

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
September 10, 2018
County Board Room**

Members Present: Fred Strand, Chairperson; Jeffrey Silbert, Vice-Chairperson; Larry Fickbohm; and David Zepczyk

Members Absent: Harold Maki

Staff in Attendance: Jason Bodine, Administrator; Steve Probst, Asst. Administrator; and Pat Bruno, Office Manager

Others: Erika Lang, Conservation Manager, and Mary O'Brien, Landmark Conservancy; Bob Davidson, Principal Manager and Owner of Fire Hill, LLC; Tom Piikkila, Wisconsin DNR; Tom Gordon, Town of Bayfield Board

1. Call to Order of Forestry and Parks Committee Meeting.

The meeting of the Forestry and Parks Committee was called to order by Chairman F. Strand at 6:00 P.M.

2. Public Comment.

Chairman Strand called for public comment. No one came forward. Closed public comment.

3. Approval of the August 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) to approve the minutes of August 13. All: Yes. Carried.

4. Access Permit Request: Rick and Kayla Polson. Town of Hughes.

The Polson's are requesting an access permit that would replace the permit held by the current property owner who is selling to the Polson's. J. Bodine recommends approval.

MOTION: (Silbert, Fickbohm) to approve the access request from the Polson's. All: Yes. Carried.

5. Presentation: Erika Lang, Conservation Manager, Landmark Conservancy. Fire Hill Acquisition Project in the Town of Bayfield.

E. Lang explained that Landmark Conservancy, (newly formed merger of Bayfield Regional Conservancy and Wisconsin Land Trust) is looking for support from the county for the potential county ownership of 107 acres of privately owned forested property located east of County Highway J. The interest is to provide protection and access (at a minimum) for the public's use. A grant application to Wisconsin Coastal Management Program must be made and owned by a local government entity. Matching funds would be made through a bargain sale with the land owner, Bob Davidson; and additional donations (\$50,000) from supportive community members to purchase the property for the appraised value. A local government entity must be the owner. The Town of Bayfield would be interested in the added recreational opportunities which this conveniently located property could provide.

B. Davidson spoke about the history of his ownership of the property and interest in making it available for the public's use.

Tom Gordon, Town of Bayfield Board, spoke of the growing Town; dependent on tourism, fishing and small farms. In the past, the Town of Bayfield turned down Davidson's request to develop the property. At a meeting of local property owners, they were in favor of the sale of this property and encourages support of this project. The Town does not have staff or expertise to purchase the property; but they would work with the department for winter plowing.

J. Bodine explained that the property would be restricted from motorized recreation and commercial timber harvesting; however, it could be managed for habitat diversity or habitat improvements (i.e. salvage harvesting). The county could develop recreational (hiking, biking, yurts, etc.) activities in the future upon ownership.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) to approve this grant application for the opportunity to become the owners of 107 acres on Fire Hill. All: Yes. Carried.*

6. Monthly Reports.

A. Forestry (all updates):

1) 2018 Budget.

Timber sale revenues for August rebounded after two sub-par months to a new total of \$3.2 million. It is anticipated that the annual revenues will eclipse budgeted revenues. Expenses are on target.

2) Stewardship Grant.

The project is still under the Joint Finance Council's objection and most likely nothing new will happen until after the November elections.

3) Oak Wilt.

Unfortunately, oak wilt has been officially discovered in Bayfield County with one tree in Cable (on county forest land) and another at the intersection of Highway N and A. The tree and surrounding trees were treated September 6 by county and DNR staff. The tree was damaged during an early season storm which created the wound that attracted the infected beetle.

The discovery will prompt a complete re-analysis of our oak resource and management objectives. DNR staff have provided a wealth of technical information and will provide public education as this is not an uncommon problem for Wisconsin. Red oak timber sale stands will have added harvesting restrictions (mid-May to mid-July) in attempt to contain, prevent and manage the problem.

Local town and county highway officials, as well as representatives from the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation and CAMBA will be invited to meet with the Department and the

DNR to discuss curbing the spread of the disease.

4) Forest Certification.

The 2018 certification audit at selected counties (not Bayfield) is completed. No new correction action requests (CARs) were issued. A few observations for improvement were noted: improved road maintenance to comply with Wisconsin best management practices and training for chemical applicators. Bayfield County will be part of the 2019 audit. Also included in the audit is the re-certification audit for both SFI and FSC.

5) GNA.

Bayfield County is responsible for the management of approximate 900 acres, all red pine this third season of participation. Included this year will be sales administration in the fall. The program has been viewed as a success and is expected to continue via a renewed five year agreement. The program helps the U.S. Forest Service reach their annual sale quantity.

On September 25, the Natural Resources Board tour group will be making a stop at the North End cabin in Cable. During the stop, the Wisconsin Counties Forest Association will be recognized for their 50th anniversary as an association. Forest challenges of regenerating oak in relation to deer browse, the deer enclosure and the yurt will be presented by Department staff, Mike Amman and Jen Bratsch.

Jason Holmes is scheduled to present *Regeneration Monitoring and Deer: The Bayfield County Experience* and preliminary Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) numbers at the upcoming Wisconsin Society of American Foresters (SAF) annual meeting in Wausau.

B. Parks (update).

Parks revenues are expected to surpass \$101,000. Preparations have begun for the annual seasonal campsite reservation call-in the second Saturday of October. Anyone may call the campground landline during specific hours to reserve a 2019 seasonal site on a first call received, first choice basis. The experience has been that all seasonal sites are reserved within the first half hour.

Parking issues have come up that will need to be addressed; in addition to last minute cancellations without penalties (deposits are not collected); we do not accept credit cards; season of operation and new pricing.

C. Trails and Recreation (all updates).

1) Motorized Trails.

The snowmobile and ATV council meetings were held recently. The snow council approved funding the supplemental requests at 100% (\$101,000 for Bayfield County). This is an annual risk that the Bayfield County Snowmobile Alliance takes not knowing if their expenses will be covered.

The ATV council approved construction of a covered picnic shelter at the intersection of Flag and Battle Axe Roads in 2019.

2) Non-Motorized Trails.

Nothing new to report.

3) Yurts.

The occupancy at the existing yurts are: Bayfield yurt at 99% and Cable at 57% for the June through August season.

Inclement weather slowed construction of the new (2nd) Bayfield yurt. Once the UDC inspector has reviewed the site, the yurt will be advertised for rental.

4) Events.

No new events were approved for August.

5) FEMA Projects.

The initial meetings are complete, and all paperwork has been submitted. FEMA will be scheduling a face-to-face meeting to develop projects, to provide overall funding level and requirement information for the request for proposal bidding processes for the projects.

The snowmobile council has set aside additional funds to cover expenses associated with the trail repairs. The funds may be used to offset what is not covered by FEMA and also to offset the county's required 12.5% contribution; resulting in 0% cost to the county.

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) to receive and place reports on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

7. Siskiwit River Preserve Project Update.

A productive meeting was held with the Town of Bell Parks and Land Committee. The town shared a few concerns regarding increased use of support facilities and the approach of the driveways to the town road. They are considering providing snow plowing. Rejuvenating the dormant apple orchard off Siskiwit Falls Road is being considered. Upcoming projects are to develop rules and regulations and trail improvements. Once approval from the Conservancy and Wisconsin Coastal Management is received, work on the parking lot will begin.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) to approve the provisional plans for the Siskiwit River. All: Yes. Carried.*

8. Access Permit Request: Dwight and Valerie Olson. Town of Orienta.

The request for an access permit was made by the Olson's as the potential owners of property. This property had an existing 10-year temporary access permit held by the previous owners. Access is via the existing route and J. Bodine recommends approval.

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) to approve the request. All: Yes. Carried.*

9. 2019 Campgrounds and Yurts Policy and Pricing Review.

After canvassing other area campgrounds' rates and reviewing the county's current pricing structure at both campgrounds and yurts, J. Bodine is recommending either shortening the amount of time the campground is open (currently May 1 to October 31) or increasing the seasonal rates. It has been three years since the prices were increased.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) to approve a rate increase of up to \$150 for seasonal campsites and to keep the number of camping days the same. All: Yes. Carried.*

Yurts: J. Bodine recommends starting the new yurt rate at \$75/night; and in 2019, increasing the original Bayfield yurt rate to \$70/night and keeping the Cable rate at \$65/night.

***MOTION:** (Zepczyk, Silbert) to approve the \$75/\$70/\$65 rates. All: Yes. Carried.*

10. 2019 Budget.

***MOTION:** (Silbert) to recommend this budget proposal to the executive committee and administrator.*

Discussion: Silbert appreciates the detail the J. Bodine has included to educate the committee.

(2nd: Fickbohm) All: Yes. Carried.

11. Access Permit Request: Mike Cariveau, CEO, Bayfield Wireless.

J. Bodine met M. Cariveau on the site of the proposed communications tower on county forest land in the Town of Bayfield. The CFL withdrawal approval is being reviewed locally by the DNR but has not yet been forwarded to Madison. Also, M. Cariveau has provided extensive documentation on a second site being considered and has received a state grant to construct the tower.

A request has been received from Bayfield Wireless for an access permit to the proposed tower location. Bayfield Wireless would be required to pay for all merchantable timber that is removed as part of the construction. J. Bodine recommends approval.

***MOTION:** (Zepczyk, Fickbohm) to accept the access permit request from Bayfield Wireless. All: Yes. Carried.*

12. Joseph LeBouton, DNR Representative.

Tom Piikkila attended the meeting for J. LeBouton who was unavailable.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 P.M.

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting will be held **Monday, October 8, 2018 at 6:00 P.M.** at Bayfield County Courthouse, County Board Room, Second Floor, 117 E. 5th Street, Washburn, Wisconsin.

The November Committee meeting and timber sale bid opening will be held on Monday, November 19 due to the Courthouse being closed for Veteran's Day observance on November 12.

Bayfield County Forestry and Parks Committee
September 10, 2018

Page 6 of 6

Submitted by,
Pat Bruno