

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

**August 8, 2022
County Board Room**

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

Members Excused: Charly Ray

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

Others in Attendance: Joseph Lebouton, WI DNR; Ron Bergin, CAMBA

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

This meeting was called to order at 6:09 PM.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Approval of the June 13th Meeting Minutes.

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

4. Recreational Use Request. CAMBA. Ron Bergin, Executive Director of CAMBA, presents information on the three classes of E-bikes, safety concerns, and possible trail impact. Discussion had regarding tire size requirement of 2 inches or greater, potential increased pressure on emergency services to assist stranded bikers, definition of E-bike to include only pedal-assisted e-bikes. Proposal to permit the use of Class 1 E-bikes on mountain bike trails.

***MOTION: (Sandstrom, Silbert)** Approve proposal on a one-year trial basis. All: Yes. Carried.*

5. Land Use Request. Washburn Valhellers Snowmobile Club. Request to construct a groomer building on county forest land in the Town of Bayview. Discussion had regarding zoning; no need to rezone, groomer barns are acceptable. Club to fund barn construction and then transfer ownership to county.

***MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom)** Approve request to construct groomer building. All: Yes. Carried.*

6. Monthly Reports.

a. Forestry (all updates): Bodine presents stumpage revenue for June and July, both well above average. Timber sale revenues are at just under \$3.5 million, primarily driven by completion of very high dollar pine sale sold this spring (over \$500k sale value). Highly probably that stumpage returns will approach and exceed \$4.0 million this year. Expenses still on target.

a) Carbon Project.

- i. Audit. Verification audit held week of July 18. Total of 21 CFI plots were audited over three days. Pass/fail audit was split into two teams, led by Jason Holmes and Joseph. We passed with flying colors and within an error margin of +/- 1%. We are still expecting the first carbon payment either late Q4 2022 or early Q1 2023.
- ii. Carbon Reserve Fund. First draft is finished. Mark and Bodine are in the process of fine-tuning. Recommendation is to wait another month before presenting to Committee.

- b) Land Acquisition Project(s). Working on three projects: ~2,000 acres with Ceres Timber; nearly 1,600 acres in the Town of Clover (Mathy); and 160 acres with Forest Land Group near Lost Creek Falls.
 - i. Stewardship Grant(s).
 - a. Ceres Timber/Sand River. Application received objection from JFC, leaving our application in limbo. TPL has moved forward with the purchase since we have already secured full funding. TPL will hold for us until mid-February 2023.
 - b. Lost Creek Falls. Landmark Conservancy's Stewardship application for Lost Creek property was approved. We secured \$75k in cash but have not yet been awarded the final \$60k from Coastal. Bodine will be contacting landowner for an extension and is confident we can move forward.
 - ii. Community Forests Grant. We were officially awarded \$600k for Ceres Timber acquisition. This grant, combined with cash received from Red Cliff land sales and additional county cash contributions, secures funds needed for this project.
 - iii. NOAA Grant. Wisconsin Coastal recently approached us with a new grant opportunity. A letter of intent has been submitted requesting \$1.925 million for Ceres project. We should know by late August if our project is selected to the next round.
 - iv. Gift of Land. 160-acre gift of land in Town of Port Wing was completed this week. Land is now owned by the county and will be enrolled in CFL.
 - c) Direct Timber Sales. Four of seven previously unsold timber sales have now been sold direct. Four sales totaled 302 acres with a value of nearly \$107k. Three remaining sales are available for direct purchase.
 - d) DNR Audit Report. Final 5-year audit report discussed, including potential pre-sale and mid-sale documentation to follow DNR's recommendation.
 - e) Spongy (Gypsy) Moth Update. Fairly significant increase in spongy moth defoliation this year. Older stands are more susceptible. Plan is to increase monitoring efforts and adjust management strategies if increased potential for large-scale mortality persists.
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- b. Campgrounds and Day Use Parks (update). Camping has been strong this summer, particularly transient camping. Revenue is solid. We are beginning detailed inventory of parks to establish short and long-term maintenance needs.
 - c. Trails and Recreation.
 - a) Motorized Trails: ATV use continues to be strong. GIS analysis resulted in determination that only 66 miles of ATV trails are on county lands. Maintenance funds will be adjusted accordingly. Highway is considering opening all county trunk roads as ATV/UTV routes. Discussion had regarding neighboring counties roads; data showing accidents haven't been an issue.
 - b) Non-Motorized Trails:
 - i. Siskiwit River Preserve Projects. With Highway's help, able to rough in new trails on west side of river. Bluebird and bat houses recently installed. Working with DNR on prairie restoration plan for the old field; should be able to proceed with first steps this fall.
 - ii. Rec Use Agreements. Work is underway to update long-term rec use agreements with Birkie, CAMBA, and N. End Ski Club.
 - iii. 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.
 - d) Events. Hayward Lion's Club Pre-Birkie event addressed below.
 - d. Delta Landfill Update. Highway is making good progress on landfill project. Another three-month extension was granted in case we need it.

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

7. **2023 Forestry and Parks Department Budget.** Overall revenue is a little less than 2022 budget; timber sale revenue increased; some grant sources decreased; expenses around 7% higher due to increases in wages/fringe and sizeable increase in reforestation related expenses. Carbon revenue not yet reflected in budget; too unpredictable to include now. A budget amendment will follow once revenue comes in.

***MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom)** Approve budget as proposed. All: Yes. Carried.*

8. **Access Permit Request.** Eric Bignell. This access permit was previously approved for Tim Martens. Property recently sold to the Mr. Bignell. No issues. Bodine recommends approval.

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

9. **County Conservation Aid Grant.** Annual allotment that requires county match; has recently been used for lake access improvement projects. Bodine proposes temporary pivot from lake access to bud capping, barrens management, or jack pine reforestation. If approved, would ask for more funds if available.

***MOTION: (Sandstrom, Silbert)** Approve Bodine's grant proposal. All: Yes. Carried.*

10. **Event Request. Hayward Lions Club.** Club requesting permission to host 41st annual pre-Birkie cross-country ski race in Town of Cable. No issues. Bodine recommends approval.

***MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom)** Approve event request. All: Yes. Carried.*

11. **Committee Members Discussion.** None.

12. **Joseph Lebouton:** No comments.

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, September 12th at 6:00 P.M.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:19 PM.

Submitted by,
Cassie Taylor