

MINUTES  
Ashland County Forestry and Recreation Committee  
Ashland County Forestry Dept Office  
304 West Michigan St, Butternut, WI 54514  
November 6, 2013

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The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jerry Teague at 8:00 AM.

Members present: Jerry Teague, Carl Kubley, Gary Mertig, Frank Kempf, and Helen Croteau.

Others present: County Board Chairperson-Pete Russo, ACSA-Bill Chandler, Recreation Officer-Jim Clapero, DNR Liaison-Tom Piikkila, DNR Wildlife Biologist-Sam Jonas, DNR Fish Biologist-Lawrence Eslinger, DNR Forestry-Heather Berklund, Forest Adm-Chris Hoffman, Assist Forest Adm-Matt Schultz, Forester-Jerome Wotachek, Secretary-Marion Pohl, Wis Conservation Congress-Bruce Prentice, Mellen Chamber of Commerce-Sue Amman and The Daily Press-Seth Carlson.

The minutes of the October 2, 2013 Forestry and Recreation Committee meeting were approved with a motion by Helen Croteau, second by Carl Kubley. Motion carried.

Pete R representing the City of Mellen's Parks and Recreation Dept requested financial assistance to repair a washout on an ATV route on Terrace Drive. Pete showed the Committee pictures of the washout that exposes pipes. The City of Mellen is asking for \$3,500. Frank K said the request needs to be on the grant application form and the application must have the actual cost of the work that needs to be done. The pictures and the in-kind labor that Pete had already would go with the application. The application needs to be signed by the mayor of Mellen. After some discussion, a motion was made by Helen Croteau, second by Carl Kubley that the City of Mellen's request is approved contingent upon the application for the grant is submitted and the grant would come from the 2014 Recreation budget. Motion carried.

Bruce Prentice representing the Wisconsin Conservation Congress requested financial assistance of \$500 for travel expenses (hotel and gas) every year for members that go to the meetings out of town.

Jerry asked if the members got funding from other sources. Bruce said

sometimes from sporting groups. Gary was concerned about automatically getting \$500 each year. Gary said Bruce should come every year like in July when the budgets are being done for the next year. Bruce said their big convention is in April. Frank K said money could be taken from one line item to another to cover the expenses for 2014. Jerry T suggested that guidelines need to be in place to document the expenses. A motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Gary Mertig to have the WCC request on the December meeting agenda to discuss what documentation is needed for the request of expense money and that money can be transferred from one line item to another. Motion carried.

Sue Amman of the Mellen Chamber of Commerce requested financial assistance to erect a fence along a connecting dual purpose trail from Thomas Street to downtown Mellen. She is requesting \$3,000. Bill C said the fence is a State requirement. There is a snow fence there now. A chain link fence would be erected with privacy slats. A chain link fence would be aesthetically more appealing than the snow fence. Jim C said he would like to see an ordinance on file for the trail. Sue will get the ordinance to Jim. Frank K said he would like to see the expenses more detailed, not just general numbers. Also, the Mellen Chamber should have their Federal ID number on their application. This financial request will be on the December agenda.

Snowmobile business - Bill reported that Assembly Bill 407/Senate Bill 343 is scheduled for a public hearing on Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> before Assembly Committee on Tourism. This bill would raise the non-resident trail pass fee from the current \$35/year to \$45/year. (Amended to \$50/year). This increase would bring in \$5M and would help fund more projects. The WCFA supports this increase.

Bill said because of the deer hunting season in December, he would like support from the Committee to groom trails after December 20<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made by Gary Merting, second by Carl Kubley to support grooming trails after December 20<sup>th</sup>. Motion carried.

Frank K said he received a phone call from a Clam Lake Forest Rider club member stating they bought a Gator (big 4-wheeler) to be used as part of the grooming equipment to groom trails. Bill said the Clam Lake club cannot groom state-funded trails because the ACSA is under contract with the County. If the Clam Lake club grooms the trails, they could be charged with trespassing.

Frank K suggested to invite the Clam Lake club members to the December

meeting to discuss what trails they want to groom. Chris agreed, and said “everyone should be on the same page.” Chris said he will come up with a list of requirements for grooming on state-funded trails and will send the list to the Committee before the meeting to look over for approval.

Recreation Officer report - Jim C said he as been patrolling the county forest during the bough season and pre- deer hunting activity. Jim said he is preparing for the snowmobile season by getting his gear out and snowmobile maintained. Jim said he asks snowmobilers how the trails are and if there are any problem spots. Jim said he relays the information to Bill. Jim said he could document the trail conditions from the snowmobile riders comments and present the information to the Committee.

Fish Biologist report - Lawrence Esslinger reported he did fish surveys on area lakes and streams. The survey reports are posted on-line.

Wildlife Biologist report - Sam Jonas is the new wildlife biologist for Ashland and Iron Counties. Sam handed out information on the 2013 wolf harvest. The 2013 bear harvest is down. Also Sam handed out information on the 2013 deer season which included the deer quotas. There is a survey on the DNR website to do or submit a comments about the deer population. The testimony will be analyzed and then final rule package will be proposed to NRB in December for rule adoption to be effective by 2014 hunting season.

Sam also discussed that the DNR will be mowing openings on Ashland County Forest in 2014. Wildlife grant money and County Conservation Aids money will be used to pay for the mowing. The DNR will supply all monies for the LTE’s time mowing.

DNR Liaison’s report - Tom P reported is has been working the county forest setting up new sales and completing other sales.

Forest Administrator’s report - Chris presented the Committee with our annual Variable Acreage Share Loan of 50 cents/acre resolution for approval. A motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Helen Croteau to approve the Variable Acreage Share Loan resolution and present it at the next county board meeting. Motion carried.

Chris presented the annual work plan for 2014 for approval. A motion was made by Helen Croteau, second by Gary Mertig to approve the 2014 annual

work plan for the county forest and present it at the next county board meeting. Motion carried.

Chris asked for approval to advertise timber sales for bids with the bid opening at the December committee meeting. A motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Helen Croteau to approve advertising timber sales for bids. Motion carried.

Chris discussed replacing the 2008 GMC truck. Chris would like approval to start the bidding process. The purchase of the truck will be in 2014. A motion was made by Gary Mertig, second by Carl Kubley to approve the bidding process for a new truck to replace the 2008 GMC. Motion carried.

Also Chris said the Recreation Officer's truck should be replaced. Chris said he would like to buy this truck along with the replacement truck for the 208 GMC for a better deal and wants approval to replace the Rec Officer's truck. A motion was made by Helen Croteau, second by Carl Kubley to approve buying a new truck for the Recreation Officer. Motion carried.

Chris said the woods is very wet now, and no one is cutting. The timber sale revenue is at \$739,000.

The vouchers were approved and signed with a motion by Carl Kubley, second by Helen Croteau. Roll call - all Committee members voted yes. Motion carried.

The next Forestry and Recreation Committee meeting will be Wednesday, December 4, 2013, 8:00 AM, Forestry Dept office, Butternut, WI.

Chris said the timber sale bid opening will be at the December 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Chris said he and the Forestry staff would like to open the bids the day before the meeting and present a summary of the bids to the Committee. Chris thought this would save time at the meeting. The Committee concurred, but stressed to make sure the change in the bidding process is well noted. Chris said he would make sure of that.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Helen Croteau, second by Carl Kubley. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.

Submitted by - *Marion Pohl*