

## MINUTES

Eau Claire County

### • Committee on Parks & Forest •

Monday, July 11, 2022

5:00 pm

Room AG 103 and 104

Members: Joe Knight, Tami Schraufnagel, Jodi Lepsch, Dane Zook

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, Jacob Tumm – EC County Forester, Kevin Stelljes – Parks and Forest Advisory Committee Member, Michele Skinner – Lake Altoona District Chair, Regan Watts – Recycling and Sustainability Coordinator, Matt Steinbach – Environmental Science Division Health Department, Charles Ellefsen – EC County Assistant Corporate Counsel, Josh Strauss – Executive for Anew (formerly Blue Source), Ryan Theiler and wife – candidate for Parks and Forest Advisory Committee

---

Chairman Knight 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 June 13, 2022, meeting. Tami Schraufnagel moved to approve the minutes as presented. The minutes passed unanimously.

No members of the public were present.

Josh Strauss from Anew (formerly Blue Source) presented to the committee on carbon credits and how ANEW is one of the largest climate solutions companies in North America. Strauss outlined the services Anew offers, including, but not limited to, the following: feasibility analysis, contracting and listing, forest inventory, modeling and documentation, verification, credit registration, and carbon credit sales. The process takes 18-24 months to get to the final stage of carbon credit sales. Once the forest inventory is completed and documented, marketing efforts begin. The following are the key obligations: 1) ensure that harvesting, over time, does not exceed growth and 2) the county must maintain certification (which is already in place). This voluntary market is outside the framework of the state and federal mandates. However, many major companies are eager to be forerunners in this market. Please see the presentation in full to get more information. Direct further questions regarding Anew to [jstrauss@anewclimate.com](mailto:jstrauss@anewclimate.com). – No action needed.

Matt Steinbach, Environmental Science Division of the Eau Claire City Health Department, presented about the beach monitoring program that is underway. They are monitoring seven locations weekly, five of which are managed by Eau Claire County Parks and Forest. Bacterial E. coli and algae are the two most prevalent harmful pathogens monitored since 2018. The Lake Altoona Park is a pilot project to help develop a new test to evaluate and mitigate the problems associated with these two harmful pathogens. After some discussion no action was taken at this time.

Regan Watts started a discussion on the Climate Action and Resilience Plan the county has adopted. This plan relates to operations only throughout the different departments. Prior to this plan, many departments were already taking steps to make sustainability a priority. Selling carbon credits allows the county to reach its goals while realizing a substantial financial gain. Based on projections for operations in emission reductions, Eau Claire County will meet our goals prior to the stated deadline of 2030. Jodi Lepsch moved to endorse and support the plan. Three in favor and one opposed. The motion passed 3:1.

The Lee Marsh family would like to place a memorial bench to honor Lee by the Lowes Creek Park gate near the Expo Center, replacing the existing bench. Lee Marsh and family have been longstanding members of CORBA, are active at the Lowes Creek Park, and very active with Eau Claire County 4-H. Tami Schraufnagel moved to support placing a memorial bench in Lowes Creek Park in honor of Lee Marsh. All in favor and none opposed.

Jacob Tumm and Kyle Johnson seek approval of the Salvage Sale on Tract 11-22. Two loggers placed bids on this sale, Syryczuk Logging winning the bid by \$40. The bid values are above our expectation for a salvage sale. Dane Zook motioned to approve the Salvage Sale on Tract 11-22. All in favor and none opposed.

The Advisory Committee to Parks and Forest has three (3) applications for two available positions. The target number of members is eleven (11). Patrick LaVelle, former committee chair, Gary Gibson, former committee member, and Ryan Theiler were all applicants. The committee allowed Ryan Theiler to introduce himself. He was encouraged by a family member to apply. After some discussion, Jodi Lepsch moved to accept Gary Gibson and Patrick LaVelle as Advisory Committee Members. All in favor and none opposed. Director Josh Pedersen will set meeting times and charge the committee with their first assignment of mapping the county trail system.

A review of some possible land acquisitions was presented. The Anderson property is approximately 240 acres with the Eau Claire River running through it. Acquiring this property would allow the county and public to access land locked County Forest. The Parks and Forest Department had an appraisal done, which resulted in \$3,800 per acre. The Anderson family is asking \$5,500 per acre. The sellers seem flexible on options of breaking up the land into parcels but do not seem flexible in price. The property boasts a nice Red Pine Plantation which is very positive for the county. The family would like the value of the timber to be wrapped up into the price per acre. There are several options to generate funds and loans to acquire this property. The committee gave Josh Pedersen permission to put together language for the August joint meeting with the Budget and Finance Committee. No action was taken at this time. Update on the Heartwood land acquisition. The sellers decided to take this property off the market until September or October. At that time, they have said they would be in touch with Josh prior to putting the land back on the market. This parcel allows for protection on the Eau Claire River corridor, has possibility for timber revenue, there are many development opportunities, and would prevent possible forest fragmentation in the eastern bloc.

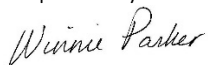
The Purchasing Department has asked us to notify the committee of RFP's (Requests for Proposals). First of all, the repair of Troubled Waters Bridge is slated to be finished prior to the snowmobile season. This project is funded by the Snowmobile Grant and State ATV Grant. Second, Ayers and Associates won the bid for the Lake Altoona Park parking lot project. Phil Johnson's prior planning work will be incorporated into the Lake Altoona parking Lot project. The original construction will begin in 2022 and carried forward to 2023.

Director's Report – Josh Pedersen wanted the committee to be aware that three park pay tubes were either broken into or set on fire. Fortunately, the perpetrators did not get into the pay tubes at Lake Altoona Park or the ones at Big Falls. Some money did get burned up, however. The kiosks are finally being installed in the parks on Friday. We should talk about going to all credit card purchases of park passes in the future.

The next meeting date was set for September 12, at 5:00 pm, at the courthouse board room, with virtual option.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Winnie Parker

Committee Clerk

Administrative Specialist III – Parks & Forest