

FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: January 9, 2024

TIME: 8:00 a.m. County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Court House, Rhinelander, WI

PRESENT: Committee Members: Almekinder, Briggs, Schultz, Sorgel, Winkler (via zoom)
Forestry Staff: Fiene, Rady, Tischendorf
WDNR: Kristina Wells; RASTA: Scott Watson

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Almekinder called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. The meeting has been properly posted in accordance with the procedures set forth by the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.

APPROVE CURRENT AGENDA WITH THE ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS AT CHAIR'S DISCRETION

Motion by Sorgel to approve the agenda with the order of agenda items at Chair's discretion. Second by Briggs. All aye, motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Briggs to approve the minutes of December 12, 2023 meeting. Second by Schultz. All aye, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

YTD Timber Stumpage Report – Fiene reported one of the best falls for timber stumpage with December stumpage of \$337,162.76 bringing the year-to-date total to \$1,154,793.91 exceeding our 2023 budget of \$1,080,000. Things have slowed considerably from the last six weeks as we have gone from 11 active jobs down to two.

WCFA SPRING CONFERENCE – MADISON, WI FEBRUARY 13-15, 2024

Approve Staff & Committee Attendance / Approve Out of County Travel for Staff and Committee – This year's spring conference will be held down in Madison as the WCFA sometimes gets involved with legislation and gives them a chance to meet legislators in person.

Motion by Schultz to approve staff and committee attendance and out of county travel for the spring WCFA conference in Madison. Second by Sorgel. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS / APPROVE BID SPECIFICATIONS – TRAIL INSPECTION SNOWMOBILE

Fiene stated the department is looking to replace the current 2018 Ski-Doo MXZ trail inspection snowmobile. Funds are available within our department's equipment budget. Requesting approval to send out notice for bids for mid-December delivery. Current snowmobile would be sold to offset purchase price of new sled.

Motion by Sorgel to approve a notice for bids for a new trail inspection snowmobile. Second by Schultz. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS / APPROVE TOWN OF LYNNE GRAVEL CONTRACT

Fiene explained the Town of Lynne utilizes a gravel pit on county forest property for maintenance of their town roads. Some minor revisions were made and approved by Corporation Counsel, to the prior contract language including the county having the authority to decide who can utilize material from the gravel pit.

Rady arrived at 8:09 a.m.

Jeff Viegut, Town of Lynne chairperson, requested the removal of item #3 Repair and Maintenance of South Turcott Road, as the road has been repaired and the Town is required to maintain it as a town road by state

statue. Fiene provided history regarding the repair and maintenance of South Turcott Road. Additional discussion regarding future gravel crushing and expansion of the pit by the Town.

Motion by Briggs to approve the Town of Lynne gravel contract as amended (striking item #3). Second by Schultz. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS / APPROVE REQUEST FROM LITTLE BELLAS MOUNTAIN BIKE PROGRAM TO UTILIZE THE WASHBURN TRAILS

Fiene provided a brief background of the Little Bellas mountain bike program and how the group utilized the Washburn trail system for the last two years. Requesting approval to use the Washburn trails again for their 2024 program.

Motion by Schultz to approve the Little Bellas agreement. Second by Sorgel. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS / APPROVE RASTA 5-YEAR TRAIL PLAN AMENDMENT

RASTA contacted Fiene regarding a 1.5 mile extension to the Enterprise winter recreation trail system which consists of either ATV trail or old logging roads requiring minimal maintenance/road work. However, as this project was not part of the RASTA five-year trail plan, a plan amendment was requested. Fiene stated that if the snowmobile club requests to re-locate the trail back to the proposed route, the ski/bike trail may need to be re-routed in the future.

Motion by Briggs to approve the requested amendment to the RASTA five-year plan. Second by Schultz. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS / APPROVE FORESTRY DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT PLAN

Fiene provided his official notice of retirement for May 1, 2024.

Lisa Charbarneau, LRES Director, relayed the County prefers to post externally for department head positions. This does not exclude internal applicants from applying for the position. Charbarneau stated it has been difficult to fill previous forestry positions and would like to get started on recruitment sooner rather than later and inquired about any need for overlap for training purposes.

Charbarneau requested committee participation for the interview process. Committee Chair Almekinder will partake in the interviews. Additional discussion regarding advertising methods, interview questions, timing, etc.

PAID INVOICES REPORT

The committee was provided a list of the invoices paid in December 2023.

Vouchers for the month totaled \$147,608.15 including \$141,770.83 for grant funded expenses including final supplemental snowmobile maintenance for last season and professional services for ATV and snowmobile grant projects.

Informational only.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET REVIEW (BUDGET / ACTUAL REPORT)

The committee was provided a copy of the department's year to date budget for review. Tischendorf will be finalizing line item transfers to cover any accounts with negative balances.

Informational only.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Scott Watson, RASTA complimented Fiene and the department on the great partnership over the years.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/MEETINGS

- Next meeting – February 13, 2024
- Dump Truck Specifications
- APHIS Agreement

ADJOURNMENT

With business completed, Chair Almekinder adjourned the meeting at 8:41 a.m.

ROBERT ALMEKINDER
COMMITTEE CHAIR

TANYA TISCHENDORF
COMMITTEE SECRETARY

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