

FOREST, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Douglas County Board of Supervisors

Monday, July 31, 2023, 9:30 a.m., Forestry Headquarters

9182 East Hughes Avenue, Solon Springs, Wisconsin

Meeting called to order by Chair Liebaert.

1. ROLL CALL

Present – Mark Liebaert, Nick Baker, Steve Long. Absent – Joseph Moen, Mary Lou Bergman. Others present – Dave Wicklund, Susan Willett, Bob Willete, Mick Salmen, Jim Latvala, Bill Whiteside, Shelley Nelson, Scott Melton, Jon Harris, Sarah Kendall, Jim Latvala, Craig Golembiewski, Clint Meyer, Bill Whiteside, Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve minutes from March 27, 2023, regular and June 6, 2023, timber sale meetings. Motion carried.

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- a. **Budget:** Whiteside reviewed the budget ending June 30, 2023.
- b. **Forest management operations:** Golembiewski reported 8 active timber sales, (2 hauling). March timber sale went well. Gordon correctional work crew assisting with mechanical TSI. Furrowing – DNR active on 5 sites for planting next year. Oak Wilt – not many new detections. County Forest roads – all open and safe for travel. LTE position update – another applicant to be interviewed this week.
- c. **Parks and Recreation:** Meyer reported (snowmobile trails) closed on April 5, 2023, very long season. Provided updates on projects. Very busy summer at campgrounds. New equipment purchases being reviewed.

4. ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS

- a. **Memorial bench request in Lucius Woods County Park (Lucius Woods Performing Arts Center):** Requesting approval to place a memorial bench (photo in packet) on behalf of Gitzi Wicklund on the Lucius Woods County Park grounds.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve memorial bench request as presented, with department staff to approve final location placement and Lucius

Woods Performing Arts Center responsible for all necessary future maintenance.
Motion carried.

- b. **Electric/gas cart shuttle request in Lucius Woods County Park (Lucius Woods Performing Arts Center):** Permission to allow operation of golf cart type vehicles on park grounds during the days and evenings of all 2023 and future Lucius Woods Performing Arts Center scheduled concerts for the purpose of shuttling concert attendees to and from parking areas. Similar request approved for up to two golf cart type vehicles in 2022 for 2022 concert season. Proof of general liability insurance coverage is required.

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

- c. **54th Annual Duquette Moose Run Enduro use of County Forest Land (Straight Arrow Enduro Riders):** Annual request – Straight Arrow Enduro Riders requesting to hold 54th annual Enduro event on August 29-20, 2023. Small portion of race occurs on Douglas County Forest Land. General liability insurance coverage provided.

ACTION: Motion by Long, second Baker, to approve request from Straight Arrow Enduro Rides to hold the 54th annual Duquette Moose Run Enduro event on County Forest Land August 29-30, 2023. Motion carried.

- d. **11th Annual ATV Rudy Run use of County Forest Land:** Group requesting approval to hold 11th annual Rudy Run event September 9, 2023. 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.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve request from group to hold the 11th annual ATV Rudy Run trail ride fundraiser event September 9, 2023, and temporary placement of portable toilets on County Forest Land. Motion carried.

- e. **Gravel crushing (Town of Solon Springs):** (Similar request made in 2019). Town of Solon Springs requesting to crush up to 4,000 tons of gravel from the Holmes Camp Road Pit on County Forest Land utilizing the same contractor contracted by the county. Gravel to be utilized to reinforce town roads adjacent to County Forest land.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve one-time request from the Town of Solon Springs to crush up to 4,000 tons of gravel from county mineral resources in the Holmes Camp Road Pit, to be stockpiled clearly separate from county stockpiles, charge \$.50 per ton royalty fee for all produced gravel with all proceeds designated for future county forest land acquisition. Motion carried.

- f. **Memorandum of Agreement for Recreational Trail Crossing (Wisconsin Department of Transportation):** Included with agenda. Agreement would allow ATV's, UTV's and snowmobiles to cross US Highway 53 at the County Road B intersection in the Town of Hawthorne.

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve entering into memorandum of agreement with WisDOT as presented. Motion carried.

- g. **Town of Dairyland property donation:** Owners interested in donating approximately 107 acres of property to Douglas County for county forest purposes.

ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION): Motion by Liebaert, second Baker, to approve acceptance of property, release of capital reserve funding (land acquisition) not to exceed \$4,000 for closing and related costs, application for County Forest Law entry, and refer to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

- h. **Release of 2023 capital improvement project reserve funding:** Requesting release of all 2023 approved Forestry Department capital improvement project funds.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Long, to release all 2023 approved Forestry Department capital improvement project reserve funding, and refer to Administration Committee. Motion carried.

- i. **Release of reserve funding (dam maintenance):** Dam structure stop logs are in need of replacement. Requesting release of non-lapsing fund for dam maintenance in the amount of \$1,500.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve release of up to \$1,500 of dam maintenance reserve funding and refer to Administration Committee. Motion carried.

- j. **Snow loading damage regeneration treatment equipment lease funding:** Demonstration of newly acquired 6-inch resolution aerial imagery to identify damaged timber stands (mostly jack pine and aspen). Ground level photos and drone video of damaged areas and tractor mulcher in action presented.

Damaged timber is of non-merchantable size for current market demand. Damaged trees remain alive but severely bent over limiting forest production and reducing future stocking. Proposing to start over and regenerate the most severely damaged stands through mechanical mastication treatment utilizing a large-wheeled tractor outfitted with a specialized forestry mulcher head. Equipment currently in the county forest being tested with positive results. Request to lease equipment for an initial one-month term at a cost not exceeding \$50,000 with on-going continued assessment for additional needs. Possible grant funding sources to also be evaluated.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve up to \$50,000 to lease mulching equipment for an initial one-month term to treat the most severely damaged stands with on-going continued needs assessment and refer to Administration Committee to work with Finance Department on funding source. Motion carried.

- k. **WDNR Sustainable Forestry Grant Application:** Harris to apply for up to \$80,000 in grant funding for heavy mulching equipment rental to treat snow loading timber stand damage resulting from the December 14, 2022, winter storm.

ACTION: Motion by Long, second Baker, to approve WDNR Sustainable Forestry Grant application up to \$80,000 for equipment rental funding. Motion carried.

- l. **WDNR Recreational Boating Facilities Grant Application:** Grant funding opportunity to potentially cover half of the estimated \$200,000 cost to replace the Lower Eau Claire Lake boat launch at Mooney Dam County Park.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Long, second Baker, to approve WDNR Recreational Boating Facilities Grant application to assist with replacing the Lower Eau Claire Lake boat launch at Mooney Dam County Park, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES/REPORTS

- a. **Forest carbon project:** Forest inventory next phase – planned for fall/winter 2023 and possible site visit verification spring 2024.
- b. **Black River Forest Land Conservation Project:** Project still being reviewed. Awaiting grant funding decision.
- c. **WDNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Latvala reported FY2023 annual time standard commitment met; working on WDNR assigned timber sale and recon projects; started furrowing sites and provided staffing and other project updates.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Baker, second Long, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk