

FORESTRY, LAND, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: March 1, 2023

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

PRESENT: Committee Members: Almekinder, Briggs, Schultz, Winkler, Sorgel
Forestry Staff: Fiene, Rady, Tischendorf, Truitt
WDNR: Kristina Wells
RASTA: Guy Hansen

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- Chair Almekinder 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 Winkler 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 Schultz to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2023 meeting. Second by Winkler. All aye, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Paul Hagen, Town of Pelican, representing the Pel-cho Mudd Nutz ATV/UTV Club spoke in support of the Pelican River Conservation Easement.
- Sorgel joined the meeting at 3:32 p.m.
- Dennis Schoeneck, Town of Enterprise, spoke in opposition of the Pelican River Conservation Easement and in support of getting ATV/UTV traffic off blacktop roads.
- Bob Kraetsch, Town of Pelican Lake spoke in support of the Pelican River Conservation Easement and requests to be on record that this go to public referendum if needed.
- Matt Carothers, consulting forester from Hazelhurst spoke regarding the Pelican River Conservation Easement and the sub-committee created to discuss the easement.

PELICAN RIVER CONSERVATION EASEMENT

- Fiene stated this item was added to the agenda at the request of Winkler after the discussion of the proposed resolution at County Board.
- Winkler explained that because Knowles-Nelson funding was mentioned in the resolution, he felt the Forestry committee should discuss it.
- Fiene informed the committee that the easement would ensure that current motorized (snowmobile and/or ATV/UTV) trails throughout the Pelican River property would remain open and available to the public. Fiene clarified that this easement would not impact the county forest program in any way.
- Ron Gropp, WDNR Conservation Easement Management Program, provided clarification and answers to the committee regarding the Pelican River Conservation Easement.
- Almekinder announced there will be a public meeting on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 10:00 of the County Board sub-committee for the Pelican River Conservation Easement.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

- *YTD Timber Stumpage Report* – Fiene reported stumpage for February was \$85,116.34 for a YTD total of \$195,912.73. Things are slowing down as we get closer to spring.
- *Set Date for Spring Timber Sale Bid Opening* – Fiene stated spring bids will be due and opened on May 1st and brought to the May 3rd committee meeting to award bids.

DISCUSS/APPROVE BAT HCP RESOLUTION

- Fiene explained the endangered species bat habitat conservation plan to the committee. Fiene's recommendation is to approve the agreement with the WDNR and forward a resolution to the County Board once we are provided a final version of the landowner agreement.
- Motion by Briggs to wait for the final version of the agreement and bring back to committee. Second by Sorgel. All aye, motion carried.

DISCUSS/APPROVE FORESTRY TRUCK PURCHASE

- Fiene informed the committee that he received five or six truck quotes and the department would like to purchase a 2023 Ford F-150 from Stevens Point Auto Center for \$47,602.
- Motion by Winkler to approve the forestry truck purchase from Stevens Point Auto Center. Second by Sorgel. All aye, motion carried.

2022 WORKERS COMPENSATION REPORT

- The Forestry Department had one report filed in 2022, however, there wasn't any lost time or medical costs associated to the injury.

DISCUSS/APPROVE 2023 FRIENDS OF TOWNLINE LAKE PARK (FTLLP) MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

- Fiene stated the new maintenance agreement is the same as last year with the addition of verbiage regarding the potential utilization of a dumpster at the forestry shop for Townline Lake Park garbage.
- Motion by Schultz to approve the 2023 Friends of Townline Lake Park (FTLLP) maintenance agreement. Second by Briggs. All aye, motion carried.

ONEIDA COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

- Fiene introduced Fred Heider of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and reminded the committee the Outdoor Recreational Plan includes county, city and township recreational plans.
- Heider outlined the plan process, timeframes and discussed the proposed recreational survey. Any revisions should be forwarded to Fiene within the next few days. Online survey regarding county recreational amenities will be available for approximately 30 days for public input.
- Information provided to townships and recreational clubs/users for input and survey visibility.
- Outdoor recreational plan should be finalized around late summer and should be adopted by County Board resolution by the end of the year.

VOUCHERS/LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

- Vouchers totaling \$258,248.68 for January and February. Approximately \$106,000 were grant funding and/or timber sale performance bond refunds.
- Additionally, \$131,000 paid to the towns for stumpage and road severance for 2022.
- Other large expenses include: Gasoline expenses for two months totaling \$2,500; the APHIS agreement for beaver control for \$4,258.87 and WCFA 2023 membership dues of \$6,575.22 of which approximately \$1,700 is offset with grant funding.
- Motion by Sorgel to approve the vouchers as presented. Second by Winkler. All aye, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Letter received from Carole Wakefield complimenting the exceptional system of silent trails.
- Guy Hansen, RASTA, commented that the River News had a large article regarding RASTA's activities.
- Briggs received a comment from the town chair regarding the graveling of Enterprise forest roads.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/MEETINGS

- Next meeting – April 5, 2023
- Timber Sale Extensions/Expirations
- Bat Habitat Conservation Plan Resolution
- WCFA Summer Tour

ADJOURNMENT

- With business completed, Chair Almekinder adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

ROBERT ALMEKINDER
CHAIR

TANYA TISCHENDORF
COMMITTEE SECRETARY