

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
June 13, 2022
County Board Room**

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

Staff in Attendance: Jason Bodine, Administrator; Steve Probst, Assistant Administrator; Cassie Taylor, Office Manager

Others in Attendance: Joseph Lebouton, WI DNR; Ben Pope, Birkebeiner Foundation

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 May 9th Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom) Approve and place on file. All: Yes. Carried.

4. Monthly Reports.

- a. Forestry (all updates): Bodine presents stumpage revenue for May was well above average at nearly \$870k. To date, timber sale revenues are at just under \$2.2 million. May has vaulted us ahead of last year's pace, as well as the three-year average for this point in the year. We were recently awarded DNR wildlife grant for additional work on Bass Lake barrens. Work will likely begin this year to establish primary access/service road that will form western boundary. A year-end budget amendment will be required. Expenses are on track.
 - a) Carbon Project. Verification audit slated for week of July 18. Two crews will conduct, led by Jason Holmes and Joseph Lebouton. Our "carbon year" is on an April 1 – March 31 cycle, with first revenues expected late October/early November.
 - b) Red Cliff Land Sale (706 acres). The CFL withdrawal was officially approved, and final sale approved by the Board this week. In total, when including the county forest and non-CFL properties, a total of roughly 1,580 acres have been transferred to the Tribe over approximately 5 years as part of this project.
 - c) Burns/Duquette Trespass Land Sale. Project closed last week and is now done.
 - d) Land Acquisition Project(s).
 - i. Purchase Agreement w/ Trust for Public Land. TPL proposes that they (TPL) purchase the land and hold it on our behalf, until full funding has been released. Then, the county would purchase the land from TPL under the same terms. With sales to Tribe, Land Acquisition is at about \$1.8 million in revenues now. We will need approx. \$95k if stewardship falls through. Bodine proposes a resolution to the County Board in June, asking for \$95k in case stewardship doesn't come through. TPL will need this to move forward.
 - ii. Stewardship Grant(s). The big \$2.5 million project was objected today by JFC. We are waiting to hear what the issue is and if it can be resolved.

- iii. Community Forests Grant. If awarded, roughly \$600k would be applied towards Ceres Timber project.
Committee discusses support of resolution to County Board. Clarification of financial need: Ceres needs \$95k, Clover needs \$969k, Lost Creek Falls needs \$240k. Potential to use carbon revenues is discussed, if landowners can extend their expirations on offers.
 - e) DNR Audit Report. Report will be ready for review at August meeting.
 - f) Xcel Energy Temporary Storage. Permission to temporarily store utility poles in the Sand River pit has been extended to December 2023. Compensation is set at \$650/month or \$12,350 total.
- b. Campgrounds and Day Use Parks (update).
 - c. Trails and Recreation.
 - a) Motorized Trails: ATV trails opened on May 13. Clubs have been engaged with various maintenance activities.
 - b) Non-Motorized Trails:
 - i. Siskiwit River Preserve Projects. In process of mapping out hiking trails on portions of the property. Will be working with Highway to brush out some trails. Chequamegon Audubon installed bird boxes in/around the old field and we're working with DNR to analyze potential for prairie restoration/improvement.
 - ii. Lost Creek Falls Projects. Work completed this week including steps to the creek and a boardwalk to the picnic area. The contractor did a phenomenal job on this project.
 - iii. Concrete Vault Restrooms. All three restrooms were installed last week (Siskiwit Falls, Lost Creek Falls, and CAMBA trailhead off Whiting).
 - iv. Rec Use Agreements. Work is underway to update long-term rec use agreements with Birkie, CAMBA, and N. End Ski Club.
 - v. Cable SMA Management Plan. Work is underway to establish long-term management plan in the Cable SMA. Anticipating the plan will look very similar to that of Ashwabay.
 - c) Yurts: Bodine presents the occupancy rates for each yurt. Occupancy is generally down by about 18% compared to last year and by about 5% compared to pre-Covid.
 - d) Events: No new events this month.
 - d. Delta Landfill Update. Highway is starting work on repairs to the old landfill.

MOTION: (Ray, Silbert) Receive reports as presented and place on file. All: Yes. Carried.

- 5. **Spring Timber Sale Re-Offer**. Five of twelve sales have been sold. The remaining seven are up as direct sales on the website. It seems frozen ground and ash sales are the ones not receiving bids.

MOTION: (Silbert, Ray) Accept re-offer bids. All: Yes. Carried.

- 6. **Resolution: Accepting a Gift of Land**. Title work has come back clean, as have the field inspections. Final Committee approval was a contingency of the resolution, which was approved by the Board this past week. Corp Counsel is working with Trust lawyer to finalize transfer and, once complete, the property would be enrolled in CFL.

MOTION: (Sandstrom, Silbert) Approve resolution 2022-52. All: Yes. Carried.

- 7. **Access Permit Request**. Dave and Joy Verfuert. This access permit was previously approved for Neil Fishbaugher. Property recently sold to the Verfuert's. No issues. Bodine recommends approval.

MOTION: (Sandstrom, Ray) Approve Bodine's recommendation for approval of access permit request. All: Yes. Carried.

- 8. Access Permit Request.** Chris Gmeinder. Adjacent to Verfuert's parcel. Bodine recommends approval.

MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom) Approve Bodine's recommendation for approval of access permit request. All: Yes. Carried.

- 9. Recreational Use Request.** American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF). Request to construct new mountain bike and cross-country ski trail in Town of Cable. Ben Pope addresses Committee: goal is to create green level trail near the trailhead and connect trails in NE corner of property. Hope to start work in July after flagging. Coordination between Birkie and CAMBA is imperative. Approximately one mile of trail will be built on 40-60 acres of County Forest Land.

MOTION: (Silbert, Ray) Approve ABSF request. All: Yes. Carried.

- 10. Recreational Use Request: CAMBA.** Request to re-route portion of mountain bike trails in Cable. Bodine seeks pre-approval on this request, contingent upon a final inspection and approval by our Department.

MOTION: (Sandstrom, Ray) Pre-approve request contingent upon final inspection and approval. All: Yes. Carried.

- 11. Committee Members Discussion.** Silbert thanks Bodine for facilitating land sales back to Tribe. Sandstrom adds that this has built trust and improved the relationship between County and Tribe. Sandstrom notifies Committee of illegal motocross trail on USFS land near Bladder Lake. Ray notifies Committee of a slash wall built to prevent deer browse at private timber sale in Bayfield; invites anyone interested to visit the site.

- 12. Joseph Lebouton:** No comments.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM

Submitted by,
Cassie Taylor