

Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee
Meeting Minutes
MARCH 25, 2020

The monthly meeting of the Rusk County Forestry Committee was called to order at 8:05am, Wednesday, March 25, 2020.

Present from the Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee: Phil Schneider, Lyle Lieffring (by phone), Alan Rathsack and Terry Dusell. Absent: Jerry Biller

Also present: Jeremy Koslowski – Forest Administrator

Present from the Public:

Bob Grunseth

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Rathsack/Dusell to approve February 19, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion carried

Public Comment:

Comments received on 15 Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan Chapter 700. Handouts provided by the Blue Hills Trail Association.

Addendum Item 1

Rusk County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan Chapter 700 Draft Approval

Presented and discussed.

Changes are as follows:

- Page 700-3 (language change/added in italics)
 - Spring Closure-No off-road use on County Forest Land from March 15 *to the Friday before Memorial Day.*
 - Damage to access: rutted or impassable roads requiring costly repair by the county or other specific user groups (e.g. snowmobile/atv club, *ski club, logging contractors*)
- Page 700-9
 - The first paragraph under Vehicle Use Restrictions is removed.
 - The last sentence in the second paragraph under “All Vehicles are restricted in the following areas” is removed.
- Page 700-11
 - Clarification needed on #4 on where ATVs are allowed in Josie Creek.
- Page 700-13
 - Second sentence under section 725 should be corrected to reflect the correct publication PUB-FR-093-2010

Motion by Dusell/Rathsack to approve Chapter 700 draft with changes listed above. Motion carried.

Schedule Adjustments

Will not be having an April meeting. Discussion held.

Motion by Dusell/Lieffring to change schedule and have both draft chapters 800 and 900 at the May meeting. Motion carried

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Administrators Report:

Jeremy reported the following:

- We will not allow camping at our campgrounds during “safer at home” order
- Field staff is currently working from the shop location
- Each staff member drives their own vehicle and maintains 6'+ distance at all times
- Some remote work is being completed

Recreation Grant Applications:

Mike (Parks Manager) will be applying for the grants listed below. These have an April 15th deadline.

2020 FORESTRY RECREATIONAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

SNOWMOBILE APPLICATIONS:

Snowmobile Maintenance

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 316.1 mi. @ \$300.00/mi. + \$410.00(Insurance) | \$ 95,240.00 |
| Hawkins Snowmobile Corridor 12 – Felix 36ft. Bridge (New) | \$ 40,200.00 |

ATV APPLICATIONS:

ATV/UTV Maintenance

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 28.1 mi. @ \$600.00/mi.(ATV) + 28.1 mi. @ \$200.00/mi.(UTV) + \$588.14(Insurance) | \$ 23,068.14 |
|--|--------------|

ATV Trail New Trail Development 6.0 Miles

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Weirgor ATV Trail Development with 100ft. Bridge | \$ 557,600.00 |
|--|---------------|

TROUTE MAINTENANCE APPLICATIONS:

Current Funded Miles:

Betty Lake Rd. (6.5 mi.), Serely Camp Rd. (1.5 mi.)

Proposed New Miles:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Weirgor Rd. (3.7 mi.), Three Lakes Rd. (1.3 mi.), Four Hill Rd. (1.4mi.) 12.9mi. @ 249.00/mi. | \$ 3,212.10 |
|--|-------------|

TOTAL = \$ 719320.24

Motion by Dusell/Rathsack to approve applying for grant funding for projects listed. Motion carried.

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County D Boat Landing Dock Donation:

The Lake Holcombe Lake Association would like to donate a dock for our landing on County D. They will purchase from A&D Docks and install it. We will be able to use our current dock at a new location.

Motion by Rathsack/Dusell to approve dock donation pending Mike's approval of design. Motion carried.

Summer Interns:

Applications have been received. We'd like to move forward with interviews and the hiring process.

Motion by DuSell/Schneider to proceed with the hiring of two summer interns, and repost if we need a third. Motion carried.

Cell Phones:

Currently, some members of the field staff are not receiving a cellphone stipend for their cellphone usage per the county's policy.

Motion by Rathsack/Dusell to approve the monthly cellphone stipend to all field staff who are not on the county's phone plan and forward on to Property Committee for approval. Motion carried.

Closed Sessions-Forestry Contract Extensions:

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 Rathsack/Dusell to enter into closed session. Roll call. Voting Yes: Dusell, Rathsack, Schneider, Lieftring. Motion carried.

Entered into closed session at 9:13am.

Motion by Rathsack/Dusell at 9:22am to return to open session.

Timber Sale Extensions and/or Closeouts:

Discussion held on the current worldwide COVID 19 pandemic and economic ramifications. Given all of the uncertainties, Jeremy would like to have all current contracts extended for 1 year with a 0% increase. This extension would follow language in clause 3 of the Rusk County Timber Sale Contract and does not guarantee future extensions.

Motion by Dusell/Rathsack to approve a 1 year 0% extension on all current contracts and waive the bidding restriction on any contract over 4 years for the spring 2020 opening. Motion carried.

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Spring Timber Sale Policy:

Discussion held on the current worldwide COVID 19 pandemic and economic ramifications. Given all of the uncertainties, Jeremy would like to have all contracts for spring 2020 bid opening to have a 4 year contract as opposed to a 2 year with two 1-year extensions.

Motion by Rathsack/Scheider to approve all contracts sold in the spring 2020 timber bid opening to have 4 year contracts. Motion carried.

Out of County Travel:

NONE

Budget Review:

No comment

Review and Approve Bills:

Motion by Dusell/Rathsack to approve March AP reports. Motion carried.

Addendum Item 2

Next Meeting Date

Motion by Dusell/Lieffring to forgo an April meeting and set next meeting date for May 20, 2020. Motion carried.

Adjourn:

Motion by Rathsack/Lieffring to adjourn at 9:55am. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. at Law Enforcement Government Center.