

MINUTES OF July 23, 2024 IRON COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm by Scott Erickson, Chair, at the Iron County Forestry Conference Room, 607 3rd Ave N, Hurley, WI 54534. Forestry/Parks Committee members present include P. Hanson, W. Thomas, S. Erickson, M. Loreti, T. Hiller and Eli Ladwig, Logger Representative. Others present during the meeting included: Eric Peterson, Forest Administrator; Tara Krall, Office Manager; Larry Youngs, County Board Chairman; Katy Broquard & Ryan Peasley, WDNR.

Tara Krall verified proper public notice of the meeting.

Motion by P. Hanson supported by W. Thomas approving the minutes from June 4, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion by W. Thomas supported by T. Hiller to deviate from the agenda and move to agenda item number 8. All in favor, motion carried.

Appearance by Gary Walton, RPM Productions LLC, regarding July 2025 Border Battle XC event. Gary Walton, RPM Productions LLC was present and explained a plan to hold the 2025 Border Battle XC motocross 2-day event at Whitecap Mountain. Due to the dramatic elevation changes on the Whitecap property he is requesting use of Iron County Forest property across from Whitecap for a trail for riders 4-8 years old riding 50 cc motorcycles. The trail loop would be about 4 feet wide and may utilize part of the existing ATV/UTV trail. His group would make the trail. These machines have minimum impact to the soil and would take about 45 minutes on one or both days. They will provide \$2 million liability coverage. The dates available for their event is the last weekend in July or the third weekend in August. The dates will be set the first week of December. They would also like to rent the entire Weber Lake campground for the weekend to help with parking.

Motion by T. Hiller supported by M. Loreti to move forward with a special event permit. All in favor, motion carried.

Eric will draft a permit and bring to the committee for approval in December after their dates are finalized.

Public Comment: None

Chairman report: None

Administrator Report: Current stumpage is \$780,425.40 versus \$864,967.89 at this time last year.

See attached for remaining Administrator Report.

DNR Report: Katy reported the team met their time standards for the 2024 fiscal year with 2530 hours of the 2487 hour goal. They attended a post fire season meeting, and buckthorn treatment workshop. Katy has been training with Lumberjack RC&D to measure CFI plots.

Ryan reporting that the fire program is up for its 10-year review where they take an in depth look at the needs throughout the state. It is unlikely Iron County will lose any equipment or staff. The new Ranger Station building has had more delays and it at least 6 weeks from completion. They are developing a work plan to get assistance from other counties to meet the 2025 time standards goal.

Review 2025 proposed Forestry & Parks Budget. Eric presented the 2025 budget highlights and the entire budget was presented on the screen.

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Motion by W. Thomas supported by T. Hiller approving the 2025 Forestry and Parks budget as presented and move to the Finance Committee for consideration. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion by W. Thomas supported by T. Hiller approving the bills as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 3, 2024 at 5:00 pm at the Forestry Conference Room.

S. Erickson called the meeting adjourned.

tlk

Administrator's Report

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2024 YTD Timber Sale Receipts -- \$780,425.40 vs. \$864,967.89 in 2023 Difference - \$84,542.49 (-9.8%)

Forestry Activity

- 8 Logging Crews working on ICF.
- 14 active sales (hauling, closeouts, etc.)
- Wet weather is hampering production and trucking for contractors.
- Pulp markets are slowly improving but the weather is restricting deliveries.
- Carbon project is active. Iron Co project is short listed for a potential sale in August.

County Parks

- Parks were all full for 4th of July weekend.
- Saxon Harbor marina has 4 open slips.
- Septic pumping costs have skyrocketed for 2024.
- Saxon Harbor & LOF campgrounds booked heavily for the remainder of the summer.
- Weber busy on weekends and Schomberg is sporadic for the rest of 2024.
- Septic pump electrical board replaced at Lake of the Falls (lightening).
- GFI Breakers a continual maintenance issue at Saxon. \$70 & \$85 each

County Forest Roads

- Camp 7 gravelling completed on the lift from last summer.
- Gerry Road gravelling is completed. Parts of 5 days / 2 guys.
- Hogsback, Lake One, Obadash, Game Road, Augustine Creek, Shirley Lake, Crawford, Crawford Pit, and Apple Creek Road graded.
- Apple Creek Road spot gravelled.

Recreation

- Steady use this summer on the ATV trails.
- Obtained permanent trail easement from Zanella's (Twin City Dairy) for Iron Horse Trail.
- Gravelling being done on Trail 17 in Mercer (Altman Const.)
- ICF crew is working on Trail 8 grant project then to Trail 17 from Cty G north.
- Driveway culvert installed on Trail 3 at Cty A.
- Trail 13 culvert installed.
- Trail 11a dozed and leveled to fix ruts from winter ATV use.
- 2023-24 Snowmobile & ATV grant seasons ended June 30th. Final expense totals being calculated for reimbursement.

Miscellaneous

- Multiple equipment breakdowns this summer. Truck #56 repair \$4,300 and unavailable for 2 weeks.
- Met with representatives of the Springstead area about ATV trail proposal.
- Conference call with Cities Initiative and Engineer about Harbor Drive Lake Superior project.
- Participated in the WCFA Board of Director's meeting.
- ICF Staff attended WCFA summer tour in Lincoln County.
- Xcel Energy is finalizing agreements for Hwy 77 Transmission line project. Staging areas and laydown yards.