

# **THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATIONISTS**

Meeting of September 7, 2011

At The Hilltop, Cross Plains, WI

ARC President Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

44 paid members and 1 guest were present.

The meal was \$ 12 including a small contribution to the picnic beverages.

A moment of silence was observed for friends and family who have passed and for our troops who are serving in harm's way.

## **Guest Speaker:**

DNR Secretary, Cathy Stepp was the guest speaker. Staff assistant Paul Heinen accompanied her.

Secretary Stepp spoke of the change for DNR to become an "Enterprise Agency", which should help eliminate the Department of Administration (DOA) from excessive oversight of DNR procurement and contracting procedures. Presumably the operations would be more like private sector practices with necessary bidding protections.

She discussed the switch to more direct line authority from 'the field to management', in her words.

She said it is hard for her to be patient, but she is learning to understand government moves in 'baby steps' of efficiencies.

DNR staff numbers are down from a high of nearly 3400 to about 2100. She feels her job is to make the staff as productive and happy as possible, given the economic conditions and cost pressures.

She answered questions on the role of the Regional ( now District) Directors that are the voice and ears of the Secretary, but not on the management team. She also stated that customer service is one of her priorities and she is planning to increase Service Center Hours by about 40%.

She said EPA is not communicating well with Wisconsin DNR or from what she can tell other state natural resource and environmental resource agencies.

She was given a recommended reading from Carl Blabaum delivered by John Hagman. It was "Water Purity – a Study of legal control of Natural Resources" which is really the basis for environmental and particularly water quality regulations adopted in Wisconsin in the 1960's and 70's.

She said she would be interested in returning again for a visit.

The minutes of the previous month's meeting were reviewed.

### **Financial Report:**

The opening balance was \$ 2,206.26 including interest earned on the savings account. Previous month's expenditures included: the cost of the caterer (\$1000) and beverages (\$90) at the picnic and paper and printing of the 2012 schedule of meetings (\$12).

We collected \$ 78 from the lunch proceeds.

We collected \$ 2 for 1 new member.

\$ 8.80 was subsequently used for stamps for Association business.

Closing balance will be \$ 2,276.26 including \$ .20 interest earned.

The funds collected (\$80) were handed over to John Hagman and deposited in Summit Credit Union account.

### **Guests:**

Larry Sperling, retire managing editor of the award winning Wisconsin Natural Resource magazine; and Randy Jurewicz from Endangered Resource, attended their first meeting.

**Guests who were attending their second meeting and were voted in as new members.**

Mike Lutz, retired from Legal Services as Chief legal counsel, sponsored by Linda Meyer, attended his second meeting and paid his \$2 after being voted in as a member.

**“Frank & Miller Report”**

The Market was up in July, but had a tough up and down August. The staff person at ETF was on vacation and there was no August update available.

Growth of 19.5% in core and 25% in variable is needed in 2011 to overcome the reductions built into the 5 year average from 2008. At the end of July, the core was up 5.7 % and the variable up 3.8%

The Governor and legislature are looking at health care coverage changes. Bob Schaefer recommended members going to ETF web site and signing up for the ETF newsletter.

We will try to get an ETF speaker to discuss insurance changes at the November meeting.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

Election of officer is in November. Members are encouraged to contact any existing officers: Jim Miller, Doris Rusch, or John Hagman, as well as luncheon organizer Linda Meyer, with nominations or as volunteers.

**Deaths and Illnesses.**

Chuck Rieck was intending to attend the meeting but bleeding in his leg stump prevented his attendance.

Dick Knitter is believed to have been diagnosed with lung cancer.

**Birthdays and anniversaries.**

This month Cliff Germain is 88, Jerry Dorscheid is 74, Rube Reddeman 73, Roy Lembke 66 and John Hagman 59.

**Trips.**

Nancy Diebold went to Alaska and sky dived for her birthday.

Bob Schaefer went to Greece.

Jerry Dorscheid went to Arkansas.

**Jokes.**

None

Next meeting is at The New Glarus Hotel October 5, 2011 10, 2011.

**Meeting adjourned** at 1:45 pm.