

Members present: Rick Seefeldt (chair), Tom Rosenberg (vice-chair), Jean Maszk

Staff present: Tom Lovlien - Forest Administrator, Jamie Polley – Director, Jeff Sorenson-DNR Forest Liaison

1. Call Meeting to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chair Seefeldt at 1:00pm, Rm. 5, 212 River Dr., Wausau. Official notice and the agenda for the meeting was posted publicly in accordance with State statutes.
2. Public Comment – none brought forward.
3. Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Maszk / Rosenberg to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2023 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.
4. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee
 1. 2024 Forestry/Recreation Committee Meeting Dates – January 4 Meeting – Lovlien said the Environmental Resources Committee may meet Jan. 5th, 2024 so this meeting will tentatively be set for Thursday, January 4th at 1:00pm. The rest of the 2024 meeting dates will be held the Tuesday before the first Thursday of the month to coincide with the Environmental Resource Committee Thursday meeting dates. This will be subject to approval of Committee after the April elections. **Motion** / second by Rosenberg / Maszk to approve the tentative dates for 2024. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.
5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee
 1. Consider Timber Sale Extensions for Contracts Expiring December 31, 2023 – Lovlien explained that last winter was not good for cutting timber and current timber markets are poor. He discussed staff’s reasoning for the following extensions and stumpage increases. Country Forest Products Contract #697-20, Wilson Forestry Contract #698-20 and Koerner Forest Products Contract #699-20 are all requesting first extensions. Lovlien’s recommendation is to grant the extensions with a 5% increase on stumpage for Country Forest Products and Wilson Forestry and no increase on stumpage for Koerner Forest Products. **Motion** / second by Maszk / Rosenberg to grant the extensions for Contract #697-20 and #698-20 with a 5% increase on stumpage and to grant the extension for Contract #699-20 with a zero percent increase on stumpage. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0. Tigerton Lumber Company Contract #688-19 is requesting a 2nd extension. Lovlien discussed the sale and his recommendation is to grant the extension with a 10% increase on stumpage following the contract. **Motion** / second by Rosenberg / Seefeldt to grant the extension for Contract #688-19 with a 10% increase in stumpage. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0. Lovlien’s recommendation for Briarton Logging Contract #694-20 is to modify the May 2023 10% increase on stumpage to a 5% increase on stumpage due to consistency with the other extensions. **Motion** / second by Maszk / Rosenberg to modify the 10% increase on stumpage to a 5% increase for Contract #694-20. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.
 2. Consider Timber Bids and Award Contracts – The second timber sale bid opening was held on October 25th. Lovlien said four bids from two bidders on the three tracts were received. Lovlien’s recommendation is to award all the sales to Flannel Fleet Logging and reject Futurewood Corporation’s bid because they did not submit a 10% bid security. Sorenson discussed a summary of the Fall 2023 bid opening results. **Motion** / second by Rosenberg / Seefeldt to award the three sales to Flannel Fleet Logging and reject Futurewood Corporation’s bid because they did not submit a 10% bid security. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.
 3. Consider Entering Into a Partition Fence Line Agreement with Wayne and Scott Hoffman – Lovlien explained the County is required by State Statute in sharing fence costs requested by an adjoining landowner if farming or grazing is being done. Many years ago, Counties suggested an agreement whereby if the landowner is agreeable, the County would buy all the fence materials and the farmer would install, maintain and pay for fence repairs as long as they owned the property. Lovlien recommends entering into a partition fence line agreement with Wayne and Scott Hoffman with the County purchasing all the materials for the fence and the landowner responsible for installing, maintaining and repairs. Questions were answered. **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Maszk to enter into a partition fence line agreement with Wayne and Scott Hoffman. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration – None

6. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee

A. Review and Consider Entering Into an Agreement with DNR on the Lake States Forest Management Bat Habitat Conservation Plan - Various bat species because of white nose syndrome disease became listed as federally endangered on March 31 and WCFA has been working with DNR on how to continue to manage (harvest) the forests. Signing on to the Lake States Bat Conservation Plan, is not a requirement, but is an easy way to receive incidental take coverage and be sure Marathon County forests and parks are in compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act with respect to federally listed bat species. Staff have been working with the DNR on the landowner agreement which includes forested areas of the county forests and parks. Lovlien recommends the Committee approve the agreement and forward the recommendation to the Environmental Resources Committee to sign on to the Lake States Forest Management Bat Habitat Conservation Plan. **Motion** / second by Maszk / Rosenberg to approve the agreement with DNR on the Lake States Forest Management Bat Habitat Conservation Plan and forward this on to the Environmental Resources Committee. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.

7. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. Wisconsin County Forests Association Special License Plate Project – Lovlien explained WCFA is working on an initiative to put forth a proposal to have a special license plate. It will help promote and advocate for sustainable forest management in the State. Funds raised will be used for WCFA operations, grants, projects, scholarships, education, research and more. Five hundred signatures are needed to move the proposal forward with the Department of Transportation. A contest will be held for artists to design the plate and the winner will receive \$1000.00.

B. Wisconsin County Forests Association Board of Directors Resolutions – Lovlien discussed the resolutions that the Legislative/Certification Committee and WCFA Board of Directors have endorsed which include support of 1) restoration of Division of Forestry budget cuts, 2) exceptions to DNR County Forest Administration Grant standards, 3) concerns with the State Snowmobile Recreation Council actions, and 4) support to serve on councils/committees. Discussion followed.

C. Department of Natural Resources Liaison Report – Jeff Sorenson reported that the DNR is on track with their time standard hours of assisting the County. He assisted the County Forester in establishing 2024 Fall sales. Helped finish up the last of the scarification at the Kronenwetter Oak shelterwood. Will be doing recon on potential 2025 sales and work on musclewood and ironwood control in some of the upcoming sales.

D. Misconduct of the Governor’s Snowmobile Recreation Council – WCFA sent a letter to Governor Evers and the Secretary-Designee of the Department of Natural Resources noting in detail numerous issues that are causing concern. In particular, potential conflict of interest among Council members and possible failure to comply with statute, code and Council guidelines.

8. Next Meeting Date, Time, Location: Tuesday, December 5, 2023, 1:00 pm, Rm. 5 & Webex, 212 River Dr., Wausau WI 54403

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence - Lovlien announced that the County Forester, Joe Tucker and his wife had a healthy baby boy on October 22, 2023.

B. Future Agenda Items: Review and Consider Approving the 2024 Wildlife Work Plan, Review and Consider Approving the 2024 County Forest Work Plan, Application for County Forest Acreage Payment, County Fish and Game Projects Resolution, Comprehensive Land Use Plan Amendments

9. Adjourn – **Motion** / second by Rosenberg / Maszk to adjourn the meeting at 2:15 p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-0.