

## **FOREST, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

Douglas County Board of Supervisors

Monday, December 19, 2022, 9:30 a.m., Forestry Headquarters

9182 East Hughes Avenue, Solon Springs, Wisconsin

Meeting called to order by Chair Liebaert.

**ROLL CALL:** Present – Mark Liebaert, Joseph Moen, Nick Baker, Steve Long. Absent- Mary Lou Bergman. Others present – Brett Corlett, Shelley Nelson (remote), Jim Latvala, Arby Humphrey (remote), Todd Gibbon (remote), Alex Rowe, Jon Harris, Bill Whiteside, Craig Golembiewski, Sarah Kendall, Clint Meyer, Cheryl Larson, Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion by Baker, second Moen, to approve the minutes from the August 31, 2022 regular and October 26, 2022 timber sale meetings. Motion carried.

### **Department Reports:**

**Budget:** Whiteside reviewed the budget ending November 30, 2022.

**Forest Management Operations:** Golembiewski reported seven active sales, 1 hauling. Work in progress on sale establishment for March timber sale auction. Reforestation completed: WDNR furrowed 209 acres for spring planting and scarified 87 acres for aerial seeding.

**Parks and Recreation:** Meyer reported seasonal staff worked through October, dog and horse groups happy with improvements made at the bird sanctuary horse area, with clubhouse bathroom project delayed until 2023; Lucius Woods upper shower house and lower restroom building replacement projects in progress, anticipated 2023 completion; Olson Meadows Dam inspected in 2021, main pipe needs repair. Repairing or removing the dam are options; grant funding for dam removal or culvert replacement may be considered. Year-round warming shack on Gandy Dancer Trail project completed; all requested 2023 rec trail project funding approved by the state. Majority of winter snowmobile/ATV trails to hopefully open by this weekend.

### **ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS:**

**Winter Trail Reroute Request (Get-er-Done Club):** Club requesting approval to move existing winter recreational trail south of Denver Road/East Mail Road off private land onto County Forest Land in the Town of Wascott (map in packet, with red showing existing and green proposed new route). Trail will be for snowmobile and winter ATV use only. Brent Corlett present. Goal is to straighten the route, make it safer for riders, and remove it from lands under private ownership. Club would incur the costs of doing the reroute.

**ACTION:** Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve the winter trail reroute request as proposed. Motion carried.

**Mooney Dam County Boat Launch Project Design:** Todd Gibbon, advised relocating launch to the east is not an option due to insufficient water depth. Redesigning at current location is being proposed. Designs in meeting packet show current conditions and proposed changes. Current boat launch very unaccommodating and difficult to use. 2023 funding has been secured for launch design work. Grant funding to be explored for construction.

**ACTION:** Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve moving forward with Mooney Dam County Boat Launch project design at existing location as proposed. Motion carried.

**Campground Campsite Advance Online Reservation Policy Amendment:** Proposed policy revisions included in meeting packet. Language proposed to change to 100% advance online reservation “up to the date of occupancy”. Standard season campsite reservations may be made online annually starting February 1<sup>st</sup>, up to the date of occupancy, and changes/cancellations must be completed online by the user through the customer portal.

**ACTION:** Motion by Long, second Moen, to approve the Campground Campsite Advance Online Reservation Policy as amended. Motion carried.

**2023 Annual WDNR Recreational Trail Grant Program Participation Resolution:** Annual approval required by state for WDNR Recreational Trail Grant participation.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Baker, second Moen, to approve participation in 2023 Annual WDNR Recreational Trail Grant Program, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**Department Fee Schedule Amendment: Platbooks – Charge Actual Fee:** Only proposed change is to charge the actual fee for platbooks.

**ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION):** Motion by Moen, second Long, to approve Department Fee Schedule Amendment as proposed, and forward to Administration Committee and County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**2023 Department Annual Work Plan:** Reviewed – required annually by the state.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve the 2023 Department Annual Work Plan, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**Town of Gordon Property Acquisition:**

**Property Acquisition:** Property owner interested in selling a 40 acre parcel in the Town of Gordon to Douglas County. Parcel located on the north side of the St. Croix /Gordon Flowage and bordered by County Forest Special Use Land on 3 sides. Requesting \$10,000 to purchase parcel, with up to an additional \$1,000 for closing costs and other related acquisition expenses, for a total not to exceed \$11,000. Fence to be maintained by landowners.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve purchase of 40 acre parcel in Town of Gordon as presented, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**Release of Capital Reserve Funding (Land Acquisition):**

**Application for County Forest Law Entry:**

**ACTION (REFERRAL/RESOLUTION):** Motion by Liebaert, second to Moen, to approve release of capital reserve funding (land acquisition) in an amount up to \$11,000, and application for Special Use county forest law entry, and refer to Administration Committee and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**Town of Gordon and Town of Solon Springs Withdrawal and Conveyance of Properties:** Harris reported area was surveyed at cost of approximately \$8,000 to the county, identifying multiple encroachment issues from neighboring property owners. There have been property line ownership issues with these parcels for many years. Outside legal opinion concluded that due to the presence of historical fence lines and length of time that has passed since their installation, adjourning property owners would

have a strong case for claiming ownership interests. WDNR consulted with for potential best options for resolution. After consideration, withdrawal and conveyance of properties to current adjoining landowners recognizing the existing fence line as the established property line is best approach for resolution. Options to be considered include (1) straight withdrawal and conveyance of properties with no public benefit compensation and (2) withdrawal and conveyance of properties contingent upon replacement lands being entered into County Forest law.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Baker, second Long, to approve Town of Gordon and Town of Solon Springs withdrawal and conveyance of properties as presented authorizing Harris to pursue either option presented for resolution, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**Town of Maple Property Acquisition Interest:** Requesting acquisition and County Forest regular use entry of 40 acre straight owned county Parcel #MA-020-00343-00 from Land and Development Committee.

**ACTION (REFERRAL):** Motion by Long, second Baker, to acquire 40 acre Parcel #MA-020-00343-00, and refer to Land and Development Committee. Motion carried.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES/REPORTS:**

**Wisconsin Conservation Congress Delegate Report:** Arby Humphrey (remote), Vice Chair of Wisconsin Conservation Congress available for questions – provided overview of 2022 activities. Report in meeting packet.

**2022 Douglas County Park Camping Permit Revenue Record:** Reviewed. Good revenue year for 2022, second highest on record.

**Recreational Vehicle (ATV/UTV) Operation in County Park Policy:** Harris requesting input from the committee on how to approach this topic for the upcoming 2023 park and campground season. Allowing registered ATV/UTVs to operate anywhere a licensed highway vehicle can legally operate in all county managed parks and campgrounds suggested for a temporary one-year trial basis for the 2023 park and campground season discussed. Topic to be further discussed at a future meeting.

**2023 Seasonal LTE Forester Staffing:** Organizational structure in meeting packet: New approved hourly rates in place for 2023 Seasonal LTE Foresters at \$18 for first year, \$19 returning second year, and \$20 if returning third year.

**Extended Timber Sale Contracts:** Updated listings distributed; numerous contracts are in year 5 and 6. Copies of correspondence sent as reminders to all contractors in meeting packet.

**Forest Carbon Program:** Harris advised final version of contract currently being reviewed by Corporation Counsel.

**2022 Annual Pesticide Ordinance #1.17 Exemption Treatment Report:** Golembiewski reported no pesticides (herbicides) were used in 2022.

**Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area Concerns Regarding Mooney Dam County Park Campground Expansion:** Correspondence in meeting packet.

**WDNR County Forest Liaison:** Latvala reported the WDNR completed site prep for 2023 spring planting; completed big RECON project of 5,600 acres; new WDNR Forester/Operator in Gordon; and as of December 1<sup>st</sup> are on target to meet the annual time standards commitment.

**Future Agenda Items:** Recreational Vehicle (ATV/UTV) Operation in County Park Policy.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Long, second Baker, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk