

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**February 8, 2021**

**Held virtually through Microsoft Teams**

**Members Present:** Fred Strand, Chairperson; Jeffrey Silbert, Larry Fickbohm, Steve Sandstrom

**Members Not in attendance:** David Zepczyk

**Staff in Attendance:** Jason Bodine, Administrator; Lindley Mattson, Office Manager; Steve Probst, Assistant Administrator, Charly Ray; County Board Member

**Presenters: Joshua Straus Bluesource, Mike Furtak Across the Pond, Rebekah Luedtke WCFA Executive Director**

**Members of the public present.**

**1. Call to Order of Forestry and Parks Committee Meeting.**

This meeting was called to order at 6:01pm.

**2. Public Comment:** None

**3. Approval of the January 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes.**

*MOTION: (Fickbohm, Silbert) to approve the minutes as presented. All: Yes. Carried.*

**4. Presentation: Bayfield County Forest Carbon Opportunity Summary and Proposal. Joshua Strauss, Vice President, Bluesource. Discussion regarding the presentation.**

Josh presented a power point presentation to the committee and guests.

Bluesource is the oldest and largest carbon offset developer in North America. They currently have 60+ projects covering over 2.3 million acres of forestland. Bluesource's services include: feasibility analysis, contracting and listing, inventory, modeling and documentation, verification, credit registration and issuance and credit sale. Timeline for these steps is generally 18 months from start to finish. Landowner obligations: must maintain either FSC, SFI or ATFS certification and the county's harvest cannot exceed growth. The agreement is for a 40 year term with annual reporting, third party verification done every 5 years and inventory analysis done every 10 years. Carbon and revenue projections were presented as well as both Bayfield County's and Bluesource's percentages of revenues.

Questions and discussion from committee and Josh.

**5. Bayfield County Forest Bayfield County Forest - Forest Carbon Offset Project. Discussion and possible action regarding participation in the voluntary carbon market under the American Carbon Registry Improved Forest Management program.**

Bodine recommends approval and asks committee if there are any questions of him.

*MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom) I recommend that the Bayfield County Forestry and Parks Administrator be granted approval to establish a forest carbon offset project and that the entire Bayfield County Forest be considered for inclusion with the exception that all Bayfield County*

*land within the Red Cliff Reservation be omitted. In addition, other county owned, non-county forest lands also be considered for the same forest carbon project, again with the exception that all Bayfield County land within the Red Cliff Reservation be omitted if deemed advantageous to the county. That the Forestry and Parks Administrator and County Administrator be authorized to negotiate directly with Bluesource on the terms of a forest carbon contract or similar agreement. Assuming acceptable terms can be reached, that the county contract Bluesource to work with the Forestry and Parks Department, through the Forestry and Parks Administrator, on the development and management of a forest carbon project for participation in the voluntary carbon market under the American Carbon Registry (ACR) Improved Forest Management (IFM) program. And that this be recommended to the full county board for approval. All: Yes. Carried.*

There were a few additional questions about buying and selling land, entering, and removing land from the project.

**6. Wildlife Opening Maintenance Request: WDNR Wildlife Biologist. Discussion and possible action regarding an annual request to maintain wildlife openings on county forest land.**

Annual request from the DNR to maintain wildlife openings on the county forest. 46 total openings to be treated by hand and 49 to be mowed. Bodine recommend approval.

*MOTION: (Sandstrom, Fickbohm) Approve the DNR wildlife openings maintenance project proposal. All: Yes. Carried*

**7. Presentation: Across the Pond Veterans Park. Presentation regarding a request to acquire approximately 13 additional acres of county forest land in the Town of Hughes. Discussion regarding the presentation.**

Mike Furtak presented a new request for additional land. This topic was originally presented over a year ago but the committee requested a more detailed plan before approval. An engineered site plan was presented to the committee as well as a summary of the proposal.

Nikki Martin from Wisconsin DNR said she does not see any issues with this withdrawal.

**8. Resolution. Sale of Land to the Across the Pond Veterans Park and Withdrawal from County Forest Law. Discussion and possible action regarding the resolution.**

No discussion from committee.

*MOTION: (Fickbohm, Sandstrom) Approve and forward to Full County Board with recommendation for approval. All: Yes. Carried*

**9. Introduction: Rebekah Luedtke. Executive Director, Wisconsin County Forests Association.**

J. Bodine introduced Rebekah Luedtke. She is the “new” Executive Director of Wisconsin County Forests Association. Rebekah said she is excited to have Bayfield County part of WCFA and Bayfield County is on the forefront in regard to county forest in Wisconsin. She looks forward to being able to visit Bayfield County in the future.

**10. Monthly Reports. Discussion of general activities, events, issues and accomplishments. Possible action on report(s) only.**

a. Forestry (all updates):

- a) 2021 Budget. Revenues were above average in January, roughly \$350k in stumpage. To date \$380k. No unexpected expenses yet.
  - b) Red Cliff Land Sale. Not much to update. Waiting on the approval of grant funds and would move forward at that point.
  - c) Stewardship Land Acquisition Project. Still working with TPL on potential projects. Much of this project hinges on the next potential land sale to Red Cliff.
  - d) Access Permits. Two previously approved access permits were re-approved last month. Mathy Construction and Don Olson, both in the Town of Iron River.
- b. Parks (update). Another site was rented at Delta. We currently have 3 seasonal sites still available at Delta.
- c. Trails and Recreation:
- a) Motorized Trail Updates: This last snowfall helped the trails. The next round of grants are going to come due this spring. A snowmobile bridge is needed over by Bono Creek. That will be a large grant if we move forward with this.
  - b) Non-Motorized Trail Updates: The elevated boardwalk has been completed. Trail is in great shape. Working with Landmark Conservancy on signs for this property. Fire Hill is going to be the next focus for development.
  - c) Yurt Updates: Bodine presented occupancy rates. Still very popular.
  - d) Events. North End Ski Club was going to host their cross country ski race but it has been delayed due to the temps. Ashwabay held their Summit Ski Race this past weekend.
- d. Delta Landfill Update: J. Bodine had a conference call with WEM, Land Conservation and DATCP engineers to discuss the change of scope which includes the additional funding request.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) Receive and place on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

**11. Bayfield County Forest 2021-2035 Comprehensive Land Use Plan Revision. Discussion and possible action on the following items:**

- a. Review of Public Comment: Two comments received. Provided to the committee for review.

***MOTION:** (Sandstrom, Silbert) Receive and place comments on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

**12. 2022 Forestry and Parks Department Budget Planning. Discussion and possible action regarding items to consider when planning for the 2022 budget.**

Bodine presented the memo from County Admin regarding future expenditures/levy reductions. Each department is supposed to start the conversation within the committee to see if there are areas or ideas of where reductions could happen. Bodine's response to this is the upcoming carbon project. This project will bring tremendous revenue to the county and could halt these discussions.

Committee discusses where a reduction could be made if it came down to it. Discussion again circles around to carbon project and Forestry and Parks department future revenues.

**13. Joseph LeBouton, DNR – No comments.**

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, March 8, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM

Submitted by,  
**Lindley Mattson**