

Northwest Illinois Forestry Association

Minutes of February 10, 2009

President Tom Arnold called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm in the basement meeting room of the Stockton Public Library.

President Arnold asked if there were any changes or additions to the January 13th minutes. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve them. Ralph Eads moved to approve the minutes as mailed. Lee Freedlund seconded the motion. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Keith Arnold, reported that NIFA has a current balance of \$6,989.52 that includes all accounts. Keith also stated that new dues envelopes will be printed and mailed to all current NIFA members for payment of 2009 dues.

OLD BUSINESS

President Arnold reported that we need a speaker for the NIFA Annual Dinner Meeting since Dave Harrison had contacted him about not being able to obtain our previously chosen speaker. Bob Sloan suggested Leroy Poignant, who is a verneer log buyer and exporter. Jerry Misek has previously suggested Mike Mason, IDNR State Forester. Bob Sloan volunteered to contact both potential speakers.

President Arnold explained a change to the April tour for the 2009 Meeting and Tour Agenda. Because of cost-sharing program delays, the Russell Roberts site will not be planted in April. Kevin Oetken was to guide the tour. However, Kevin has a couple of other sites that NIFA could tour. One is south of Mt. Carroll and the other is near Savanna. Kevin did not want to set any dates for planting at either of these sites because of possible delivery problems with seedling stock and weather conditions. Rather, he suggested a short notice time when he could assure of being able to do the demonstrations for the tour.

President Arnold said that Ralph Jones contacted him about repairing the NIFA Power Pruner. Ralph has a neighbor who does small engine repairs. The group agreed to try this way of repairing the Power Pruner .

NEW BUSINESS

President Arnold said he was contacted by Jesse Randall from the Iowa Extension about enlisting NIFA members to help register participants at the Tri State Forestry Conference at Sinsinawa Mound on March 14th. This year only 5 NIFA members will be needed because Jesse will be bringing some of his graduate students to help with registration. Members who have previously helped register have been contacted to help.

Christie Trifone told those present that she will be working with the Boy and Girl Scouts to plant 50 trees on April 3,4, and 5th. She also stated that The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation will be sponsoring a burn school at the Galena Territory for those people wanting to do prairie burns. The fee for the workshop is \$250. Contact Christie for more information on either of these events.

Dick Pouzar reported that the NIFA website has been transferred to 1&1 server and is up and running. He invited everyone to visit the new site (at the same address as the previous site) www.nifatrees.org If you find any errors, contact Dick. Dick also wanted those members who are listed in the Products and Services section to review and update their listings and report any changes to him at pouzar@yahoo.com

Because NIFA's funds are slowly declining, a question was raised as to the costs of mailings and who is doing them. President Arnold responded that each mailing cost about \$120 and Mindy Pratt is doing the mailings. President Arnold reminded the members that if they provide him with an email address, that

would reduce the mailing costs. Alvin Wire responded with giving President Arnold his email address.

There being no further business, President Arnold called for a motion to adjourn. Ralph Eads made the motion and it was seconded by Dick Pouzar. Motion Passed. The business meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

Dave Dornbusch, Coordinator for the Blackhawk Hills RC&D presented a program on producing biomass.

Dave started his presentation confirming that JoCarroll Energy is still planning on breaking ground for their biomass plant in 2009 and that they want their Coop members and others in a 50 mile radius of the plant to provide biomass materials.

Dave continued by sharing some of his experiences in Minnesota on growing biomass trees. Hybrid Poplar is the specie best suited for the tree plantings. The trees are planted as cuttings and need effective weed control for the first few years to maximize their growth potential. The trees are scheduled for harvest 12 years after planting. Since the trees coppice back, the second and third harvests are scheduled after 9 years of growth. So in 30 years, 3 harvests can occur. He was not sure of the tonnage per acre harvested.

He continued his Power Point presentation with other plants that can be used as biomass. Switchgrass is considered as one of the best warm season grasses and can yield at least 4 tons of dry matter per acre per year with one harvest. However, for wildlife concerns, only 2/3 of the field should be harvested in any one year and that should be rotated around the field.

Other warm season grasses can also be used, but they do not produce as much tonnage per acre. Miscansus is another possible choice since it could yield 10 ton per acre per year. However, it has harvesting and drying problems that would need to be addressed.

Corn residues that come out of the back of the combine are also a good source of biomass. The corn cob is highly favored for the heat it generates and can yield one ton per acre.

With any of the systems, there are challenges in harvesting, storing, and transporting. These also need to be considered before entering the biomass producing enterprise.

Mr. Dornbusch will keep NIFA informed of any new developments in biomass production.

The group thanked him for his presentation and the meeting concluded at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerry Misek

NIFA Secretary