

MINUTES  
Ashland County Forestry and Recreation Committee  
304 West Michigan St, Butternut, WI 54514  
January 7, 2015

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The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jerry Teague at 9:00 AM.

Members present: Jerry Teague, Carl Kubley, Gary Mertig, Frank Kempf and Kathy Schutte.

Others present: Recreation Officer-Jim Clapero, ACSA-Bill Chandler, Forest Adm-Chris Hoffman, Assist Forest Adm-Matt Schultz and Secretary-Marion Pohl.

The minutes of the December 3, 2014 meeting were approved with a correction. Chris said the timber sale revenue in the minutes was written as "\$1.7M" and that number should be \$1,075,585.75. A motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Carl Kubley to approve the corrected minutes. Motion carried.

Snowmobile business - Bill C reported that the trails are officially closed. Bill explained there is water on the southern trail and not enough snow in the northern part of the county. The Tri-County Corridor is open. The Butternut trail is closed because the swamp on the trail is flooded. The trail is detoured to ride on Butternut Lake. There is about 12" - 13" of ice. Bill said it is not the policy to run on the lakes, but there was no other way to get around the swamp. Price County has trails that use the lake as part of their trail system. Matt said the lake is safe at 12" -13" of ice. A motion was made by Kathy Schutte, second by Frank Kempf to approve having the snowmobile trail on Butternut Lake, and that Matt Schultz and Recreation Officer Jim Clapero will monitor the ice conditions of the lake. Motion carried.

Frank K asked about the policy of closing trails. How come the whole county is closed if the northern part of has no snow? Bill said the State Tourism says the trails have to all open or not at all. You can ride at your own risk. The Secretary of Tourism is the person to talk to about changing this policy.

Recreation Officer's report - Jim C reported he gave out snowmobile citations and warnings. There is more ATV activity in northern Ashland County.

DNR Liaison Tom Piikkila and other DNR personnel are at a meeting.

Forest Adm's report - Chris reported that back in December 2013, Jeff B asked for a list of capital improvement projects from the Forestry Dept. Chris reviewed the projects with the Committee. The top 3 projects are #1 - enlarge the current office space by building on between the garage and office (new windows, floors, another bathroom). #2 - build addition onto Creamery Rd garage, with water and restroom facilities. #3 - insulate and heat the Forestry Dept garage, floor repairs. Frank K asked about heating the garage. Chris explained there would be less truck repairs if the mud and snow melted off of them. Frank said he did not know about the lists each county department was to make, and thought the Committees should have reviewed the lists first and approve it. Chris said Jeff B needs project numbers by November for the 2016 budget. Frank suggested this improvement project list be on the Committee's February meeting agenda. Chris said he had Park Falls Builders draw up preliminary plans just see if the additions onto the office would be feasible. Jerry T said he would like to see the Forestry Dept expansion as the #1 project. Frank K asked about the Creamery Rd garage addition. Chris said the garage is shared by a other county departments and ACSA. The garage has no more room. Chris said when the Foresters are mixing herbicides, it would be nice to do that out there, and you need water to mix the herbicides. Jerry T recommended that Chris go back to Jeff with the top 3 projects with the smaller projects for the office combined into one project.

Frank K made a motion, second by Carl Kubley that the Forestry and Recreation Committee support item #1 including all the smaller projects to make the large addition to the office complete.

The #2 project is the Creamery Rd garage addition and #3 project is Forestry Dept garage heat and floor repairs. Motion carried.

Chris discussed the McCarty property back taxes that Bill Metzinger says the Forestry Dept should pay back to the County. Frank K said Ashland County pays the property taxes on tax delinquent land. When the land sells, the back taxes are repaid to the County plus 18% interest. Frank feels the Forestry and Recreation Dept should pay the taxes, but not the interest. Gary M feels Bill M should have gone to the Zoning Committee first. Gary will get this on the Zoning Committee's meeting agenda. Jerry T said this item should be on the Forestry and Recreation Committee's agenda for February.

Chris reported that Forester Jerome W had knee surgery and will not be able to do work in the woods until June. Chris said we need help now and contacted Tom Ernst our summer intern to work for 8 weeks, 40 hours a week. Chris said he asked Jeff B if this was ok and Jeff said yes. Chris said we will not hire a summer intern.

Chris said there isn't much logging activity now because of mud and water in the woods. The weather has not been cold enough to freeze down roads. The markets need wood.

Frank K said he had a person come to his house complaining about the roads in the Town of Jacobs. Frank says he knows the Town of Jacob's maintenance crew has a hard time keeping up with road work. Frank was wondering if we provide incentives for the towns and identify culvert problems. Gary M suggested the towns use their 10% timber sale revenue check towards maintenance only. Chris says we regularly offer to buy culverts for the towns. Chris said he knows the roads in the Town of Jacob are bad, but the Jacobs maintenance crew has Glidden and the sewer and water to take care too.

The vouchers were approved and signed with a motion by Carl Kubley, second by Kathy Schutte. Motion carried.

The next Forestry and Recreation Committee meeting will be Wednesday, February 4, 2015, 9:00 AM, Forestry Dept Office, Butternut, WI.

The meeting adjourned with a motion by Kathy Schutte, second by Gary Mertig. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:16 AM.

Submitted by: *Marion Pohl*