

FOREST, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Douglas County Board of Supervisors
Monday, May 16, 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, Mary Lou Bergman, Joseph Moen, Nick Baker. Absent – Steve Long. Others present – Ann LaLiberte, Paul LaLiberte, Ann Torrey, Sara Kendall, Jim Latvala, Shelley Nelson, David Gardner, Betty Gardner, Jon Harris, Clint Meyer, Bill Whiteside, Craig Golembiewski, Cheryl Westman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Bergman, second Moen, to approve the minutes from the March 28, 2022, meeting. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Budget: Whiteside reviewed the budget ending March 31, 2022.

Forest Management Operations: Golembiewski reported 4 active sales; timber sale set for June 7, 2022, with 19 sales; two straight county owned sales being worked on; reforestation - aerial seeding completed on over 300 acres; Moose River Grouse Dog Club held spring trial three weeks ago and it went well.

Parks and Recreation: Meyer reported summer ATV/UTV trails officially open as of May 13, 2022; electric and water turned on at campgrounds, all docks in, well pump replaced and contractor redoing pavilion floor at Lucius Woods Campground. Still recruiting park workers and seasonal equipment operator.

ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS:

Lucius Woods Park Lighted Holiday Trail Request (Solon Springs Family Fun Days): Requester unable to attend - refer to future meeting.

County Park Seasonal Staffing Wage Increase and Seasonal Position Structure: Recruiting for seasonal staff for 2022 has been very difficult. Advertising since early March and only able to fill half of 8 needed positions. Three options being considered:

- Option 1: Increase seasonal park staff wages (\$2.00 an hour);
- Option 2: Offer seasonal campground host position (free site); and
- Option 3: Offer campground aide positions to LTE Forester positions.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve request for Option 1, forward to May 19, 2022 County Board meeting, and implement and utilize Options 2 and/or 3 as necessary within 2022 personnel budget, to attempt to adequately address park staffing needs. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution Authorizing 2022 Annual WDNR Off-Highway Motorcycle Trail Grant Program Participation: Annual approval required by state for WDNR Off-Highway Motorcycle Trail Grant Participation.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Bergman, second Baker, to approve 2022 annual WDNR Off-Highway Motorcycle Trail Grant Program participation, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

From Land & Development Committee – Review Pesticide Ordinance #1.17 for Revisions: Discussion regarding committee exemption approval process for pesticide application on non-county Forest County owned lands. Refer to next meeting.

Withdrawal and Exchange of Property in the Town of Gordon:

Withdrawal of Property: Maps in packet identifying property to be exchanged: 40 acre parcel of Douglas County Forest land for 80 acre parcel of privately owned vacant forest land, both located in the Town of Gordon. Exchange would be in the county's best interest.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Baker, second Bergman, to approve withdrawal of property from County Forest Law, land exchange, and application for regular use County Forest Law entry, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Town of Gordon Easement Acquisition: Property owner has agreed to grant an access easement to Douglas County, providing direct access to otherwise very difficult to access Douglas County Forest land. After survey completed, about 30' of road being accessed is owned by a private landowner off of CTH-Y. Requesting approval for purchase of easement acquisition.

ACTION (RESOLUTION): Motion by Baker, second Moen, to acquire Town of Gordon easement, and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES/REPORTS:

Mooney Dam County Park Campground Expansion: Two updated drawings distributed for review showing 19 drive-through full hook-up site options and relocated boat landing area. Discussion of expanding/relocating the boat landing, and installing a second play area, as well as potential ATV/UTV accessibility. Campground expansion projects may qualify for potential ATV grant funding if ATV's are allowed. Several area residents were present expressing concerns about the campground expansion concept, as well as safety issues about existing play area location and need for a barrier fence. Cost estimates coming to next meeting, along with further discussion about the potential expansion project and fencing in existing play area.

Campground Campsite Advance Reservation System: Meyer advised it is working well, with campground staff being trained on system.

Forest Carbon Program: Harris reported multiple developers still interested in developing a carbon offset project with the county. Actual annual growth rates and removal thresholds have been main points of discussion. Growth rates not known until comprehensive inventory has been completed. County to continue discussions/negotiations with developers with goal to identify a single developer for potential carbon offset project consideration. Refer to next meeting.

Department Staffing: Harris included organizational chart in meeting packet. Fulltime Forestry and Parks Technician employee recently gave notice of voluntary resignation by end of the month. Seasonal Heavy Equipment Operator position remains unfilled with few applicants.

WDNR County Forest Liaison: Latvala reported on target to complete the 300 remaining hours of required county forest time standard work by the end of the state's fiscal year (June 18th); also busy with prescribed burns.

Future Agenda Items: Review Pesticide Ordinance #1.17 for Revisions; Forest Carbon Program; and Mooney Dam Expansion,

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Bergman, second Baker, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk