

Members present: John Burke, Susan Haug, Dale Heil, Paul Klocko, Mike Lane, Susan Stomieroski, Gary Weiland

Excused: Mark Chickering, Greg Klos, Ryan Schleifer, Marcell Wieloch

Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Rec, and Forestry Department staff present: Tom Lovlien-Forest Administrator, Matt Block-Central Wisconsin Off-Road Cycling Coalition (CWOCC)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Lane

I. Minutes

Motion by Burke to approve the December 18, 2019 minutes. Motion **carried** unanimously.

II. New Business

A. 2019 County Forest Annual Report

Lovlien discussed some of the program highlights including revenue and expenses, certification, timber management, road and trail maintenance, wildlife management, recreation, public outreach and professional development.

B. 2010 – 2019 County Forest Division Expense/Revenue Report

Lovlien reported that over the last ten years about four million dollars in gross timber was sold. The net is the amount of revenue to the County after the twenty percent payment to the State for interest free loans and ten percent payment to the townships. The County sets an even-flow budget because timber revenues fluctuate each year depending on weather, markets, etc. Timber sale contracts are typically two-three years.

C. Central Wisconsin Off Road cycling Coalition Proposal for Maintenance and Improvements to the Mountain Bike Trails at Nine Mile Forest

Matt Block, CWOCC explained that the volume of riders has increased so there is more wear and tear on the trails. The sport has changed from just riding trails to riding trails with features, such as jumps and drops. The features will be on existing trails but a rider would not have to do them. Some trails will be rerouted due to resource damage and safety. They will be doing a lot of rehab work to make it more rideable and for better erosion control. Lovlien said staff supports most of what the club is proposing and has requested that natural materials be used in any features. Some trails will be closed, other small sections will be opened but will maintain existing trail mileage as close to 13.45 as possible. Staff didn't support a skill area and a jump park in the north lot at Nine Mile. Not that staff doesn't support these, but they belong in a park and maybe these could be expanded at Sylvan or Ringle landfill trails. Discussion followed. **Motion** by Burke to approve the Central Wisconsin Off Road Cycling Coalition bike proposal with the exception of #29 skill area and #30 skill/jump park. Motion **carried** unanimously.

D. 2020 Spring Timber Sales Being Advertised for Purchase

The spring timber sale package offers 281 acres of timber on five tracts with an estimated volume of 9,485 tons and 422.0 thousand board feet. Lovlien discussed all of the sales. The sales will be advertised and the bid opening is May 4th. Questions were answered.

E. Revised Timeline for Completion of the Marathon County Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Lovlien said the revised timeline includes Chapter 900 tonight along with Chapters 700 and 800. The Forestry/Recreation and ERC Committees will review those three chapters at their April meetings. Chapter 1000 will be reviewed along with Chapter 2000 in June. Lovlien hopes to continue to work on the plan and have a public meeting in July and move it on to County Board and DNR later in the year.

F. Review Revisions to the Marathon County Comprehensive Land Use Plan Chapters 700 – 900

Chapter 700 contains information about roads and access, access control and history, permanent primary and secondary forest roads, temporary roads, state, county, town driveway permits, utilities, culverts, restricted access areas, wild lakes, road construction best management practices for water quality, and signs. Chapter 800 contains information about integrated resource management, sustainable forestry, management considerations to reduce loss, plant communities management, animal species management, exceptional resources, unique areas, aesthetics and landscape management. Chapter 900 contains information about recreation and includes information on planning, authority, entrance and user fees, recreational service agreements, recreational use permits for organized events, extensive recreational use of the forest, intensive recreation areas/uses, recreational trail access, demand development/exclusion, trail construction and maintenance,

organized trail use and special events, designated recreation trails, recreation program funding and grants. Questions were answered. **Motion** by Burke to approve revisions to chapters 700 – 900 of the Marathon County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and forward the recommendation to the Forestry/Recreation Committee. Motion **carried** unanimously.

G. Chronic Wasting Disease Found in Marathon County – Update from Mike Lane

Lane discussed information from the public meeting held in March. He said one positive deer was found near Bevent and the DNR is going to increase testing in that area and issue more permits in the fall. There is not a lot that can be done about Chronic Wasting Disease other than testing to try and determine where it is. Discussion followed.

H. Forest Certification Field Audit August 3 – 7, 2020

Lovlien explained that the field audit will take place one day between August 3rd and the 7th. The auditor will be shown some County Forest timber sales, wildlife, watersheds, and forest roads. If any member wants to come along, they are welcome to see how a forest audit is done.

I. Winter Recreational Trail Program Update

Lovlien reported that winter recreation is coming to an end and he thought it was a good season.

J. Wolf Delisting – Senate Bill 3140 – Mike Lane

Lane explained that the Fish and Wildlife Service is going to delist the Gray Wolf. It will be up for review for public comment. There are two bills, one in the Senate and one in the House of Representatives to support delisting of wolves and to add a rider that they can't be put back on the Endangered Species List rule by court action. In the future, the Fish and Wildlife Service could put the wolf back on the Endangered Species List if their population crashes because of disease or if the states aren't managing them properly.

K. Member Items

None brought forward

II. Old Business

A. Status on the CERES and Romatowski County Forest Land Acquisitions

Lovlien has received a signed Offer to Purchase from CERES for the two hundred acres in the Harrison-Hewitt Forest Unit and this item will be going to County Board March 24. Eighty of the two hundred acres are ready to be harvested so the County will recoup some of the value of that purchase. The Romatowski property in Kronenwetter is in a holding pattern until the end of the year to give the seller a little more time to make a decision.

B. Status on Snowmaking at Nine Mile Forest – John Burke

Burke said the club is continuing to figure out what their next steps are. Lovlien said a test hole had been done at Nine Mile and most likely there is enough water capacity to provide water for the trail. That was the wetlands person opinion that the Nordic Ski Club hired, but the report still needs to be reviewed by an engineer. The Ski Club has had some discussions about considering another vendor. Lovlien said staff and the club will have a meeting in May to discuss this item. Burke mentioned this was a good year to do a baseline on revenues that Nine Mile can generate being open from December 15 through the end of March.

C. County Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) Approved

Lovlien said the CORP Plan had been approved by County Board and is on the County website. References to recreation on County forests are in the plan but the recommendations for improvements are part of the County Forest Fifteen Year Plan. The CORP Plan refers to the Fifteen Year Plan on any recommended or action items.

IV. 2020 Tentative Meeting Dates – June 3, September 16, and December 16, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

V. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Haug. Motion **carried** unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:08pm.

Thomas Lovlien
Secretary