

Members present: Arnold Schlei (c), James Bove

Members excused: Rick Seefeldt

Also present: Tom Lovlien-Forest Administrator, Jamie Polley-Director, Chad Keranen-DNR Liaison, John Beatty, Christian Boulanger

Call meeting to order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Schlei at 12:30pm, Rm 3, 212 River Dr., Wausau.

Public Comment Period – Not to Exceed 15 Minutes – none brought forward

Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei to approve the minutes from the May 7, 2019 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. Article – Report Says Wisconsin Forestry on the Upswing – Lovlien commented that the forestry employment sector increased nearly five percent and timber sales in dollars increased by nearly ten percent. Consumption of pulpwood has decreased because some of the pulpwood mills have been going out of business but because the forests are aging more high quality wood is being shipped.

B. Article – Wisconsin Tourism Industry Generates 21.6 Billion – Lovlien commented that the 2018 visitor spending rose five percent to \$13.3 billion and most of the growth was tied to recreational activities. The different events promoted through the Department will help the local area. Marathon County tourism has also been increasing the last several years.

C. Article – May 2019 Paper and Forestry Products Month – Lovlien said the State legislature has noted that papermaking has been going on for 165 years starting in 1848. Because of sustainable forestry practices Wisconsin, forests are growing one and a half times more timber than is being harvested each year and there are more trees and forests in the United States than there were one hundred years ago. The forests are being managed sustainability and are not being overharvested. Along with that, the quality of life that the recreational programs provide is also important. Schlei questioned the progress of the national forests timber sales with the counties taking over some responsibilities. Keranen will bring information to the next meeting about the increased harvesting and how the state and counties are helping with the sales on the national forests.

D. Article – Electronic Assist Bikes – Polley said the concept had previously been brought to Forestry Committee and Park Commission and eventually will come back whether or not to allow them on the County's mountain bike trails. Currently electronic assist bikes are just allowed on the Mountain Bay Trail. The articles discuss the pros and cons of these bikes and the new legislature being brought forward for them. Polley said the only electronic assist bikes the Marathon County Pedestrian and Bike Committee are discussing are the Class 1 pedal assist bikes and not the other classes that are throttle only. The bike has levels of assistance and needs to be pedaled in order for it to move. There are different classes within the pedal assist bikes and the ones being looked at are the lowest class with a limit on motor size and speed.

Polley thought there may be some mixed feelings among the bike community with some not having any problem with the electronic assist bikes while other may feel they don't belong on the trails. She felt there was some support for e-bikes for aging bikers who may have difficulty biking up a hill. The e-bike would make it easier for them which would allow them to still continue to bike which is a benefit. There is not a lot of research yet as to what effect they have on a mountain bike trail but Polley did not think it could be much more than a regular mountain biker has. Whether they are allowed or not on the trails may come down to enforcement and how to know that the correct class of bike is being used on the trails.

Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Timber Sale Extension Requests

a. Tigerton Lumber – Contract #642-15 – A one year extension at a zero percent increase had already been granted on this contract because of poor logging conditions and bad winters. There is also an agreement with a private landowner that Lovlien worked to extend for two years. Lovlien thought the County should assess a penalty because this contract could have been cut last winter and is four years old and no timber has been harvested yet. He is recommending a twenty-percent increase. The contractor may be able to cut some of this sale before the rate increase on January 1, 2020. Questions were answered. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to extend Contract #642-15 until January 1, 2020 with a twenty-percent increase in stumpage on January 1, 2020. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

b. Central Wisconsin lumber – Contract #644-15 – Lovlien said a one year extension at a zero percent increase has already been granted on this contract because of poor logging conditions and bad winters. Central Wisconsin Lumber cut three of their four sales catching up on some of their four-year old contracts with the County last winter. This sale was operable, it is four years old with no timber harvested and it could have been cut but the contractor chose not to. He recommends a twenty-percent increase on stumpage as of January 1, 2020. Questions were answered. **Motion** / second by Bove /Schlei to extend Contract #644-15 to December 30, 2020 with a twenty percent increase in stumpage after January 1, 2020. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent

2. Discussion and Possible Action on Ordering a Second Appraisal for Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Funding on the Property in the Town of Hewitt – Lovlien said the CERES property is (200 acres) in the Town of Hewitt that the County is attempting to acquire. An appraisal was completed but some problems arose. CERES is willing to pay for a second appraisal using an appraiser that the County contracts. The DNR will determine which appraisal is the fairest to both parties and certify one of the two. That certified appraisal is the one the County will use for State grant funding. Lovlien also believes that the County, CERES and the State will be better served if a second appraisal is done so a comparison can be made. Questions were answered. **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei that the County orders a second appraisal on the CERES property with CERES paying for that appraisal in full. Both appraisals will be sent to the DNR who will review and the County will use one of them for State grant funding. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Questions were answered.

Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – July 2, 2019 at 12:30pm, 212 River Dr., Rm. 3

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence – Lovlien said the County received an accepted offer on the Kerswill property for the appraised value and this item will most likely come back to the Committee at the July meeting.

B. Future Agenda Items – Timber Sale Closeouts, offer to purchase on the Kerswill property, Good Neighborhood Authority update, approval for a public participation plan for the Fifteen Year County Comprehensive Forest Use Plan

Adjourn – **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to adjourn at 1:10 pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.