

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
October 14, 2019
County Board Room**

Members Present: Fred Strand, Chairperson; Larry Fickbohm, David Zepczyk and Harold Maki

Not Present: Jeffrey Silbert

Staff in Attendance: Jason Bodine, Administrator; Lindley Mattson, Office Manager; Steve Probst, Assistant Administrator

Others in Attendance: Joseph LeBouton, DNR Liaison, Todd Naas, DNR; Bob Hanson, DNR; Jane Snilsberg, Across the Pond Veterans Park

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 6:01 P.M.

2. Public Comment.

Chairperson Strand called for public comment. After repeating the call no one came forward. Closed public comment.

3. Approval of the September 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes.

***MOTION:** (Maki, Fickbohm) to approve the minutes as presented. All: Yes. Carried.*

4. Presentation: Across the Pond Veterans Park.

Jane Snilsberg, Across the Pond Veterans Park, Inc is asking for more county forest land in order to fulfill their long-term vision. The original ten acres sold to the group was not all buildable/useable 10 acres. After architectural setbacks due to easements and such, approximately 5.7 acres are operational. The group is asking for the remainder of the 40 acre parcel to develop and follow through with their plan. With these additional acres the plans will include an amphitheater, hiking trails and a social/educational building. This park would be open to all, not just veterans.

Discussion from committee and presenter.

Presenter would like decision on organization's proposal at this meeting. Administrator notes this is a discussion only item at this time and no action will be taken.

F. Strand requests a plan for development of the park and how much land would be necessary to just complete the initial request (phases 1 and 2) before making any sort of decision. When the plan is received, it can be revisited at the next committee meeting.

5. Presentation: Barrens Management and Development.

Bob Hanson, WDNR Wildlife Biologist presented an overview of barrens management, with a focus on the NW sands habitat corridor plan. The Forestry Department has been exploring the potential of creating a secondary barrens area on county forest land located about 3 miles north of the Barnes Barrens. Creating habitat corridors, or stepping stones, from one suitable barrens habitat to the next is viewed as an important part of the overall process for providing optimal habitat for barrens dependent

wildlife species. Spacing each habitat area about 3 miles apart has been identified as the preferred distance. Maps were presented highlighting the areas, including info on current conditions.

The management area would encompass about 4,000 acres total, with roughly 1,000 acres as a “core” and the remainder as floating/surrogate barrens. The 3,000 acre floating area would be managed about the same as previously planned, but with a goal of providing more structured or systematic connections to the open core. The roughly 1,000 acre core would be managed to maintain an open, grassy landscape, similar to the core of the Barnes Barrens.

Some discussion from committee members.

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Strand) Pursue developing a plan. Three: Yes. One: No. Carried.*

6. Bayfield Area Trails System and Committee.

Earlier this year, a small group was gathered to discuss various recreational topics, with a focus on the Bayfield area. Kate Kitchell (City of Bayfield, Parks and Rec Committee) was the lead organizer and orchestrated the meeting. Initially, the City of Bayfield (Kate), Bayfield County (our Department and Tourism), the Town of Bayfield, Landmark Conservancy, Red Cliff and the Bayfield Chamber all met to see where this could go. Meetings have been fairly regular, very productive, and have expanded to pull in other user groups, both non-motorized and motorized. All with the goal of identifying, strategizing and prioritizing rec trail development and maintenance in the Bayfield area. Jen Bratsch, our Rec Forester, has been a core member of this team.

J. Bodine presented a memorandum of understanding (MOU) from the BATS committee. The MOU establishes a foundation and development of a long-term vision and structure. Bayfield County, through our Department (Jen taking the lead) is listed on the MOU as a core member.

J Bodine believes this to have excellent representation from the major players in the Bayfield area. By signing the MOU, the county would be part of the core team, with that there will be some commitment by the county. J. Bodine suggests that signing the MOU as the Forestry and Parks Department, with either the Forestry and Parks Administrator or Committee Chair signing the document.

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) Approve county participation in the BATS organization. All: Yes. Carried.*

Chairman Strand gives Forestry Administrator the okay to sign on behalf of the Committee/Department.

7. Monthly Reports. Discussion of general activities, events, issues and accomplishments. Possible action on report(s) only.

a. Forestry (all updates):

- a) 2019 Budget. Timber sale revenues were down in September. The significant amount of storm salvage sales down south has pulled away some contractors that would normally be operating here. Poor markets most likely had an influence as well. The good news, we have already exceeded that amount in October (currently at around \$150,000). Total stumpage revenues are just over \$3.2 million. We will exceed the budgeted amount once again (which is \$3.325 million), but may not reach \$3.85 million, as initially predicted. Expenses will probably end up slightly below budget.
- b) Certification Audit. Attached is the final certification audit report from SFI. Still haven't seen the final report from FSC yet. Once again, kudos to the entire staff.
- c) Oak Wilt. Map presented showing all oak wilt locations. Staff's expertise was requested on Berkie Property as well as on Forest Land Group Property. Summary was presented showing the amount of time and expense put into Oak Wilt. If the problem continues to grow, we may need to look at contracting out some of these services.

- d) Emerald Ash Borer. We set 9 of the large purple traps this summer. Scattered throughout the county, in areas where ash is more prevalent. Each trap was checked a few times throughout the summer. Fortunately, no EAB was discovered in any of the traps. We will set traps again in 2020.
 - e) Trespass in Iron River. The County Surveyor is currently in the process of establishing the new corners and developing the CSM. Once that is finished, we'll send everything to Corp Counsel and close on the transaction. Should be finished by the middle of November.
 - f) Comprehensive Land Use Plan Revision. Template is completed. The department will begin working on the plan in the coming weeks. A process needs to be established for involving the public. There are thoughts of using the "Notify Me" option on the website, with notifications sent out when drafts are completed. From there having a set amount of time for comments before going ahead to the committee. Other options are open houses, which is more time invested.
- b. Parks:
Campgrounds close the end of October. Another record revenue year for 2019. Revenues should end up close to \$115,000. A more detailed summary of the 2019 season during the meeting in December.
- c. Trails and Recreation:
- a) Motorized Trail Updates: Currently working with the Snowmobile Alliance regarding a re-route to Trail 31S. This trail is in the Barnes hardwood block and travels through numerous wet areas. Also, we received tentative approval to add another 15 miles to the snowmobile trail program. These are still under review and most were previously funded, but were removed about a year ago as part of the SNARS process. If approved, it would increase the snowmobile trail total to roughly 452 miles.
 - b) Non-Motorized Trail Updates:
 - i. Siskiwit Falls. We are in the process of crafting an RFP for the various trail projects. Would address upgrades to the existing trail along the river, including an elevated boardwalk over the wettest problem area. Work would most likely begin Spring of 2020.
 - ii. Fire Hill. Few updates. Working with Landmark Conservancy and the current landowner, as well as WI Coastal, on various items regarding this property/project.
- d. Yurt Updates.
The following are occupancy rates for the yurts: Bayfield yurts were 93% in September, Cable was at 74% Reservations are picking up for October and November.
- e. Events. No events were approved last month.
- f. LCORP Update.
Letters to all municipalities and the Tribe went out last month. We reached out to various non-profits as well. The deadline for updated info is November 1. We've heard from a small handful thus far and expect a few more to arrive within the next week. Once all have been received, we'll put together a new draft and bring it to the Committee for review.
- g. FEMA Projects.
- i. Delta Landfill. A minor repair was done; a fabric flap came open and had to be reattached. A field visit with DATCP is scheduled for later this month. The plans for repair should be completed over winter, then a request for bids would go out first thing in the spring. The goal is completing all repairs by next summer. A 2020 repair date will require an extension of the FEMA grant and similar notification to DNR Waste Management.

***MOTION:** (Maki, Zepczyk) Receive and place on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

8. Fall Timber Sales.

A total of 31 sales, covering just under 2,600 acres will be part of the fall offering. Of that total, six are re-offers (five previously unsold and one from a terminated contract). There are 25 new sales covering a little over 2,080 acres as part of this offering. Hard copies were available.

***MOTION:** (Maki, Zepczyk) Approve timber sales for the fall offering. All: Yes. Carried.*

9. Sand and Gravel Agreement.

In 2011 we made an agreement with the Town of Bayfield, Town of Russell and the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa regarding mining and crushing gravel at a new location near the Sand River Pit. The agreement was for the extraction of an estimated 51,000 tons of gravel. All three parties were to split all costs associated with the agreement, including site reclamation and a \$.75/ton royalty to the county. There is believed to be approximately 15,000 tons remaining. All three parties are asking to renew the agreement until the material has been harvested, crushed and removed. Even though we have the ability to charge our expenses associated with this agreement, we never have. We acquire a permit through Zoning every year, as well as occasionally inspecting the site.

J. Bodine recommends extending the agreement for another five years, or until the remaining gravel has been removed. Bodine also recommends increasing the royalty to \$.95/ton, which would cover our costs.

Attached is the old agreement. Although it is in the agreement that reclamation of the site is up to them, J. Bodine believes it of importance to mentioning again.

***MOTION:** (Maki, Zepczyk) Renew the sand and gravel agreement with the two towns and the tribe with an increase in royalty to \$.95/ton. All: Yes. Carried.*

Joseph LeBouton, DNR Liason – Commented on the land request from Across the Pond Veterans Park. A lot of analysis from legal staff goes into withdrawing land from MFL

Chairman Strand brought up the next meeting occurring on Veteran's Day, November 11. With no mail service happening that day and bid opening being the main component of the November meeting, the committee decided to rescheduled the meeting for the following Monday, November 18.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 PM

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting will be held **Monday, November 18, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.** at Bayfield County Courthouse, County Board Room, Second Floor, 117 E. 5th Street, Washburn, Wisconsin.

Submitted by,
Lindley Mattson