

MINUTES OF February 5, 2025, IRON COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting called to order at 5:15 pm by Scott Erickson, Chair, at the WDNR Mercer Ranger Station, 5291 State House Circle, Mercer, WI 54547. Forestry/Parks Committee members present include P. Hanson, W. Thomas, S. Erickson, M. Loreti, T. Hiller and Eli Ladwig, Logger Representative, Conner Saari and Elaina Jackson, Student Supervisors. Others present during the meeting included: Eric Peterson, Forest Administrator; Tara Krall, Office Manager; Larry Youngs, County Board Chair; Katy Broquard and Ryan Peasley, WDNR; Roxanne Lutgen and Rick Boes, County Board Supervisors; John Hilgemann.

Tara Krall verified proper public notice of the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes.** Motion by W. Thomas supported by P. Hanson approving the minutes from December 11, 2024 as written. All in favor, motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None

**Chairman report:** S. Erickson complimented WDNR on their new office building.

**Administrator Report:** 2024 stumpage ended at \$1,629,045.52 vs \$1,711,966.53 in 2023. Current stumpage is \$124,354.17 versus \$179,344.29 at this time last year.

Eric reviewed the 2024 budget.

See attached for remaining Administrator Report.

**DNR Report:** Katy reported the team time standard hours are currently at 1174 hours (47%). The team has been working on establishing 3 timber sales. She met with Jenna to plan a timber sale to establish woodcock habitat. Katy also attended a training on the new system for internal audits and winter survival training.

Ryan added they are still struggling with vacancies but hope to hire an LTE forester by the end of the month.

**Logger Representative Report.** Eli reported the general health of the industry is that the average logger is just getting by. Ponsee is seeing delinquent parts accounts and equipment sales are down. People are entering the industry. Eli reported on markets as flat and poor pricing. Mat wood and pine markets are good. Gate wood prices are the same or a little less than 5 years ago.

**Consider sale of SESE, Sec 7, T45N, R2E and SESW, Sec 7, T45N, R2E Town of Pence.** An offer was made to purchase the two 40s for \$27,200 which is \$680/acre. These properties are not enrolled in County Forest and are land locked.

Motion by T. Hiller supported by W. Thomas to offer SESE, Sec 7, T45N, R2E and SESW, Sec 7, T45N, R2E Town of Pence, out to public bid with a minimum bid of \$790/acre. All in favor, motion carried.

**Review and possibly award gravel crushing bids.** Gravel crushing bids were opened today at 3:00 pm. The following bids were received:

James Peterson Son's Inc - \$7.49/cy  
Northern Crushing & Screening - \$4.49/cy  
PGA, Inc – O'Brien Lake Pit \$7.07/cy; Oma Pit \$6.54/cy

Motion by W. Thomas supported M. Loreti to award the gravel crushing bid to Northern Crushing & Screening for \$4.49 per cubic yard. All in favor, motion carried.

February 5, 2025

**Review ATV and Snowmobile Ordinance.** Eric explained that the existing ATV and Snowmobile Ordinance is 20 years old and contains no reference to UTVs. The updated ordinance will contain language referring to the appropriate Wisconsin Statue. Eric and Tara will meet with Deputy Baker and Warden Robin Miller to work through the ordinance. It will be approved by the Forestry Committee and Law Enforcement Committee before the County Board of Supervisors.

**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 Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 5:00 pm at the Forestry Conference Room.

S. Erickson called the meeting adjourned.

tlk

## Administrator's Report

### Forestry Committee Meeting – February 5, 2025

2024 YTD Timber Sale Receipts -- **\$1,629,045.52** vs. **\$1,711,966.53** in 2023    Difference - \$86,861.01 (5.1%)

2025 YTD Timber Sale Receipts -- **\$124,354.17** vs. **\$179,344.29** in 2024    Difference - \$54,990.12 (30.1%)

#### Forestry Activity

- 10 Logging Crews working on ICF.
- 12 active sales (hauling, closeouts, etc.)
- Winter pulpwood markets improved for aspen pulpwood and with Billerud mills.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> carbon credit sale was recorded in late December.
- After expenses and Anew's share Iron Co. received \$746,803.19.
- RP2 & RP3 credits will be batched together when guidance is released by the American Carbon Registry.

#### County Parks

- Ordered 6 new picnic tables and 10 new fire rings for new Lake of the Falls campsites.
- Over \$55,000 received in January for campsite reservations.
- Saxon Harbor has 2 – 24' and 2 – 28' slips available for 2025 season.

#### County Forest Roads

- Pushed brush back and are plowing Augustine Creek Road.

#### Wildlife Openings

- ICF staff mowed 67 of 123 openings scheduled for 2025.
- Low snow helped and many access trails dozed open and widened.

#### Recreation

- Opened ATV / UTV trails in northern Iron County January 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Snowmobile trails countywide opened January 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Still thin snow cover in Saxon area. Most trails in fair condition.
- Schomberg snowshoe and Uller trails groomed.

#### Miscellaneous

- Purchased new 2012 John Deere 548 wheel loader
- Sold 1998 John Deere 548 wheel loader at auction to Ross Peterson Construction.
- Ordered 2025 ½ ton truck.
- Participated in WCFA Executive Committee call.
- Participated in other WCFA conference calls.
- Conference call about Gile Flowage acquisition – Land survey requirements.
- Appraisal for Gile acquisition received in late January. Title work should be completed this month.
- NOAA funding falls under President Trump's Executive Order's review. Should be ok with our longer timeline.
- Presented at Wisconsin Coastal Management Grant funding meeting for Lake Superior Shoreline Restoration project. Tentatively awarded \$41,220.
- ICF staff to cover Courthouse maintenance and plowing while B. Nasi is on medical leave.