

MINUTES OF September 3, 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N, Hurley, WI 54534. Forestry/Parks Committee members present include P. Hanson, W. Thomas, S. Erickson, M. Loreti, and Eli Ladwig, Logger Representative. Others present during the meeting included: Eric Peterson, Forest Administrator, and Katy Broquard, WDNR. T. Hiller absent.

Eric Peterson verified proper public notice of the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes.** Motion by P. Hanson supported by W. Thomas approving the minutes from July 23, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None

**Chairman report:** None

**Administrator Report:** Current stumpage is \$1,006,257.02 versus \$1,060,085.02 at this time last year.

See attached for remaining Administrator Report.

**DNR Report:** Katy reported the team time standard hours are currently at 285 hours (11%). Members of the Barnes, Rhinelander, and Wausau Teams will do work in Iron County to help meet required time standard hours. Katy and others manned the Loon Days booth. New Mercer Ranger Station building nearing completion. Staff walk-through and familiarization will be in the next week or so.

**Permission to Advertise For the 2024 Fall Timber Sale.** Motion by W. Thomas supported by M. Loretti to approve advertising of the 20-sale packet for the fall timber sale. All in favor, motion carried.

**Approve Timber Sale Location and Contract for Log-A-Load For Kids to be held October 3-4, 2024.** 2024 Log-A-Load-For Kids to be held on lands owned by Iron County and the Town of Pence near the old Pence Ballfield. Ericson Logging of Minong, Wisconsin organizes and coordinates logging for the event. Terry Peters, Mellen, Wisconsin, has organized in the past but has since retired. This 2-day event raises money for the Children's Miracle Network and gives over 1,000 regional kids an opportunity to learn about the industry and benefits of the forest.

Motion by P. Hanson supported by W. Thomas to approve a timber sale contract with Ericson Logging, Inc. of Minong, WI with product rates set at \$10 / cord for the 2024 Log-A-Load For Kids. All in favor, motion carried.

**Discuss opening a Brush Dump Site on County Forest.** Suggestion by P. Hanson at a prior meeting to open a brush dump site that could be used by contractors and the public to dump stumps and other woody debris. Review of 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan found no conflict with proposal. Suggestion to develop a brush dump at the old gravel pit north of Upson off HWY 122. Mercer area currently has disposal sites available. The site would remain locked and access / use controlled. Fee schedule and administration of the site were also discussed.

Motion by M. Loretti supported by W. Thomas to develop a secure brush dump at the Upson location. Fees set at \$10 per pickup truck, \$20 per dump trailer, and \$50 per dump truck load. All in favor, motion carried.

**Discuss Transferring a Pickup Truck to the Health Department.** The Health Dept. had previously requested a new vehicle for department use. New vehicle was included in original 2024 budget then removed due to cutbacks. Iron County Forestry has an extra truck due to not filling Forestry Mechanic position as part of 2024 budget cutbacks.

Motion by W. Thomas supported by M. Loretto to approve transfer of 1 ½ ton truck to the Health Dept. All in favor, motion carried.

**Review 2025 Forestry & Parks Budget.** Eric presented the 2025 revised budget showing the changes made due to grant funding not being received for ATV / Snowmobile projects. Staff time has been reallocated to wildlife projects and other grant related expenses and revenues have been removed. Additional grant money revenues have been included with the additional workload. Expense budget reflects a decrease of \$25,850 and the revenues decrease \$26,500. Revised 2025 budget will be forwarded to the County Clerk and Finance/Personnel Committee.

No action taken.

**Approval of Bills.** Motion by W. Thomas supported by P. Hanson approving the bills as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

**Set Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 10, 2024, at 5:00 pm at the Forestry Conference Room.

S. Erickson called the meeting adjourned @ 5:30pm.

EJP

## Administrator's Report

### Forestry Committee Meeting – September 3, 2024

2024 YTD Timber Sale Receipts -- **\$1,006,257.02** vs. **\$1,060,085.02** in 2023    Difference - \$53,828 (-5.1%)

#### Forestry Activity

- 7 Logging Crews working on ICF.
- 16 active sales (hauling, closeouts, etc.)
- Crews are seeing better production with drier weather.
- Hardwood pulp markets have better outlook for winter with aspen cooling.
- Treating Black Locust on Birch Hill to minimize spreading.
- 2024 Certification Audit (Vilas, Oneida, Taylor, Price) had no CARS or findings. Clean audit (4<sup>th</sup>) unprecedented.
- Carbon project is active. Iron Co project has 2 potential buyers gathering more information.
- ANEW will be in Iron County October 2<sup>nd</sup> to tour and film promotional and marketing video.

#### Fall Timber Sale

- 20 Sales (3 rebids) – 2,591 acres with estimated 1,287 MBF & 40,353 cords.
- Minimum sale value --\$920,794.80.
- Bid Opening – October 10<sup>th</sup> @ 3pm.

#### County Parks

- Parks were all full for Labor Day weekend.
- Camping season is winding down. Weekend reservations strong but weekdays are slow.
- County Park Road at Lake of the Falls was paved August 27<sup>th</sup>. 50/50 share with Town of Mercer.
- Plan to gravel new sites at Lake of the Falls yet this season.

#### County Forest Roads

- Mowing being done on Wren Falls Road and Boomer Creek Road.
- Foresters will mow other roads as time permits.

#### Recreation

- Spot graveling done on Trail 17.
- Culvert replacement on Trail 8.
- ICF crew completed work on Trail 8 grant project by West Branch with Ross Peterson trucks.
- Iron County was only awarded 1 ATV / Snowmobile project for 2025. 5 projects submitted.
- Snowmobile funding was oversubscribed nearly 2:1. Iron Co. received no funding from snowmobile.
- The ATV Council funded the Hurd Creek bridge 100%.

#### Miscellaneous

- Truck #57 sent for electrical repairs at Truck Country.
- Conference call with Cities Initiative and Engineer about Harbor Drive Lake Superior project.
- Participated in the WCFA Quarterly Administrator's Conference call.
- Participated in the WCFA Executive committee meetings.
- NOAA is delayed in grant awards due to new online system. Delays Xcel Gile Flowage acquisition.
- Summer Intern Rayona Suelflow's last day was August 13<sup>th</sup>. Part time at Saxon Harbor in Sept / Oct.