

MINUTES
Ashland County Forestry & Recreation Committee
Ashland County Forestry Dept Office
304 West Michigan St, Butternut, WI 54514
July 1, 2015

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: ACSA-Bill Chandler, Recreation Officer-Jim Clapero, Ashland County Board Chair-Pete Russo, DNR Liaison-Tom Pikkiila, Forest Adm-Chris Hoffman, Assist Forest Adm-Matt Schultz, Forester-Jerome Watochek, Secretary-Marion Pohl, Tourism-Mary McPhetridge, Town of Jacobs Supervisor-Dennis Walczyk.

The minutes of the June 5, 2015 meeting were approved with a motion by Carl Kubley, second by Pete Russo. Motion carried.

Snowmobile business - Bill C had nothing to report.

ATV business - Jim C and Bill C reported that they rode the county back roads and other roads looking for a good route for the ATVs to use. From Mellen south there is a good route. They tried riding all back roads as a route. This turned out to be too confusing and isolated in some areas. They rode county highways that would get them to where ever a person wanted to go, except in the White River area. We would have to go to the DNR with a proposed route with a bridge over the White River near the dam. A state statute would need to be changed to cross the White River. Then ATV funding would be available for a bridge crossing below the dam. Jim summarized by saying the county highways would be the most suitable for ATV routes in county

Jim C said the speed limit for ATVs on blacktop roads and county highways would be reduced.

At the last meeting Jim C said there was a problem with the ATV route in Glidden crossing the Chippewa River bridge that is on County Highway N. Legally, County Highway N cannot be used by ATVs. Chris said he would call

Emmer Schields of the Highway Dept to ask if he would approve ATVs using County Highway N going over the Chippewa River bridge. Chris reported that he did call Emmer, and Emmer approved ATVs to use that portion of County Highway N going across the Chippewa River bridge. The Town of Jacobs ordinance will have to be changed to reflect the use of County Highway N going over the Chippewa River bridge.

Recreation Officer's report - Jim C he has been busy with ATV riders.

Tourism report - Mary McP reported that since May there has been an increase of tourists to the area. Fishing and ATVing are the most popular activities.

DNR Liaison Tom P reported he is working on a timber sale near Augustine Lake.

Forest Adm's report - Chris presented a resolution for approval to apply for County Conservation Aid 50/50 funding for a wildlife project. Chris said the county's portion of the funding would come from the Ruffed Grouse Society donation. A motion was made by Frank Kempf, second by Pete Russo to approve the resolution and to present the resolution to County Board at their next meeting. Motion carried.

Chris told the Committee that he wants to buy 2 ATVs. He would trade in the ATVs we have now and the final cost would be \$13,058. This money would come from the non-lapsing timber sale revenue account. A motion was made by Kathy Schutte, second by Gary Mertig to approve purchasing 2 ATVs at \$13,058. Motion carried.

Chris said he would also like to purchase a chisel plow at \$4,300 and tractor sprayer made to specs at \$7,000. The money to purchase these items would come from the nickel/acre fund. A motion was made by Gary Mertig, second by Frank Kempf to approve the purchase of the two aforementioned items. Motion carried.

Chris discussed the Improvement and Development (fund 23) budget. The Tourism account is part of this budget and was treated as a segregated account. After the audit, the fund 23 budget showed less money in the whole budget than the Tourism account was suppose to have. The balance of the fund 23 budget is \$16,775 now. Some of the extra money left over from other years was taken to cover other department budgets. The auditor said this

was not a non-lapsing budget in reality. The money left over goes to the general budget or expenditures over budget come from the general budget. Chris talked to Jeff B about this budget to find out the history of how this budget was to work. Jeff B had Lori look through the county records and did not find anything. Frank explained that at one time there was a separate committee called the Improvement and Development Committee. Then that committee joined the Forestry Committee along with their budget. Frank K suggested that the fund 23 budget should be created as a non-lapsing budget with \$25,000 to \$30,000 be the top amount in the account. Frank suggested to have this on the next committee meeting agenda. A resolution should be written up by Chris and if need be confer with Jeff on the resolution to make fund 23 a non-lapsing budget. Frank said the resolution approved by the Committee would go to the Finance Committee for approval and then to the County Board.

Other business - Frank K discussed the federal campground closures. He talked to Mike Martin the District Ranger about the closures and that the Town of Chippewa is interested in partnering with the Forest Service to keep the Stock Farm Bridge campground open. Mr Marten explained there would be various details to work through and then enter into a participating agreement. Frank said he will meet with Mr Martin again. Gary M said that Mr Martin should be reminded to have money in the Forest Service budget for 2016 for maintenance of the campgrounds that was taken out of the 2015 budget that closed the campgrounds. Kathy S said she has 4 campgrounds in her district that are closed, and would like to attend the meeting with Frank and Mr Martin. Gary said he would also like to attend the meeting. Chris suggested to have Mr Martin attend our Forestry and Recreation Committee meeting along with the chairpersons from each of the towns that have federal campgrounds so everyone can be informed and be able to ask questions. Chris said the meeting could be held at the Village of Butternut town hall.

Chris said a family who owns property west of Butternut (the Town of Chippewa) wants to sell the land to the county as they want the property to stay open to the public. The property consists of 1,100 acres and is in the MFL program. Chris said there is grant money from the State to help pay for the property along with stumpage money. Chris said he would like to discuss this property more in a closed session at the next committee meeting.

Frank K said the Town of Jacobs will be getting a ROW cutting plan put

together in the near future. Also the Town of Jacobs would like help from the county with gravel.

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

The next Forestry and Recreation Committee meeting will be Wednesday, August 5, 2015, 9:00 AM, Butternut, IWI.

The meeting adjourned with a motion by Kathy Schutte, second by Carl Kubley. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:54 am.

Submitted by
Marion Pohl