

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

October 6, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gary Mertig at 9:00 a.m.

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

Others present: ACSA, Bill Chandler; Recreation Officer, Jim Clapero; DNR Liaison, Tom Piikkila; DNR Fish Biologist, Zach Lawson; Forest Adm., Chris Hoffman; Assist Forest Adm., Matt Schultz; Forester, Jerome Wotachek; Secretary, Marion Pohl.

The minutes of the September 1, 2016 meeting were approved with a motion by Pat Daoust, second by Marty Vitek. Motion carried.

Snowmobile/ATV Trail Business - Bill C. reported that there is still a lot of storm damage to clean up on the trails, but he is making progress. One bridge has been placed, and another one will be placed soon. There are culvert repairs to be made also. Bill said the East side of the county the trails will be open for snowmobile traffic. Bill said he will be meeting with the Forest Service about putting in a temporary trail because the regular trail is damaged and will not be repaired for the time being.

Chris said he met with FEMA to finalize paperwork.

Recreation Officer's report - Jim C. reported that there is good ATV traffic in the area. Jim also reported that he is patrolling the county forest more now because of increased activity of bird hunters, balsam bough gatherers, firewood cutters, etc. Also, Jim said he is working with the Forest Service on birch twiggling activity.

Jim discussed the railroad tracks not in use anymore according to the railroad people. Jim said people are going to be using them, but he won't be patrolling the tracks. Jim said that it is the railroad's responsibility to do the patrolling. Jim does not condone use of the tracks. Jim said he will be doing snowmobile safety education classes.

DNR Fish Biologist - Zach L. reported that he has finished the fish surveys for Ashland County. Zach said most trout streams seem to be unscathed from damage from recent storms, and some streams need restoration work. Zach said lakes had a good hatch of fish, and the fish stocked in lakes did well too. Zach also mentioned that a wildlife biologist has been hired and that person will start October 15th.

DNR Liaison's report - Tom P. said he finished a 75-acre timber sale for the next timber sale bidding.

Forest Adm.'s report - Chris H. reported logging activity is still slow because of the wet conditions in the forest. Work has begun on the office addition. The footings will be poured this week. Kathy S. asked what the contract completion date is. Chris said the completion date is December 31, 2016. With delays, the contract may get extended.

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

A discussion took place about the next meeting date. After discussing what day to have the meeting, the Committee decided to go back to having the meetings on the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m.

The next Forestry and Recreation Committee will be Wednesday, November 2, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. at the Forestry Dept. Office in Butternut, WI.

Kathy S. suggested that the Committee and Forestry Staff have a Christmas luncheon for the December meeting. Kathy wants this idea on the November meeting agenda to discuss further.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Pat Daoust, second by Kathy Schutte. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Submitted by
Marion Pohl