

FOREST, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Douglas County Board of Supervisors
Monday, August 28, 2023, 9:30 a.m., Forestry Headquarters
9182 East Hughes Avenue, Solon Springs, Wisconsin

1. ROLL CALL

Present – Mark Liebaert, Nick Baker, Joseph Moen, Mary Lou Bergman, Steve Long.
Others present – Dan Corbin, Alex Rowe, Jim Latvala, Shelley Nelson, Sarah Kendall, Jon Harris, Craig Golembiewski, Clint Meyer, Bill Whiteside, Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve the minutes from July 31, 2023, meeting.
Motion carried.

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- a. **Budget:** Whiteside reviewed the budget ending July 31, 2023.
- b. **Forest management operations:** Golembiewski reported 7 active timber sales (2 hauling); 18-19 timber sales anticipated for October timber sale auction; and site prep for next year's spring planting in progress.
- c. **Parks and Recreation:** Meyer reported Lucius Woods and Mooney Dam Campgrounds are experiencing their highest revenue producing seasons in history, with campground host positions working out well, causing less law enforcement call-outs; Lucius woods closing for the season September 11 for paving project; fence installed at Mooney Dam Campground between playground and river; Bird Sanctuary clubhouse repair projects in progress; new equipment purchases being finalized; and seasonal park staffers finishing up.

4. ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS

SUSPEND THE RULES: Motion by Liebaert, second Bergman, to take up item 4.e.
Motion carried.

a. 2024 Budget

- 1. **Review:** Budget summary provided by Whiteside and Harris. Changes reviewed. Personnel budget increase; timber sales revenue decrease; general fund transfer decrease. Capital outlay distributed and reviewed. Reforestation budget discussed.

2. Non-profit funding requests:

- a. **Northern Regional Trail Advisory Committee:** Emily Nelson present, on behalf of Clem Larson, provided background for request (letter enclosed).

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve 2024 funding request from Northern Regional Trail Advisory for \$500 (organization and purpose of request meets non-profit funding request criteria). Motion carried.

- b. **Tri-County Recreational Corridor Commission:** Dan Corbin present, provided background for request (letter enclosed).

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve 2024 funding request from Tri-County Recreational Corridor Commission for \$6,000 (organization and purpose of request meets non-profit funding request criteria). Motion carried.

- c. **Wisconsin Conservation Congress Delegates:** Camron Vollbrecht present, provided background for request (letter enclosed).

ACTION: Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve 2024 funding request from Wisconsin Conservation Congress Delegates for \$3,500 (organization and purpose of request meets non-profit funding request criteria). Motion carried.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Bergman, second Moen, to approve 2024 budget as presented and refer to Administration Committee. Motion carried.

3. **Funding donation and recognition request (St. Croix Headwaters Foundation)** St. Croix Headwaters Foundation is a local non-profit with mission to provide funding and support to increase positive enhancement of outdoor recreational user experience, education, and lifestyle within local communities of Douglas County. Group offering up to \$3,000 towards the boat mooring pier system being planned for Lucius Woods County Park and would like to be recognized at the pier location with a sign/plaque with logo and foundation name.

ACTION: Motion by Bergman, second Baker, to accept donation of \$3,000 from St. Croix Headwaters Foundation towards boat mooring pier system in Lucius Woods County Park, and approve recognition

sign/plaque as requested, with group responsible for all procurement, installation, and future maintenance costs; department staff to approve final design and location placement. Motion carried.

- b. Town of Superior property interest:** 80-acre parcel in Town of Superior of interest to the Forestry Department for possible addition to the County Forest or easement acquisition due to location and access opportunity to adjacent County Forest land. Map distributed showing parcel and proposed access road location. Parcel has merchantable timber on it available for harvest. Property is currently owned by Douglas County (not entered as County Forest) and managed by the Land and Development Committee.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Long, to request acquisition and County Forest regular use entry of all/part of parcel TS-030-01445-00 or acquisition of an access easement over and across the parcel and refer to Land and Development Committee. Motion carried.

- c. Snow loading damage regeneration treatment equipment lease funding request:** Leased tractor mulcher working well targeting the most severely damaged jack pine stands covering close to 300 acres. With current production rates, need more equipment time to treat all of the high priority jack pine areas. Planning to lease equipment for a second, consecutive one-month term utilizing awarded WDNR Sustainable Forestry Grant funding. An additional 2,800 acres of severely damaged aspen stands and 14,400 acres of moderately damaged aspen stands have been identified. Aspen regeneration treatment requirement is less intensive than jack pine due to the self-sprouting nature of aspen. Local contractors showing interest in offering possible treatment services. Requesting to release up to \$50,000 from the reforestation reserve to be used as an initial trial to perform treatment work utilizing outside contracted services.

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Moen, to approve releasing up to \$50,000 from the reforestation reserve for the purpose of contracting regeneration treatment work as presented and refer to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried.

- d. Reserve and designate land acquisition funding:** Harris provided history for request; WDNR requiring additional reparation as part of the County Forest withdrawal application (Resolution #73-22) to offset the loss of public land and meet the higher and greater use requirement under the County Forest law. \$2,986 was offered as return and designated for future County Forest land acquisition (\$1,386 land value and \$1,600 surveying expense reimbursement). Requesting to designate and reserve an additional \$2,614 for future County Forest land acquisition bringing the total offered return to \$5,400 (\$4,000 land value and \$1,600 surveying expense reimbursement).

ACTION (REFERRAL): Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve \$2,614 be reserved and designated for future County Forest land acquisition in the land acquisition reserve for purposes of County Forest withdrawal application (Resolution #73-22) and refer to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried.

- e. **Withdrawal and sale of property in the Town of Wascott:** Recent survey identified previously unknown 0.26-acre parcel of County Forest land being located within Lot 8 of Spider Lake Estates in the Town of Wascott (PIN #WA-032-024390-00). Land sale recommended as best option for resolution. All proceeds to be designated in the department's land acquisition reserve for future County Forest land acquisition.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve withdrawal and sale of County Forest land with proceeds designated for future County Forest land acquisition; and to authorize Liebaert and Harris to negotiate acceptable terms of the land sale, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES/REPORTS

- a. **2023 County Forest Certification Audit update:** Sawyer, Burnett, Washburn, and Barron participated in this year's audit. Findings reviewed.
- b. **WDNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Latvala reported WDNR working on recon, timber sales, site preparation.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

7. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: Motion by Long, second Moen, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk