

Unofficial Until Approved

Forestry & Parks Committee Minutes

January 18, 2018; 9:00 a.m.

Courthouse Auditorium, Neillsville, WI

Call to order 9:00 a.m.

Supervisors Present: Tom Wilcox, Al Bower, Joe Waichulis, Dale Mitte and Dean Zank

Supervisors Absent: None

Others present for all or some of the meeting: Rick Dailey – Forestry and Parks Administrator; John Wendorski – Forestry Manager; Marcus Aumann – Parks & Programs Manager; Daryn Horn – Facilities Supervisor; Mary Olson-Back – Office Business Manager; Bryan Peterson – DNR Liaison; Wayne Hendrickson - County Board Chairman; Marlin Laidlaw – Whitetails Unlimited; Ken Ness – Express Disposal; Travis Verdegan – WI DNR Forestry Specialist; Luke Nigon and Einar Fransen – County Foresters

Marlin Laidlaw presented a sign on behalf of the Marshfield Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited and the Bauman family to recognize the chapter's contributions to the Sherwood Lake dredging project. The sign will be placed near Sherwood Lake at the location of the secondary forest road that was reconstructed to improve hunting opportunities in the area. The Administrator and committee thanked Mr. Laidlaw for the support. No action taken.

The Administrator presented the December 12, 2017 minutes for committee approval. Motion by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Dean Zank to approve the December 12, 2017 minutes as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

The Administrator presented the December 2017 financial report for committee approval. Motion by Al Bower, seconded by Dale Mitte to accept the December 2017 financial report as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Daryn Horn presented the inmate labor report for committee review. Inmate crews finished splitting firewood at the shop and have been working at Bruce Mound as needed. No action taken.

The Administrator presented a request for proposals for engineering services for Mead Lake Dam. The Administrator also shared a Mead Lake Dam gate assessment that was completed in 2001 for committee review. Motion by Dean Zank, seconded by Al Bower to approve the request for proposals for engineering services – Mead Lake Dam as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

John Wendorski presented a request for quotes – timber stand improvement project. Motion by Dale Mitte, seconded by Joe Waichulis to approve the request for quotes – timber stand improvement project as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Marcus Aumann presented a request for quotes – purchase of a grader. Motion by Dale Mitte, seconded by Dean Zank to approve the request for quotes – purchase of a grader as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

WisDOT buyout offer for Black River County Park – No report

Marcus Aumann presented a proposed design for the new Sherwood Park shower building for committee approval. Motion by Dale Mitte, seconded by Dean Zank to approve the Sherwood Park shower design to include all additions as discussed. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried. Motion by Dale Mitte, seconded by Joe Waichulis to contact area plumbers directly for bids to install a new mound system at Sherwood Park as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Mary Olson-Back presented the current WI DOT equipment rates to be adopted as the official Forestry and Parks Department equipment rates. Motion by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Al Bower to approve the current WI DOT equipment rates as the official Forestry and Parks Department equipment rates unless superseded by the ORV rates where applicable as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Marcus Aumann reviewed the extended stay camping policy and presented several minor changes to the policy for committee approval. Marcus also presented a letter from a frequent camper at Russell Memorial Park with suggestions for the extended stay camping policy. Marcus explained that the suggestions are not currently feasible with the reservation system that is currently in use. The committee took no action on the presented letter. Motion by Dean Zank, seconded by Dale Mitte to approve extended stay camping policy as presented with the minor changes to the policy. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

The Administrator presented a preliminary list of delegated responsibilities that could be part of the Fair Board lease agreement that is being drafted for committee review. The committee discussed the list at length and offered no further suggestions at this time. No action taken.

Under General Department Updates, the Administrator reported that the department is advertising to hire one part-time worker to fill a vacancy, the office has received 3 new desktop computers to replace virtual work stations or outdated desktops, and ADS would like to work with the department through their employee training program in the future. Mary Olson-Back reported to the committee on the implementation progress of the County's new accounting software program.

Under Forest Management Update, John Wendorski presented an update on the skidder repairs and DNR calendar year timber sale reports.

Under Parks Management Updates, Marcus Aumann reported that he is waiting for the final invoice for the Levis Mound Chalet, he is working with Land Conservation and the DNR to solve the Russell Memorial Park beach erosion issues, and is starting to evaluate new recreation software that could replace DMI in the future.

Under Trails Management Update, Marcus Aumann reported that the winter ATV trails were closed temporarily to allow for the snow base to stabilize following a decent snowfall event and they will likely reopen after the upcoming January thaw passes and a predicted snowstorm move through the area.

Under Fairgrounds Management Update, Daryn Horn reported on attending the annual Statewide Fair Conference with the Administrator.

Under Bruce Mound Management Updates, Daryn Horn reported that a helmet sale to promote safety was held at Bruce Mound, Social Services held a coat drive at the facility, cold weather in late December into January negatively impacted attendance, the state inspector completed his annual inspection and praised the staff and the facility for the upkeep and upgrades over the past few seasons.

Under Dams Management Updates – The Administrator reported that the Mead Lake Dam Failure analysis has been approved by the DNR after being resubmitted by Tiry Engineering.

John Wendorski presented information on two parcels of land currently owned by Meteor Timber in Mead and Sherwood Townships that the County was approached about purchasing. After reviewing the information presented the committee agreed that the parcel in Mead Township was not a high priority property for the County. They also agreed that the parcel in Sherwood Township, which is adjacent to County Forest, is worthy of pursuing. Motion by Dale Mitte, seconded by Joe Waichulis to continue discussions with Meteor Timber to purchase 280 acres of land in Sherwood Township as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Dale Mitte left the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

At 12:43 p.m., motion by Al Bower, seconded by Dean Zank to go into closed session in accordance with WI Statute 19.85(1)(c) considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the government body has jurisdiction or exercise responsibility – conduct interviews for vacant Forestry Technician position. Roll call vote, all ayes, motion carried.

At 2:00 p.m., motion by Dean Zank, seconded by Al Bower to reconvene into open session. Roll call vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Ken Ness of Express Disposal presented a request to purchase County Forest Land in Section 3, Town of Mentor. Several different options were presented. Travis Verdegan, WI DNR Forestry Specialist was present to answer questions about the withdrawal process. Mr. Ness indicated that if he were to purchase the County Forest land he would be willing to add a parking area off his future driveway to be

used by the public and the department for access to county forest in that area. The committee agreed that if land were to be sold or exchanged, they preferred a straight property boundary between the two parties for ease of future maintenance. Motion by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Tom Wilcox to continue negotiating with Mr. Ness to purchase County Forest in Section 3, Town of Mentor and to simplify property boundaries as well as replace the County Forest land with other lands and money as deemed appropriate for the successful completion of a withdrawal application. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

John Wendorski presented a request to purchase County Forest land in section 17, Town of Mead. John explained that the County owns a narrow strip of land between Kington Road and private land north of the road. These landowners are not able to sell their property due to lack of access to the road. In many cases driveways already cross the County land. Travis Verdegan indicated that from a DNR perspective it would be easier to submit one withdrawal application for the entire strip of land between the town road and private property to clean up this issue. Travis also suggested that the County could put money into the Department's land acquisition account to offset the loss of County Forest in instances where other landowners have not yet contacted the department to purchase. The County could then get reimbursed over time as the other parcels are sold to adjoining land owners. Motion by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Al Bower to withdraw the entire strip of land located in sections 17 and section 18 laying north of Kington Avenue, sell the parcel to the requesting party as presented, and replace the other County Forest lands to be withdrawn by moving funds into the Land Acquisition account for future purchase. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Wage Rate Changes were presented for committee review. No action taken.

December 2017 vouchers were presented for committee approval. Motion by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Dean Zank to approve vouchers as presented. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

Luke Nigon and Einar Fransen joined the meeting to discuss the Forestry Technician interviews and candidates. Motion by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Tom Wilcox to offer the Forestry Technician position to Sebastian Neisius. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

The Committee Chair opened the floor for public comment. No comments received.

Next regular meeting date was set for February 13, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in the Courthouse Auditorium.

Motion to adjourn at 3:12 p.m. by Joe Waichulis, seconded by Al Bower. Voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

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Rick Dailey, Secretary