

Members present: Arnold Schlei (c), James Bove, Rick Seefeldt
Also present: Tom Lovlien-Forest Administrator, Chad Keranen-DNR Liaison

1. Call meeting to order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Schlei at 12:30pm, Rm 3, 212 River Dr., Wausau.
2. Public Comment Period – None
3. Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Bove / Seefeldt to approve the minutes from the January 7, 2020 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

4. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Timber Sale Closeout – Bell Timber Contract #659-17 - A closeout summary was previously provided. Lovlien reported that the estimated number of tons was 820 and 1034.58 tons were cut. Total revenue for this sale was \$26,122.19. Lovlien’s recommendation is to close out Contract #659-17 and return their cash bond. **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Schlei to close out Bell Timber Contract #659-17 and return their cash bond. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Timber Sale Closeout – Country Forest Products #672-18 - A closeout summary was previously provided. Lovlien reported that the estimated number of tons was 3500 and 3343.68 tons were cut. Total revenue for this sale was \$78,239.44. Lovlien’s recommendation is to close out Contract #672-18 and return their Letter of Credit. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to close out Country Forest Products #672-18 and return their Letter of Credit. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

2. Revised Timeline for Completion of the Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land use Plan

Lovlien revised the timeline and moved Chapter 900 to be reviewed earlier along with Chapters 700 and 800 at the March 18th Citizen Advisory Subcommittee meeting. The Forestry Committee will review those three chapters at their April meeting and the Park Commission will review Chapter 900 because it deals with some recreation items they have purview over. The Environmental Resource Committee will be given a quarterly update in April. Lovlien asked that Committee review the chapters thoroughly especially Chapter 900 because it pertains to recreation regulations and policies that have been adopted. The time line is to ask the County Board for approval in November and then on to the DNR for approval in December.

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration

1. 2019 County Forest Division Annual Report – Lovlien discussed some of the program highlights including revenue and expenses, certification, timber management, road and trail maintenance, wildlife management, recreation, public outreach and professional development. **Motion** / second by Bove / Seefeldt to approve the 2019 Forestry Division Annual Report and forward it to the Environmental Resources Committee for their approval. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

2. Resolution: Consider the Purchase of the CERES Timber LLC Property for County Forest

Lovlien received a signed Agreement of Purchase and Sale that was reviewed by the County’s Corporation Counsel. He discussed the funding sources for the purchase. Some of the land is ready for a timber harvest. Questions were answered. **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Bove to forward the recommendation to purchase the property to the Environmental Resource Committee. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

5. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee – none

6. Educational Presentations/Outcomes Monitoring Reports

A. Value of Public Land Timber Sales in Wisconsin – Lovlien reported that in 2019 the 29 county forests took in 44 million dollars in stumpage. He discussed the state lands stumpage. Lovlien noted that the timber industry relies on public land in county forests to provide this amount of wood every year. There is spinoff in the local economy. The county forests are an important contributor to the forest economy in Wisconsin.

B. Wisconsin County Forests Spring Administrators Meeting – March 19-20, 2020

Lovlien asked that any members that wish to attend let him know by this Friday, March 6th.

C. Wisconsin County Forests Summer Tour – June 25-26, 2020

The tour will be held in Vilas County in Eagle River this year. Lovlien does not have all of the details yet, he just wanted them to know what the dates were in case anyone was interested in attending.

D. Required Yearly Timber Stumpage Payments to Townships – Lovlien explained that fifteen towns have County forest land in Marathon County. It's important to note that the County shares some of the stumpage proceeds with the towns. The County is required to share ten percent and each of those fifteen towns receives an amount based on the amount of County forest acreage they have. Lovlien understands that some of the towns want more than the required ten percent. Lovlien explained that in addition, towns receive thirty cents an acre payment from the State in lieu of taxes. The Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) has been working on State legislation to increase the State payment from thirty cents to a dollar an acre. Only the State legislature can change the law to increase this amount but has not been supportive in the last 10 years. WCFA will work again to try to get the State to increase their payment but Lovlien said it is not something he thinks will be supported. The counties will continue to work on behalf of the towns because it's important that the town roads remain open to get timber products to the market.

E. Report on Winter Timber Sale Activity on County Forest Lands - Lovlien said a lot of companies cut timber the last two winters. This winter was a slow start and only a few companies moved in. Currently, there are four sales being cut. He doesn't believe it's going to be a large revenue year. However, there are some valuable timber sales in Nine Mile and if those get cut the division will make its revenue projection of \$245,000. Markets, weather, and having three year contracts all cause ebbs and flows in the revenue.

7. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – April 7, 2020 at 12:30pm, 212 River Dr., Rm. 3

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence - none

B. Future Agenda Items – Consider Approving the 2020 Spring Timber Sale Package, Forestry Division Expense/Revenue Report, Review of Proposed Policy Revisions to the Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan – Chapters 700 - 900

8. Adjourn – **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Bove to adjourn at 1:15 pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.