

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
September 12, 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

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

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

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Approval of the August 8th Meeting Minutes.

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

4. Monthly Reports.

- a) Forestry (all updates): Bodine presents normal stumpage revenue for August. Timber sale revenues are at \$3.76 million. Total stumpage revenue should hit at least \$4.0 million this year, or roughly \$800k over budget. Expenses are still on target.
 - a. Carbon Project. Committee discusses the allocation of revenue and whether a tax levy reduction has been proposed/considered. Bodine emphasizes the department's need to be cognizant of how proceeds are reinvested to appeal to carbon buyers. Expect a healthy conversation about carbon at the October meeting.
 - b. Land Acquisition Project(s). Trust for Public Land now owns roughly 2,000-acre Ceres Timber – Sand River properties; holding on county's behalf as funding options are confirmed. Accomplishing all three land acquisition projects is the goal.
 - c. 2023 Budget Modifications. To balance the county budget, forestry is budgeting above what the model is predicting for timber sale revenue. Carbon offset revenue was not included in the 2023 budget.
 - d. Trespass in Town of Hughes. Minor encroachment on county forest land that needs to be addressed with an opportunity to negotiate an easement (to the county) on current snowmobile trail. The area of concern is only around 1/20th – 1/10th of an acre, which will ultimately require a withdrawal from County Forest Law.
- b) Campgrounds and Day Use Parks (update). The 2023 seasonal camping applications recently went live and are due late September. Camping revenues will likely exceed last year's record revenue, approaching \$140k for the season.
- c) Trails and Recreation.
 - a) Motorized Trails: The supplemental payment for the last snowmobile season will end up being nearly \$138k; double the standard maintenance allotment of approx. \$136k (\$300/mile) and a testament to the massive number of resources required to maintain one of the largest snowmobile trail programs in this state. Also a testament to the hard work and dedication provided by the Snowmobile Alliance, local clubs and everyone else involved.

- b) Non-Motorized Trails: Engaged with numerous partners conducting trail construction and/or maintenance activities on the forest. Primarily to gain more experience with those activities and foster relationships. Also conducted additional improvements and maintenance on trails at the Siskiwit property.
- c) Yurts. Rustic camping variance expires this fall; no issues expected in the renewal process. Bodine presents the occupancy rates for each yurt.
- d) Events. The National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) held a mountain bike event at Telemark this past weekend.
- d) Delta Landfill Update. Highway is making good progress. Still targeting mid to late October completion date.

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

5. **Recreational Use Request – Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation.** AOEF is requesting permission to construct a new classic cross-country ski trail within the Ashwabay block of the county forest with the goal of eliminating congestion on the black bear trail. Bodine recommends approval.

MOTION: (Fickbohm, Ray) Approve AOEF's request. All: Yes. Carried.

6. **Recreation Use Agreement – Cable Namakagon Historical Society.** In March 2022, the Committee approved moving forward with the development of a rec use agreement with the Cable Namakagon Historical Society that would recognize the old Frels schoolhouse location. Bodine recommends approval. Discussion is had about creation of database for historical site on county forest land.

MOTION: (Silbert, Sandstrom) Approve Bodine's recommendation for approval of recreation use agreement and recognizing this area as a historical site. All: Yes. Carried.

7. **Town Road Projects – Town of Bell.** Department is working with the Town of Bell on the potential of converting two existing county forest roads (secondary roads) to Town roads. Town of Bell wants to generate revenue by adding four miles of road; agreement would be obtained via easement. Bodine recommends approval.

MOTION: (Fickbohm, Silbert) Approve Town of Bell's request. All: Yes. Carried.

8. **Land Acquisition.** Mark Gierl recently approached the county regarding the sale of a roughly 1-acre lot in the Town of Barnes. The lot is located on East Eight Mile Lake and is adjacent to county forest land. Seller is asking for \$2,500 from the county. Lot has some rec potential and would more than double county's lake frontage. Bodine recommends approval.

MOTION: (Fickbohm, Ray) Approve land acquisition proposal. All: Yes. Carried.

9. **Event Request – Lifetime Triathlon Series, LLC.** Lifetime is requesting permission to host the 39th annual Chequamegon MTB Fest on September 17 in the Cable block. It's worth noting the amount of interaction required between logging and recreation industries to coordinate events like this. Very popular and well-organized event; Bodine recommends approval.

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

10. Committee Members Discussion. Ray discusses small parcel land acquisitions and potential reasons for unsold direct sales from the spring timber sale. Silbert expresses interest in creating a database of historical sites on county forest land; Bodine discusses looking into this. Sandstrom mentions public sentiment around Mt. Ashwabay and how upcoming timber sales will likely generate a buzz.

11. Joseph Lebouton: No comments.

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, October 10th at 6:00 P.M.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Submitted by,
Cassie Taylor