

MINUTES

Eau Claire County

• Committee on Parks & Forest •

Monday, July 12, 2021

5:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Members: Kevin Stelljes, Joe Knight, Missy Christopherson, Gary Gibson, Tami Schraufnagel

Others Present: Josh Pedersen – Director, Jody Gindt – Supervisor, Jacob Tumm – Forester, Kyle Johnson – DNR Liaison, Winnie Parker – Administrative Specialist III (Committee Clerk), Erika Gullerud – Finance Analyst, Debbie Kitchen – Eau Claire County Fair Representative, Letecia Papke – Eau Claire County Fair Representative

Chairman Kevin Stelljes called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. and confirmed public posting of the meeting.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the June 14, 2021, meeting. Supervisor Knight moved to approve the minutes as presented. It passed unanimously.

No members of the public were present.

Lease with Friends of the Fair – After some discussion about the language of the contract presented and the review from our legal counsel, Chauncey Ellefsen, Tami Schraufnagel made a motion to adopt the contract/lease between the Eau Claire County Parks and Forest Department and the Friends of the Fair, subject to corrections. All in favor, none opposed.

Approve User Fee Change Sheet for 2022 – Josh Pedersen outlined the User Fee Schedule and the ease of making these changes during the budget season. Kevin Stelljes motioned to accept the changes as presented except for the deposit for contracts at the Expo Center to increase to \$1,000 and to not change any winter skiing fees for Tower Ridge. All in favor, none opposed.

Forest Carbon Credit Updates – The data collected from Jody Gindt, Jacob Tumm, and Kyle Johnson was submitted to the developer, Blue Source. We are working to answer their questions, get them more information, and expect a submission in early fall.

Fall Forest Tour date has been scheduled for September 17, at 1 p.m. Please mark your calendars.

The 2021 Summer Camping Season has been in full swing and is expected to exceed last years' statistics for nights booked and revenue collected. The staff hired this year has been one of the strongest teams we have ever had, with the returning seasonal staff training the newcomers. Post-Covid we are seeing an influx of additional individuals taking advantage of the campgrounds Eau Claire County has to offer. There are very few complaints, only one eviction

over the 4th of July at Coon Fork (due to ruckus behavior) and one at Harstad (due to an individual having a meth lab in their camper). This was caught and dealt with early on, a benefit of having a former law enforcement person on staff who can quickly detect undesirable activity. The beach access chair was checked out at Coon Fork only one time. While this amenity is not getting used as often as we had originally anticipated, it has been well received by the community. This has been a record year for firewood sales.

2021 Timber Revenue – We are on target for what is expected for this time of year with Timber Revenue. Through the end of June (Q1 and Q2), collected revenue was \$139K. During the third and fourth quarters, 70-75% of the total revenue for the year is typically collected.

Directors Report - The Parks and Forest Department is working with the Highway Department to repave the Big Falls North parking lot. This project, with an estimated cost of 40K, is expected to be done by Senn Blacktop, Inc. in August of this year using funds carried forward from 2020. On August 2, 2021, Eau Claire County Parks and Forest Department is hosting a four (4) county audit which takes place approximately every 5 years by the SFI and FSC certification auditors. This intensive and comprehensive forestry audit is a significant event in the life of the Parks and Forest Department. It allows us to showcase the many aspects of forestry in Eau Claire County, including but not limited to sales, forest management, conservation, environmental responsibility, beautification, and fiscal accountability. Josh Pedersen negotiated \$3,500 for JC Norby to appraise the “Sand Mine” property. CORBA’s Firecracker event was a “skeleton” of what it used to be with only 100 in attendance vs 1,000 in previous years.

Joe Knight complemented the staff on a job well done as he has recently observed Lake Altoona Park busy and full of a diverse population enjoying and taking full advantage of this wonderful park.

The next meeting date was set for August 9, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., virtually.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Winnie Parker
Committee Clerk
Administrative Specialist III – Parks & Forest