

MINUTES
Ashland County Forestry and Recreation Committee
Ashland County Forestry Dept Office
304 West Michigan St, Butternut, WI 54514
May 6, 2015

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

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

Others present: ACSA-Bill Chandler, County Board Chairperson-Pete Russo, DNR Liaison-Tom Piikkila, DNR-Heather Berklund, DNR Fish Tec-Jason Folstad, Forest Adm-Chris Hoffman, Assist Forest Adm-Matt Schultz, Forester-Jerome Wotachek, Secretary-Marion Pohl, Ashland Area Tourism-Mary McPhetridge, visitors-Dennis Walczyk, Lois Freeland, Deb Thimm, Doug Thorp and Cindy Kennedy.

The minutes of the April 1, 2015 meeting were approved with a motion by Kathy Schutte, second by Carl Kubley. Motion carried.

Kathy S showed everyone the Ashland Daily Press with pictures of the Marengo mural on the front page. The article was about the rededication and a new place for the mural.

Dennis Walczyk, a newly voted in supervisor for the Town of Jacobs, came to the meeting to discuss damaged roads by logging trucks. Chris explained culverts and gravel are provided. Dennis wants to know if more gravel can be taken from the gravel pit. Chris explained that 2 acres are open now. If you need the pit opened bigger, to call and he could get the pit made bigger. Frank K said the new town chairman talked to Emmer Schields and he said pit run gravel goes down first and then the crushed gravel on top. Emmer also told the chairman that small borrow pits could be opened. Chris said he was unaware that was permitted. Frank suggested that the county's loggers work with the town to cut the ROWs out. Chris explained the Forestry Dept does set up timber sales with ROW clearings. Jerry T said to have the road maintenance subject on the June meeting agenda. Chris said we need coordination of all entities involved.

Deb Thimm representing Ryan Thimm Handicap Reserve came to the meeting

to discuss their project of putting in a handicap pier on Gordon Lake. Deb gave the Committee the information on the pier. The total cost of the pier is \$4,388.30. After some discussion a motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Kathy Schutte to give the Ryan Thimm Handicap Reserve \$2,300.00 for handicap pier project on Gordon Lake. Motion carried.

Sue Motola did not come to the meeting to present her project. We will put her on the agenda when she calls us.

Snowmobile business - Bill C reported that the Ashland to Odanah snowmobile trail project is on track. The night curfew for snowmobiles has been removed in the City of Ashland. Bill said there are always ongoing trail issues with the private landowners.

Recreation Officer Jim Clapero did not attend the meeting as he was getting things ready for the DNR audit of his job grant. Frank K asked about the audit, and Chris said Jim's audit goes good. The grant may get prorated as that depends on how many people request funding.

Gary M said the Town of Agenda is considering opening up all their roads to ATVs. The town will asked Recreation Officer Jim Clapero and Chris Hoffman to attend a town meeting in regards to this proposal.

Mary McPhetridge of the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce came to the meeting to update the Committee on tourism. Mary said all counties seen an increase in tourism numbers for the first time in forty years with a 7.93% increase for Ashland County. She said the ice caves were a big help. Mary said the "Travel Ashland County" website is done now and is good for mobile devices. A new Bay Area Ashland County bike map was made. Chris said there are many bikers who use County F to go to Mercer and that may be a route added to the map. Frank explained that the County F area is part of a national bike trail and that is why a person sees a lot of bikers.

DNR Fish Tech Jason Folstad reported that Meder Lake has been surveyed. The DNR will stock the lake with walleye next year. The White River Flowage was surveyed for northern pike. The DNR want the northern pike out to keep the trout. Jason said the DNR wants to clean up Devil's Creek in Mellen to improve the trout habitat. He applied for grant money to do this project.

DNR Liaison Tom Pikkilla reported he was busy with fire season. There were 5 fires which burned a total of 23 acres. Tom is also helping on timber sales.

Forest Adm report - Chris said the timber sale bids were opened May 5, 2015 and gave the Committee the bid results summary. Chris said on Tract #5-15 Schloers are the high bidder even though they failed to put in a bid price for 5 MBF of MX Hardwood logs. Chris decided to use the minimum bid of \$100.00 and added the \$500 to the total bid. A motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Gary Mertig to award a timber sale contract to the high bidder of each sale provided all requirements were met. Motion carried.

Chris said the road restrictions are still in place. The restrictions will be lifted May 11th.

Frank K had questions about 2 items in April's meeting minutes. He wanted to know about a letter to be written regarding the snowmobile trail to the Bad River Reservation. Jerry explained that the letter was a consensus of the Committee to send along with the application for trail funding. Frank wanted to know why the purchase of 8 snowmobile signs was taken from the Non-Lapsing Timber Sale Revenue account. Frank said the signs are a recreation expense and should come from the Recreation Budget. Chris explained the signs were purchased for trail issues that came up unexpectedly and to keep the trail open. Chris said the Recreation Budget is low in money, and thought the Non-Lapsing Timber Sale Revenue account would be the next logical place to use to pay for the signs. Chris said he did not know there was a guideline for using the county Improvement Fund. Jerry T suggested that Chris talk to Jeff Bierl about the criteria for using the Improvement Fund.

Kathy S said the federal government is closing some campgrounds in the area. She said Mineral Lake and Lake 3 are closed. She said those campgrounds get used. Frank suggested Kathy call Tammy Baldwin a state representative.

Frank was wondering if the towns or county could take over the maintenance of the campgrounds. Chris said the water at the campgrounds needs to be tested twice a month and this is a cost deterrent.

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

The next Forestry and Recreation Committee meeting will be Wednesday, June 3, 2015, 9:00 AM, Forestry Dept office, Butternut, WI.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Kathy Schutte. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Submitted by
Marion Pohl