

MINUTES
Ashland County Forestry and Recreation Committee
Ashland County Forestry Dept. Office
304 West Michigan St, Butternut, WI 54514
May 4, 2016

The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairperson, Pete Russo, at 9:00 A.M.

Members present: Gary Mertig, Carl Kubley, Pat Daoust, Martin Vitek and Kathy Schutte.

Others present: County Board Chair-Pete Russo, ACSA-Bill Chandler, Recreation Officer-Jim Clapero, DNR Liaison-Tom Piikkila, Forest Adm.-Chris Hoffman, Forester-Jerome Wotachek, Secretary-Marion Pohl, Bob Rybak and Bill Ernst (Town of Chippewa).

Pete R. asked for nominations for Chairperson. Kathy S. made a motion to nominate Gary Mertig, second by Carl Kubley. Pete R. asked for any other nominations three times. A motion by Carl Kubley to cast a unanimous vote for Gary Mertig for Chairperson, second by Kathy S. Motion carried.

Gary M. asked for nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Carl K. made a motion to nominate Kathy Schutte. Gary M. asked for any other nominations three times. A motion was made by Carl Kubley to cast a unanimous vote for Kathy Schutte for Vice-Chairperson. Motion carried.

The minutes of the April 6, 2016 meeting, Kathy S. asked to have in the minutes that she picked up the Recreation Grant application for the Sanborn Community Club and gave the application to George Mika. A motion to approve the minutes with the additional information was made by Kathy Schutte, second by Carl Kubley. Motion carried.

Kathy S. asked if the agenda item Other Business - Forest Service Campgrounds could be moved up as the next agenda item. The Committee approved this change.

Kathy S. explained that at the Town of Marengo annual meeting in April, the Forest Service personnel came to the meeting and announced the Forest Service will not reimburse the towns for any maintenance costs if the towns take care of the campgrounds. Gary M. had e-mailed the Forest Service to find out what was going on and did not get a clear answer. Gary explained to the new committee members that at our last month's committee meeting, Forest Service personnel had said that they would reimburse some of the maintenance costs and supply some of the cleaning products. And now the Forest Service said they will not reimburse any expenses. Gary said we need to know what is going on, if the campgrounds are a dead issue or not. If the campgrounds are closed a second year, people will have gone elsewhere and not come back. Bob Rybak asked if the County could help with maintenance costs. Kathy S. said the City of Mellen would help support the campgrounds, and thought the Town of Jacobs would too. Gary M. said he will contact Mike Martin and Chad Jacobson of the Forest Service to get some clear answers.

Bob Rybak asked for a Recreation grant application for a Butternut Park project of new fencing around the ballfield.

Snowmobile trail business - Bill C. reported that a snowmobile bridge was installed over Silver Creek just on the corner of Martin Vitek's property last week. Bill showed the Committee pictures of the new bridge.

Recreation Officer's report - Jim C. said activity is quiet so he is catching up on paperwork and getting the boat and ATV ready for the summer season.

DNR Liaison's report - Tom P. introduced himself to the new Committee members. Tom handed out information about the county forest, discussing the history of the forest and the timber harvesting. Kathy S. asked about stumpage rates. Chris said prices are down.

Tom also reported that the fire season has been slow. Tom has been setting up timber sales.

Tom discussed the changes in the Managed Forest Law, Bill 358, that was passed into law April 15th. Tom gave the Committee that information.

Forest Adm.'s report - Chris H. asked for approval to advertise timber sales for bids and a sale on Butternut Village property. A motion was made by Carl Kubley, second by Pat Daoust to approve advertising the timber sales for bids. Motion carried.

Chris discussed our current phone system and the need to have an updated system. Chris said the new phone system would be like the County Highway Dept.'s. The phone system would have a list of the office personnel, and the caller would press a number corresponding to who they want to talk to or leave a message. Chris said he has found a person who does the installation for about \$3,000 or less. Chris asked the Committee to approve getting a new phone system. A motion was made by Kathy Schutte, second by Pat Daoust to approve installing a new phone system for the Forestry Dept. Office for no more than \$3,000 and the money would come from the non-lapsing timber sale revenue account. Motion carried.

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

Gary M. discussed the next meeting date. He said he would like to change the meeting date to the first Thursday of the month and would like to start the meetings at 8:00 AM for the summer. Gary asked the Committee members if the first Thursday works for them. The Committee members agreed to have the Forestry and Recreation Committee meetings on the first Thursday of the month with the start time of 8:00 AM.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Kathy Schutte, second by Carl Kubley. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 AM.

Submitted by

Marion Pahl