

FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: February 2, 2022

TIME: 3:30 p.m. Committee Room #2, 2nd Floor, Court House, Rhinelander, WI

PRESENT: Committee Members: Sorensen, Pence, Almekinder, VanRaalte, Mott (via Zoom)
Forestry Staff: Fiene, Rady, Tischendorf
WDNR – Manny Oradei

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Sorensen called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.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 VanRaalte to approve the amended agenda with the order of agenda items at Chair's discretion. Second by Almekinder. All aye, motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Pence to approve the minutes of January 5, 2022 meeting. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

FOREST MANAGEMENT – YTD STUMPAGE REPORT

YTD Stumpage Report – Fiene reported final county forest stumpage for 2021 was \$1,685,629.28 which is approximately \$535,000 over budgeted revenue. Stumpage for January 2022 was \$93,972.82, down from the 5-year average of \$129,631.08. Currently have seven active jobs, however, most of them are smaller sales.

Connor Forest Management Overdue Account Update – Fiene updated the committee with the status of payments and outstanding balance for Connor Forest Management. Fiene sent final correspondence via email and certified letter that requires full payment by February 4, 2022. If payment is not received, Fugle will be directed to start legal proceedings.

REVIEW/APPROVE APHIS 2022 COOPERATIVE SERVICES AGREEMENT

This is the yearly agreement with APHIS to control nuisance beaver throughout county forest land. The annual fee decreased from last year.

Motion by VanRaalte to approve the 2022 APHIS agreement. Second by Pence. All aye, motion carried.

HWY Q WITHDRAWAL & HANSON PARCEL PURCHASE CONCERNS

Fiene attended a Capital Improvement Committee meeting a few weeks prior to provide an update on the Hanson purchase as it is listed as a 2022 CIP. Concerns were brought forth regarding the funding on the purchase due to the issues experienced with the purchase of Gillette-Wickham.

Even though the withdrawal application has been updated and states the proceeds from the sale of Hwy Q will be used to fund the Hanson purchase, the timing of the sale/purchase is a concern. Currently there aren't sufficient funds in the Land Purchase Account to cover the purchase of the Hanson parcel and some committee members are hesitant to pull money from the general fund until the Hwy Q property sells. It was suggested to postpone the purchase of the Hanson parcel until Hwy Q is sold if agreeable by the Hanson property owners.

Direction by the committee to reach out to Hanson property owners to see if they are willing to wait for the county to sell the Hwy Q property to fund the purchase.

Motion by Pence to postpone. Second by VanRaalte. Discussion regarding the amount currently in the Land Purchase Account (approximately \$16,000), the amount needed for the Hanson purchase and the timing of the Hwy Q sale. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS ROEHL/EAST END ROAD GATING/DUMPING ISSUES

Fiene was contacted by a property owner at the end of East End Road in the Town of Lynne, looking to gate off the road that abuts his property and provides public access to county forest property. It is not typical for the County to gate off public access at landowner request/benefit.

Additionally, there was a recent dump of approximately 200 tires across from the landowner's property on county property. This has not been a typical dumping area in the past.

Fiene's recommendation is to keep the road open to public access.

Motion by VanRaalte to instruct Fiene to keep the logging road open to the public. Second by Pence. All aye, motion carried.

Jeff Viegut, Town of Lynne Chair, spoke in favor of keeping the road open as he received numerous calls from people previously when the landowner installed a cable gate when he bought the property. Viegut informed the landowner he was not allowed to gate the road.

REQUEST TO FORWARD WOLF MANAGEMENT RESOLUTION #14-10

Included in the meeting packet was a letter from Laurie Groskopf, wolf population control advocate, requesting the Committee forward Resolution 14-10 passed by County Board in 2010 to keep the wolf population at 350 or less.

Laurie Groskopf provided handouts to the committee showing the Wisconsin Annual Wolf Damage Payment Summary since 1985 and Wisconsin's wolf population from 2000-2021.

Groskopf provided background information regarding many Wisconsin county approved resolutions from 2010-2017 requesting wolf populations of 350 or less. In the near future the WDNR is going to update the state's wolf management plan and provide a public comment period. There is an updated resolution which includes verbiage regarding wolf relocation that Groskopf recommends passing on to County Board that was developed by Polk County with Groskopf's input. Groskopf provided verbal information regarding wolf conflicts within the county over the past few years including human safety concerns and pet harassment.

Discussion regarding the delisting status, wolf management harvests, etc.

VanRaalte stated there are several concerns with forwarding the prior resolution from 2010 as information contained within the resolution is outdated. The committee does not have an updated resolution copy to review at this time.

Paul Hagen spoke in support of wolf population control. Hagen owns approximately 500 acres and has seen a significant decrease in the deer population due to the wolf activity in his area.

Sorensen directed Fiene to draft an updated resolution with a wolf population goal remaining at 350 or less to review at the March Forestry Committee meeting.

AWARD FORESTRY TRUCK BID

Forestry sent out a Notice for Bids for a forestry truck as both Dodge and Ford had informed us they would be able to provide bids. We received bids from Dave Marston Motors in Minocqua and Brickner's of Antigo; however, on Monday, Brickner's called to rescind their bid as they received notification they would not be able to order fleet vehicles.

Dave Marston bid is for a Ford F-150 non-fleet vehicle available on the lot at a discounted price of \$36,364.00. It does not meet all the bid specifications and they are not interested in a trade-in of the 2009 Silverado; however, the recommendation is to accept the bid if we want to replace the truck.

Motion by Mott to accept the Marston bid and outfit the truck as needed for the bed liner, winch, etc. and sell the 2009 outright. Second by VanRaalte. All aye, motion carried.

VOUCHERS/LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

Vouchers - Vouchers presented totaling \$301,241.09. The majority is 2021 stumpage and road severance to towns of \$202,273.00. Additionally there was a timber sale performance bond refund of \$12,349.88; the final snowmobile maintenance payment for 2021-22 of \$64,065.00 which is all grant funded; the first half of RASTA trail maintenance for 2022 of \$9,950.00; the 2022 WCFA membership dues of \$6,577.62, however, we will receive a grant of approximately \$1,700 to offset the cost; and \$3,000 to the WDNR for mowing the wildlife openings and is funded by the nickel an acre account.

Motion by VanRaalte to approve the vouchers as presented. Second by Pence. All aye, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Viegut questioned the maintenance of the road for cell tower access as the town keeps the road plowed and there are a couple of major holes that need repair. Fiene recommended contacting the Oneida County Sheriff's Department.

Viegut had questions regarding the opening/closing of the gate located at the west end of Willow Falls road. Sorensen directed Fiene to work with Viegut regarding his concerns.

Guy Hansen commented on the irony of the request for the Forestry Committee to support a resolution so there can be more deer in Oneida County when studies continue to show deer are probably the greatest threat to forests. Understands both sides and stated black bears kill far more deer than wolves.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/MEETINGS

- Next meeting – March 2, 2022
- Connor Forest Management Account Update
- Proposed Wolf Population Control Resolution

ADJOURNMENT

With business completed, Chair Sorensen adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

JACK SORENSEN
CHAIR

TANYA TISCHENDORF
RECORDING SECRETARY