

MINUTES

Eau Claire County

• Committee on Parks & Forest •

Monday, March 14, 2022

5:00 pm

Room AG 203

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

Others Present: Josh Pedersen – Director, Jody Gindt – Supervisor, Winnie Parker – Administrative Specialist III (Committee Clerk), Erika Gullerud – Finance Analyst, Kyle Johnson – DNR County Forest Liaison, Michele Skinner – Lake Altoona District

Chairman Stelljes called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm and confirmed public posting of the meeting.

Verbal roll call was taken by the committee clerk and is noted above.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the February 14, 2022, meeting. Missy Christopherson moved to approve the minutes as presented. The minutes passed unanimously.

No members of the public were present.

There was discussion regarding a week of free parks admission in honor of Beaver Creek Earth Week. Gary Gibson moved to follow the same protocol as last year to participate in a free week to include only one full weekend over the April 16-24, 2022, reminding Beaver Creek about their responsibility to add and take down signs. All in favor, none opposed.

Michele Skinner of Lake Altoona District gave a report about the prairie planting at the sand dredge site. Eleven volunteers seeded the berm around the sand dredge site which creates two protected prairie areas. The results will be seen in approximately four years if reseeding is done in subsequent years. Mowing or having a controlled burn are necessary every three or so years to keep trees from getting established. Joe Mauer's father, a local chapter prairie enthusiast, left money in his will to go towards this project. Less than 50% of the site is developed in a sustainable and perpetual way. One project where it is evident that this protocol is working is along the power lines where prairie plantations have taken off.

The committee discussed off-road motorized vehicles on county forest land and the need to better identify road use in the county forest. It is unclear to the general public which roads allow driving access and which ones do not. In most cases, this issue has not been a problem. If a road is not blocked off, driving is allowed. Eau Claire's policy is that driving your licensed vehicle is permissible but not an ATV or UTV, as these types of vehicles tear up the logging roads and endanger the public. Gary Gibson moved to charter the Advisory Committee to look at the Eau Claire policy on this issue and road access within the next year, inviting involvement of local townships. All in favor, none opposed.

Josh Pedersen presented Resolution 21-22.097 Motorized Trails Maintenance Grant. This grant is for a maintenance program for ATV and UTV trails in the county forest. This grant is not able to be used for special projects. One hundred percent of this grant is through the state of Wisconsin. Joe Knight moved to approve Resolution 21-22.097 as written. All in favor, none opposed.

A second Resolution 21-22.098 Recreation Trails Program Grant was also presented by Josh Pedersen. This grant is 50% cost share, expenses are about \$25,000 every two years. This grant can be used for special projects, not just maintenance. Possible projects could fall under the umbrella of this grant, for instance, trail maintenance, signage, chalet cleaning, and tying trails of differing systems together. Tami Schraufnagel moved to approve the resolution 21-22.098 as written. All in favor, none opposed.


Director's Report – Josh Pedersen

The land acquisition of Heartwood has an interested party on the south side of the property for sale. This portion of the land is landlocked, and the interested party inquired about an access agreement. Josh is going to ask our legal team about granting access or not. Eau Claire County's appraisal is forthcoming for the parcels for which we have an interest. The Harstad project is open for bids. Once awarded, the project will commence early summer. Timbers will need to be cut from Colorado for the Harstad project. Things have been ordered for the Big Falls bathroom project and paving will begin in early June. The plans are completed for the Coon Fork office building. Josh shared the schematic with the committee. We are waiting for the consultant bids for the Lake Altoona Park parking lot project. A contract has been awarded for the Lake Eau Claire Clubhouse assessment project. The cost of this assessment is going to be \$15,700. For the dump station project at the Expo Center, only one bid came in. The bid was over budget by 5k, but we've decided to accept the bid and move forward with this project. The kiosk wrap design has had some minor slowdowns but is expected to be complete in April. Two kiosks will go in at Lake Altoona Park, one at Big Falls, and one at Lowes Creek.

The next meeting date was set for April 11, 2022, at 5:00 pm in room AG 206.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,



Winnie Parker
Committee Clerk
Administrative Specialist III – Parks & Forest