

Members present: Arnold Schlei (c), James Bove, Rick Seefeldt

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

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 / Seefeldt to approve the minutes from the July 2, 2019 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. Federal Forests Good Neighbor Authority Program – Keranen explained that in 2014 the State signed a master agreement with the forest service to perform timber sale contracting work on the national forest. The DNR along with county foresters, and private consultant foresters are helping to set up the sales and the revenues from those sales are paying for the work that is done. Keranen noted that Wisconsin was the first State in the nation to sign this agreement. In 2016 the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest was the number one timber producing forest in the nation. He said 10,000 acres have been sold since they went into the agreement with a 7 million dollar bid value. The extra money from the sales have been going back into the forest for beaver control, timber stand work, and updating all the recon on the national forest. He said that he can't answer the most asked question of why the national forests don't hire their own staff. He believes it's because there is too much red tape and politics that go along with the national program. He said the County forest program in this State is the model forestry program in the whole U.S. in how efficient and productive it is. He added that seven northern counties have signed the agreements. They have more staff and their county forests are next to the national forest so it is easier for them to do the work on them. Lovlien said the reason the counties want to help is because over the years more timber has come off the market. Not having timber on the market drives prices up to the point where it may lead to mill closures. If the mills close that doesn't help anyone because then the counties can't sell their timber either.

B. County Forest Land Acquisition Updates – Kerswill, CERES, and Romatowski - Lovlien explained that the State Joint Finance Committee voted to give the County full funding of the grant and match lands in the amount of \$347,043 towards the purchase of the Kerswill property. The cost to the County for the 199 acre property will be about \$8,500. Lovlien discussed the revisionary clause in the deed of the property that was given to the County by the Park Foundation that was used as match lands. The landowner had wanted the revisionary clause to stay to protect the family's original intent when they gave it to the Park Foundation and by entering it into the County Forest Special Use it meets that intent. A correction to the deed needs to be filed which will satisfy the State's concerns about the clause. The resolution will be brought to County Board in August and will need a 2/3 vote to pass.

A second appraisal will be done this week on the CERES property. There were some questions regarding the first appraisal and CERES had agreed to pay for a second appraisal with the County as the client. Both appraisals will be submitted to the State and they will determine which one they are going to accept going forward for the grant match. The certified appraised value is what the County will negotiate with CERES and then would get a 50% grant.

There is forty acres in the Village of Kronenwetter owned by Romatowski that he has offered to the County. Lovlien attended the Village Board meeting where they unanimously approved the County acquiring the land. Lovlien has submitted the grant paperwork and has asked for appraisal quotes. The application will be submitted and then staff will work on a potential offer to purchase.

C. Cross Country Skiing Survey Results - Lovlien said this survey is done every year and the response rate this year was thirty nine percent. Most of the respondents were positive. From the written comments it seems there are people that are happy with grooming and people that are unhappy with the grooming done at Nine Mile. Lovlien said that a lot of things affect grooming including timing and temperature when they groom, the weather, and when people come out to ski. Staff is always looking for ways to improve. There are a lot of times the larger groomers cannot be used because there is not enough snow.

D. Report on July County Forest Storm Damage – Lovlien reported that Marathon County was lucky compared to other counties that were hit hard by storm damage. Marathon County had some patchy storm damage in the southern area of the Leather Camp Forest Unit. There was also a downburst at the Big Eau Pleine Park which took over 1000 trees down. Crews have been cleaning up for a couple weeks and have most of the trails open. The area in the park where timber was managed is standing and the areas that haven't been harvested took the most damage. Timber management is an important part of keeping the forest stands healthy.

Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Timber Sale Closeouts

A. Tigerton Lumber Company – Contract #662-17 - A closeout summary was previously provided. Lovlien reported that the estimated number of tons was 3450 tons and 4058.78 tons were cut. Total revenue for this sale was \$132,361.17. Lovlien's recommendation is to close out Tigerton Lumber Company contract #662-17 and return their cash bond. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to close out Tigerton Lumber Company contract #662-17 and return their cash bond. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

B. Central Wisconsin Lumber – Contract #631-14 - A closeout summary was previously provided. Lovlien reported that the estimated number of tons was 2535 tons and 2751.38 tons were cut. Total revenue for this sale was \$133,902.21. Lovlien's recommendation is to close out Central Wisconsin Lumber Contract #631-14 and return their cash bond. **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Bove to close out Central Wisconsin Lumber contract #631-14 and return their cash bond. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

C. Country Forest Products – Contract #658-17 - A closeout summary was previously provided. Lovlien reported that the estimated number of tons was 2540 tons and 3388.24 tons were cut. Total revenue for this sale was \$98,279.89. Lovlien's recommendation is to close out Country Forest Products Contract #658-17 and return their Letter of Credit and their remaining cash balance. **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei to close out Country Forest Products – Contract #658-17 and return their Letter of Credit and remaining cash balance. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

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

1. Review and Consider Approving Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan Timeline and Public Participation Process 2021 – 2035 - Lovlien explained that the last fifteen year plan was completed in 2005. The new plan will be revised over the next year and a half. The first involvement will be public participation through an on-line or paper survey for identification of issues. The survey will be sent to different groups that have interest in the County forests and will also be available on the County website. The Forestry Committee's purview is to review the chapters and recommend them to the Environmental Resource Committee. Lovlien said the acceptance process goes from the Forestry Committee to Environmental Resource Committee to County Board and then to the DNR. In September the committees will list any potential issues they may want to address. This doesn't mean all the issues that come up will get addressed. There may be some things that the County won't be able to provide that the public requests. There will be an open house at the end of the process when the preliminary draft is finished and comments will be taken for a month. The draft will be revised as necessary. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Seefeldt to accept the public participation process as outlined and the planning timeline. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – August 6, 2019 at 12:30pm, 212 River Dr., Rm. 3

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence – none

B. Future Agenda Items – 2019 Forest Certification Audit Preliminary Findings, Wisconsin County Forests Association Annual Meeting, consider Approving Fall 2019 Timber Sale Package, County Forest Tour agenda

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