

Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2021

The monthly meeting of the Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee was called to order at 8:01 am, Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Present from the Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee: Phil Schneider, Lyle Lieffring, Terry Dusell, Alan Rath sack. Jerry Biller

Also present: Jeremy Koslowski – Forest Administrator, Heidi Woldhuis – Office Manager, Mike Zimmer – Parks Manager, Jerrad Macholl – Assistant Forest Administrator, Dane Gravesen – Forester III (by phone), and Derek Jochimsen – DNR Rusk County DNR Liaison (by phone), Connie Meyer – County Clerk

Present from the Public:
George Sihsmann, Don Mansky, Theodore Strzok, Ben Hanson

Approval of Minutes:
Motion by Lieffring/DuSell to approve February 17, 2021 meeting minutes. No Opposed, Motion carried

- Public Comment:**
- Question/Discussion regarding bidding for trail development
 - T. Strzok – Contract due in April, request for a free extension
 - B. Hanson – Furturewood contract 2506 due in April, request for extension

Parks and Recreation Report:

Mike reported on the following:

- Recreation applications for grants due April 15, 2021
- 22 pine trees cut off Firelane Rd for Memorial Park Pavilion
 - Phil – Do we consider planting Red Pines for future use of similar projects
- Snowmobile trails are closed; working with State's GPS grooming system to finalize maps
 - Weyerhaeuser and Bruce added GPS units to groomers
 - GPS systems will be mandatory in 2022 for State funding
- Started prework phase for Weirgor ATV trail development
- New Docks delivered to McCann, Perch, and
- Summer Internship deadline extended to April 2nd, 2021 to draw in more applicants
- Campground caretaker – Jim and Josie Creek, ready for another year. Considering the addition of Audie/Perch Lake campgrounds – will post the position

Timber Sale Report:

Jerrad reported on the following:

- Road Bans are in place, end of winter logging

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- 4 sales not completed this winter, 13 completed sales
- Over 3200 cords of wood decked in the forest currently, all decked wood has been scaled

Administrator's Report:

- Letter from WCFA regarding Consolidated Cooperative
- Spring County Forest Association Meetings (WCFA) Wednesday 3/17/21 – Friday 3/20/21
- Summer Tour 2021 in Eagle River – June 23rd – 25th; Rusk County hosts summer 2022
- Conference Call of WCFA Administrators – discussion regarding weight limit and size increase on side-by-sides (Voted 2,750 pounds)
 - Maintenance and funding needs of trails will increase with change accordingly
 - Trail designs do not currently accommodate the machines outside of current regulations
 - Forest roads and trails are receiving additional damage/wear and tear
 - WI ATV Association is currently discussing this issue
 - Rusk County Ordinance on trails follow State Law. Individual County Forests may choose to adjust Ordinance
 - Forest Logging Roads are being worn, eroded, etc. from oversized ATV/UTV use resulting in increased costs

Recreational Grant Summary:

Mike Reported:

- Maintenance Grants – Snowmobile, ATV/UTV, Trout
- Snowmobile Bridge Replacement – Potato Creek
 - 60-foot arched bridge (currently 52 flat bridge)
 - Received one quote, waiting on a second quote
- ATV Parking Lot on CTY F – Improvement – restrooms, grading, road shoulder improvements
 - Club is donating towards the project as well

Motion by Dusell/Rathsack to approve grant applications. No opposed, Motion Carried

Felix Road Snowmobile Bridge:

- Received grant however trail will be rerouted
- Grant needs to be returned if unused

Motion by Lieftring/DuSell to return grant funds. No opposed, Motion Carried

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Weirgor ATV Trail Phase 1 Construction:

- Negotiated Proposal Process for 2.1 miles of trail
 - Utilization of a specific vendor for specialized work/processes
 - Discussion regarding the best use of tax papers dollars with currently approved grant funding
 - Contractor history of trail development vs road development
 - Moving to a bid system would require engineering fees to evaluate trail development area and needs as well as additional contractor fees for maintenance past the development phase
 - Engineering fees and additional contractor maintenance fees were not included in the current grant and these additional costs would not be covered by grant funds; would need to be covered by the current department budget

Motion by DuSell/Lieffring to accept Negotiated Proposal Process due to specialized nature of ATV trail development, utilize contractor with proven past performance – Biller opposed, Motion Carried

Temporary Access Agreement:

- Steigerwaldt – use of logging road

Motion by Biller/Rathsack to approve Steigerwaldt temporary access agreement for 1 year. No Opposed, Motion Carried

Birchwood H.S. Pavilion Reservation:

- Birchwood student requested information to rent the Murphy Pavilion for use for Prom 2021

Motion by Biller/Rathsack to waive reservation fees for use of the Murphy Pavilion by Birchwood H.S. for use for Prom 2021 following compliance with contract agreements. No Opposed, Motion Carried.

Josie Creek Roof Replacement:

- Insurance does not cover metal roof
- Replace roofs on pavilion and clubhouse, switch from shingles to metal

Motion by Biller/Rathsack to replace roofs on Pavilion and Clubhouse and switch to metal roofs – No Opposed, Motion Carried

Firewood Permit Website Transaction Fee:

Motion by Biller/DuSell to waive transaction fee for Firewood Permit sales through the website. No Opposed, Motion Carried

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County Forest Carbon Development Assessment:

- Discussed Carbon credit of County Forests as a potential revenue source

Motion to allow Forestry Administrator to move forward freely with assessment and discussions regarding County Forest Carbon Development. No Opposed, Motion Carried.

Forestry Technician Position:

- Discussion tabled from February 17, 2021 Committee Meeting

Motion by Lieffring/DuSell to advertise to hire a Forestry Technician. No Opposed, Motion Carried

Budget Review:

Review and Approve Bills:

Motion by Lieffring/Schneider to approve the February AP report. No Opposed, Motion carried.

Closed Session – Timber Contract Extensions and Closeouts

- Motion by Lieffring/Biller to go into closed session 10:02 AM; No opposed, Motion carried
- Roll Call: DuSell, Rathsack, Biller, Lieffring, Schneider

Chair announces closed session for deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, WI Stats 19.85(1)(e).

- Motion by Lieffring/Biller to return to open session 10:46 AM; No opposed, Motion carried
- Roll Call: DuSell, Rathsack, Biller, Lieffring, Schneider

Open Session

Motion by Biller/Lieffring to approve 1-year extensions with a 40% increase, must be signed by April 21st committee meeting; No opposed, Motion carried

Adjourn:

Motion by Lieffring/Schneider to adjourn at 10:48 am. No Opposed, Motion carried.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. at Law Enforcement Government Center.