussed a potential 2nd land investment for our chapter. Tim has submitted a request for an appraisal on a 44 acre parcel in the Town of Poygan. PF could participate in this acquisition without taking on the whole sale. DNR would give us appropriate recognition, etc and we would not have to go through the grant application process.

Discussing our already owned property, Tim indicated the sharecropper agreement did not go well. By the time the last crop was taken off it was too late to do anything in 2005. Tim is considering a fast track approach in 2006. He indicated if the chapter wants to get a volunteer cutting and clean-up project going here, DNR could send some help.

Updating the Rush Lake Project, Tim noted the new dam has been finished on this milestone project. 8000 yards of material have been removed from the channel and a 2 year draw down will begin in March.

Tim passed out some sample maps he created on the DNR website. They are trying to get away from producing hardcopy maps in order to cut costs. They would like the public to print their own maps from the website and described how this interactive mapping program works. He also indicated that the map we produced for DNR has been one of the most demanded publications. They have been out for a long time and still get many requests. He indicated if we wanted to run another printing, DNR may be able to cost share. He would also like to get a similar map for Fond du Lac County.

VI. Correspondence

- a) *Landig Resignation* – Jim read a letter from Paul, indicating that he was resigning from the board. Paul indicated that he is only able to work on land acquisition projects and feels a director should be more balanced toward other projects.

M/S/C – Accept Paul's resignation.

It was noted we now have three director spots to be filled by Executive Committee.

VI. Committee Reports

- a) *Habitat* – No report
- b) *Land Acquisition* – Covered with Tim's presentation
- c) *Banquet* – Jerry reported on the last Banquet Com meeting:
First mailing is scheduled for Jan. 4
Early Bird due by 2/1
Al will take over registration
Price will be at \$65 in advance, \$75 at the door
Next Banquet meeting is Monday, 12/12/05, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM, Gun Club – Jerry won't be there so will get all documents to Ryan.

- d) *Habitat Crew* – Josh has completed three fall plantings and has three more planned. He has been meeting with NRCS.
- e) *LEP Scholarship* – Terry reported that he has spoken with the national and regional directors of the Aldo Leopold and will speak with Kaye Solomon after the holidays. He expects to be on top of this program by mid-January.
- f) *Membership* – No new members – we are at 403 current members.
- g) *Newsletter* – Rachael reported that there was a very poor showing of articles last month and noted who had articles due next week. It was suggested that we get a schedule of upcoming Hunter Safety classes into the next issue. Erin suggested that Scott may be the next spotlight member.

VII. Old Business

- a) *Mike Solomon Foundation* – Paul, Jerry and Terry met with the Oshkosh Community Foundation discussed a \$10,000 base amount. We would come up with \$7,500 and the Foundation would kick in \$2,500. This amount will earn interest (13% ly) and the Foundation feels the base amount can last forever. We have about \$2,500 dedicated so far and will have 3 -4 months to get the rest. There are a few legal details that still need to be ironed out. Kaye will be providing a list of contacts in a fundraising effort. The family finds these efforts to be very virtuous

VIII. New Business

- a) *Inventory* – Scott dropped off a van load of PF stuff at Jerry's. He brought up several issues that he dealt with that are coming up and should be dealt with. Of these, Leo and John will handle the raffle license. Ryan will take over inventory control, and Jack will continue to handle gun inventory. Banquet items will be handled by the Banquet Committee.
- b) *Website* – Mark addressed the issue of the site being off line. There was some mix-up where his company did not get a notice. He has now renewed for three years and it should be back up within 24 hours. Mark will handle updates to the site himself and indicated that board members should get items they want on the site to him. He will have the site updated within 24 hours of receipt.
- c) *State Meeting* – This annual meeting will be held January 28th in Reedsburg. The chapter will pay for up to three directors' hotel and registration for the event.
M/S/C – Approve payment of motel and registration for up to three board members to attend the State Meeting.
See Jack if interested.
- d) *Blanket Bags* – Jerry heard of an online product giving a discount to PF members. See www.blanketbag.com for details.

IX. Other Business

- a) *Board Seats* – Several people have shown interest in our vacant seats. Terry Zawacki, Ryan Seely and Brian Trebatiowski were in attendance at this meeting. Brian Wilke has indicated he would prefer to be active in as a committee chair but prefers not to be on the board. Leo will check the by-laws for technicalities on how this needs to be handled. Steve will call a special meeting prior to Jan 1.

b) Internship – Tom Davies has indicated that our Intern will not return to finish the second half of his work. Only half of the \$4000 (we agreed to pay half of that) has been paid out. The way it was handled we end up saving our entire commitment of \$2000. Tom Davies hopes that this will be an incentive for us to volunteer again in 2006.

c) Maps – Jim noted he would like to see the chapter run another printing of the hunting area map we did for DNR. John will check out the costs of the last run and we can discuss next month.

X. Next Meeting

Wednesday January 4 6:30PM Oshkosh Gun Club

XI. Adjourn

M/S/C – Adjourn – 9:00 PM

Winners of the 10-gun raffle were drawn after adjournment.



Merry Christmas