

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

Also present: Tom Lovlien-Forest Administrator, Jamie Polley-Director, Chad Keranen-DNR Liaison, Brandon Stefanski-DNR Wildlife Biologist

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

Public Comment Period – None

Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Bove to approve the minutes from the November 5, 2019 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. Wisconsin Counties Earn High Marks for Forest Management – Lovlien said that the article discusses the Forest Certification five year audit that recently took place on four county forests. The State holds the license and Marathon County is part of the group certification. The third party independent auditors didn't find anything that the counties could improve on. The auditors will be coming to Marathon County in August 2020. The field audit is interesting and could be a mini-tour for interested members next year.

B. Pixelle Specialty Solutions to Acquire Business from Verso – Lovlien said Pixelle Specialty Solutions bought a mill in Stevens Point which will be the largest specialty paper business in terms of annual production. Selling and purchasing of mills has been more common in the last ten years.

C. Final County Forest Fall 2019 Timber Bid Summary – Keranen gave a summary of the two fall bid openings and said the general theme is that prices are down. The sales sold for over the total advertised value and the County received \$575.96 per acre. Typically the spring bids and summer ground wood fetch far higher stumpage values than the fall bid openings with winter ground wood only. With the markets and storm damage it appears that few want winter sales. All of the sales sold except one and staff is hoping this sale will be sold direct or it may be re-appraised and re-advertised in the spring.

Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. 2020 Forestry/Recreation Tentative Meeting Schedule – Committee agreed to keep the meetings on the same schedule of the first Tuesdays of the month at 12:30pm.

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

1. Review and Consider Approving the 2020 County Forest Wildlife Work Plan – Brandon Stefanski, DNR Wildlife Biologist – The workplan had been previously distributed. Stefanski reported on accomplishments from 2019. He discussed 2020 plans including flowage maintenance, wild rice seeding, alder and invasive species management, forest opening maintenance and the Nickel-An-Acre budget.

2. Review and Consider approving the 2020 County Forest Work Plan – Resolution to Approve – Lovlien reviewed the work plan. He gave highlights on upcoming work including timber management, road and trail maintenance, conservation aids projects, administration, GIS work and professional development. He noted that this past year they have replaced more culverts than they typically do in three years because of all the rain, washouts and beaver problems. This work will continue in 2020. The priority in 2020 will be to continue to work on and finalize the 15-Year County Forest Comprehensive Land Use plan. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to approve the 2020 County Forest Wildlife Work Plan and the 2020 Annual County Forest Work Plan and forward them along with the resolution to the Environmental Resource Committee. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

3. Resolution: Application for County Forest Acreage Payment – Lovlien explained that this interest free loan is based upon the number of County forest acres at 50 cents for the purchase, development, preservation and maintenance. The loan is paid back through a 20% severance tax on timber. **Motion** / second by Bove / Seefeldt to approve the application for County Forest Acreage Share Loan Payment Resolution and forward it to the Environmental Resource Committee. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

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

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence – Lovlien announced that the policy is not to officially open the Nine Mile Chalet and ski and snowshoe trails until the last gun deer season is over which is December 16<sup>th</sup> this year. A compromise was made with the user groups to groom at night and turn the lights on for night skiing as a courtesy to the Ski Club. There has not been enough snow to open Nine Mile earlier than December 15<sup>th</sup> since 2007. Staff is reminding the user groups of the 2008 adopted Forestry/Recreation policy and asking the skiing community not to ski during daylight hours as a courtesy to the hunting community.

B. Future Agenda Items – Review of Proposed Policy Revisions to the Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan Chapters 400-600, Request by IronBull to Use Nine Mile Trail System for Red Granite Grinder Gravel Bike Race, Timbersale Closeouts, Land Acquisitions.

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