

FOREST, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Douglas County Board of Supervisors
Monday, July 25, 2022, 9:30 a.m., Forestry Headquarters
9182 t Hughes Avenue, Solon Springs, Wisconsin

Meeting called to order by Chair Liebaert.

ROLL CALL: Present – Mark Liebaert, Mary Lou Bergman, Joseph Moen, Nick Baker, Steve Long. Others present – Craig Golembiewski, Samuel Pomush, Ann LaLiberte, Paul LaLiberte, Sara Kendall, Greg Kessler, Susan Willette, Dave Blumer, Tom Higgins, Ron Carlson, Dolly Ledin, Neil Mathison, Jim Borgeson, Paul Halverson, Lloyd Pickering. David Gardner, Ann Doucette, Dan Corbin, Dan Hannula (remote), Ken Fastner (remote), Todd Gibbon (remote), Bill Whiteside, Jim Latvala, Clint Meyer, Joshua Strauss, Jon Harris, Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2022, regular and June 7, 2022, timber sale meetings. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Budget: Whiteside reviewed the budget ending June 30, 2022.

Forest Management Operations: Golembiewski reported 11 sales actively harvesting, and 3 hauling. Reforestation: site prep in progress, roller chopping, trees ordered for 2023 spring planting. Establishment: prepping for October auction. Possible recent Oak Wilt finding in Wascott.

Parks and Recreation: Meyer reported fully staffed with summer crew utilizing Option 1, approved at the May 16, 2022, meeting increasing seasonal park staff wages by \$2.00 an hour. Busy camping and concert in the parks season. Lucius Woods building replacements project slated to start September 12th; finalizing maintenance grants for ATV and snowmobile clubs.

ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS:

Withdrawal and Sale of Property in the Town of Solon Springs (Enbridge Energy Company, Inc.): Enbridge offer to purchase approximately 40 acres adjacent to the existing Hawthorne Pump Station just north of Tom Green Road in the Town of Solon Springs @ \$5,000 per acre, including \$854 per acre for future timber value losses. Enbridge to complete a certified survey of the parcel and cover all associated surveying expenses, in addition to all associated title work, closing costs, and other associated fees. Proceeds from land sale to be designated for future County Forest land acquisition. County interested in retaining an access easement on parcel for the existing road. Enbridge to pay for easement surveying expenses. Future use of the land would be installation of a solar array. Paul Halverson, Enbridge Permitting and Land Agent, present.

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve withdrawal and sale of property in Town of Solon Springs to Enbridge for solar array purposes at \$5,000 per acre, including \$854 per acre for future timber value losses, retaining access easement through the property on existing road, and proceeds to be designated for future county forest acquisition, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

53rd Annual Duquette Moose Run Enduro Use of Douglas County Forest Land Request (Straight Arrow Enduro Riders): Straight Arrow Enduro Riders requesting approval to hold 53rd annual Enduro event on Sunday August 21, 2022. Small portion of race occurs on Douglas County Forest land. (General Liability insurance certificate and map of course provided in meeting packet.)

ACTION: Motion by Moen, second Bergman, to approve request from Straight Arrow Enduro Riders to hold the 53rd annual Duquette Moose Run Enduro event on County Forest Land August 21, 2022. Motion carried.

10th Annual ATV Rudy Run Use of Douglas County Forest Land Request: Requesting use of the Gravel Pit to hold ATV Rudy Run event on September 20, 2022. Group requesting approval to hold 10th annual Rudy Run event September 20, 2022. ATV/UTV trail ride fundraiser event held in memory of Rudy LaJoie supporting Superior Youth Organization. 4 to 5 portable toilets to be rented and temporarily placed on County Forest land off West Mail Road. Susan Willet, representing the group, present.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve request from group to hold the 10th Annual Rudy Run ATV/UTV trail ride fundraiser event September 20, 2022, and temporary placement of portable toilets on County Forest Land. Motion carried.

Lucius Woods County Park Electric Cart Shuttle Request (Lucius Woods Performing Arts Center): Requesting permission to allow operation of electric golf cart type vehicles on park grounds during the days and evenings of all 2022 Lucius Woods Performing Arts Center schedule concerts for the purpose of shuttling concert attendees to and from parking area.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve request from Lucius Woods Performing Arts Center to operate up to two electric golf cart type vehicles on park grounds to shuttle concert attendees to and from parking areas during all 2022 schedule concerts, contingent on proof of adequate general liability insurance coverage provided to the county. Motion carried.

Electric Transmission Line Utility Easement Request (Solon Springs Airport Commission): Commission requesting current date update to letter of support for consideration of granting additional right-of-way easement to American Transmission Company to relocate a portion of their existing transmission line to help facilitate runway expansion at the airport. Neil Matheson, Solon Springs Airport Commission, present.

ACTION: Motion by Moen, second Bergman, to reissue letter of support with new date. Motion carried.

WDNR Surface Water Grant Program Grant Sponsor Request (Gordon St. Croix Flowage Association): Dave Blumer, LEAPS (Lake Education and Planning Services) present. Looking to identify a grant sponsor to apply for funding to help control invasive Eurasian Watermilfoil in the Gordon/St. Croix Flowage. Discussion.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Moen, to refer to Land Conversation Committee. Motion carried.

Reclamation Plan for Non-Metallic Mine on Douglas County Forest Land Tree-Vegetation Standards Policy: Draft reclamation plan in meeting packet – reviewed with proposed town edits. Discussion regarding developing standard regeneration/reforestation policy to be used for all new and renewed gravel pits located on County Forest land.

ACTION: Motion by Bergman, second Baker, to refer to next month's meeting to acquire additional information. Motion carried.

From Land & Development Committee – Review Pesticide Ordinance #1.17 for revisions (attached): Proposed revisions from Keith Allen distributed – reviewed.

ACTION: Motion by Liebaert, second Baker, to refer to next month’s meeting. Motion carried.

Forest Carbon Development Project: Chair Liebaert determined entering into closed session on topic not necessary. Multiple carbon project developers have been vetted over the last 18 months. Anew LLC (formerly Bluesource LLC) has been identified as the most well qualified and best suited developer for a carbon offset project with Douglas County. Joshua Strauss, Anew, provided presentation on Forest Carbon project. Landowner obligations: harvesting should not exceed growth; must maintain forest certifications (FSC, SFI, ATFS); and commit to monitoring period of 40 years. Due to the size of the county forest and number of qualifying acres (approximately 220,000 acres), carbon credit volume and revenue projections are sizable. Ability of the county to continue managing its timber resources through sustainable harvesting will be unaffected. A 40 year forest carbon project commitment reinforces the county’s already existing commitment to sustainable forest management. Presently, Douglas County would be the 6th Wisconsin County Forest to develop and contract a forest carbon offset project and would be the single largest public land carbon offset project in the United States.

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by Baker, second Moen, to authorize Liebaert and Harris to develop a forest carbon project for the Douglas County Forest by participating in the voluntary carbon market for a 40 year commitment under the American Carbon Registry (ACR) Improved Forest Management (IFM) program, and to negotiate and execute acceptable terms of a forest carbon contract or similar agreement with Anew LLC, with Corporation Counsel review, and forward to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES/REPORTS:

Timber Sale bids (June 27, 2022 Timber Sale Auction): Reviewed.

Mooney Dam County Park Campground Expansion: Approximate cost estimates for Campground Expansion Option #2 \$1,000,000 and just the Relocation of Boat Launch (\$168,000) reviewed. Both projects would qualify for grant funding assistance. Different river embankment public safety fencing options for existing park play area reviewed.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to continue conceptually moving forward with both projects, bringing various options back to committee for review with project design, engineering, permitting, and administrative development cost estimates; and to install standard chain link fencing along river embankment adjacent to existing park play area for improved public safety. Motion carried.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to extend the meeting beyond the two hour time limit. Motion carried.

Campground Campsite Advance Reservation System Update: Meyer reported that the system working moderately well. Request to committee to move 100% online advanced registration process for the 2023 camping season anticipated this winter.

WDNR FY2022 Time Standards Report: WDNR time standards history report reviewed (July 1 to June 30). Exceeded goal in 2022.

Department Staffing Update: Seasonal park staff now fully staffed; thank you to committee for emergency wage increase. Still short a seasonal equipment operator.

WDNR County Forest Liaison: Latvala reported working on site preparation for next spring's planting; recon inventory and next year's timber sale establishment. One vacancy on team, hope to fill in the fall. WDNR FY 2023 time standard commitment hours going from 4051 to 4227.

Future Agenda Items: Reclamation Plan for Non-Metallic Mine on Douglas County Forest Land Tree-Vegetation Standards Policy; Review Pesticide Ordinance #1.17 for revisions.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Moen, second Bergman, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman,, Committee Clerk