

## MINUTES

Eau Claire County

### • Committee on Parks & Forest •

Monday, November 13, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Agricultural and Resource Center

227 1<sup>st</sup> Street West., Altoona – Room 103 and 104

Members Present: Joe Knight, Missy Christopherson, Jodi Lepsch, Nate Otto (Virtual)

Others Present: Josh Pedersen – Director, Jody Gindt – Supervisor, Kimberly Watnemoe – Administrative Specialist III (Committee Clerk), Erika Gullerud – Finance Analyst, Nancy Coffey– Ex Officio Member, Kyle Johnson – DNR County Forest Liaison, Jacob Tumm – EC County Forester, Matt Steinbach – Environmental Science Division EC City Health Department, Rachel Hart-Brinson – EC 4H, Charles Ellefsen – Corp Counsel, Geoff Goodland – EC Curling Club, Chris Gorzek – Kickin Kids, Mallory Williams – President of the University of Eau Claire Ski Club

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### Call to Order Committee on Parks & Forest and confirmation of meeting notice

Chairman Knight called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and confirmed public posting of the meeting.

### Public Comment

No members of the public wished to make a comment.

### Review of October 9, 2023, and October 16, 2023, Committee Meeting Minutes

Supervisor Lepsch motions to approve the minutes from October 9, 2023, and October 16, 2023. All in favor.

### UWEC Nordic Ski Club Event Request for Tower Ridge January 20, 2024

Williams presented in front of the Committee about wanting to host a fundraising event for the UWEC Nordic Ski Club Event at Tower Ridge. The race would be a 5K loop and has been done in the past. Williams expects the event to bring in roughly 30-40 people and every participant must pay an entrance fee and must pay for their own Tower Ridge parking pass.

Supervisor Christopherson motions to approve the race contingent on the group securing insurance and signing a formal contract. All in favor.

### Curling Club Request to Install and Help Fund Dehumidification Unit at Expo Center

Goodland from the EC Curling club presented on the issue of humidity in the Expo Center. He expressed concern about high humidity, especially in the fall and early spring. The Curling Club is seeking help to recoup some of the cost associated with this machine as it not only benefits them, but also the overall maintenance of the Expo Center as well. The dehumidifier has already been installed and the curling club is requesting \$9,000 to come from the Parks and Forest 2024 Contingency Funds. The Committee would like Goodland to explore all grant options as currently they did not explore any of that.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to postpone action to the December 11th Committee on Parks and Forest Meeting. All In favor.

### Kickin Kids 2024 Request to Host Free Ski Nights on Mondays at Tower Ridge

Gorzek spoke about this event, which has been held in the past at Tower Ridge. It is a free ski night/an opportunity for kids to learn how to ski. This event covers eight Mondays from January to February. All participants are required to purchase a Tower Ridge parking pass.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to approve the event for another year. All in favor.

### **Review Results from Lake Altoona Bacteria Study, Matt Steinbach Health Department**

Steinbach from the EC City Health Department reviewed the lake findings from the 13 test samples taken from Lake Altoona over the summer. This was a pilot program funded from the 2023 Parks and Forest budget. The findings found markers of birds (i.e. goose, and gull) as well as cattle markers. The sample size was small, and data was mixed so Steinbach felt the data was less convincing and he didn't feel this was a service we needed to do every year, more on a as needed basis.

Supervisor Lepsch motions for Steinbach to put together simple talking points to distribute to the Committee. All in Favor.

### **Interdepartmental Rental Fees and Charges Policy**

Rachel Hart-Brinson from UW Extension recapped what was discussed at the previous meeting in November. Chauncey advised cleaning up the code with a clear clarification on who gets charged and who doesn't for Expo Events. If approved, he would need to draft an ordinance to change the code in order to enact the policy.

Supervisor Christopherson motions to allow Corp Counsel to draft an ordinance change for interdepartmental rental charges and fees. All in favor.

### **Skills Park Naming Policy**

No CORBA representative was present for this issue. The committee felt it was unclear what they were directly requesting, but the general consensus was to allow some sort of naming rights.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to postpone vote until the next Committee meeting until CORBA can draft a specific outline on their request. All in Favor.

### **Approval of 2023 Fall Timber Sales**

Forester Tumm discussed the ten new timber sales and two re-bid sales. Minimum bid value from these sales is roughly \$490,000 and 529 acres. Tumm went through each sale and timber volumes and noted that we typically see a 25% increase in revenue from the bids versus the minimum bid value.

Supervisor Christopherson motions to approve Fall 2023 timber sales. All in favor.

### **Approval of 2023 Fall Timber Extensions**

Forester Tumm discussed the extension list, with 1753 being the oldest sale.

Supervisor Christopherson motions to approve the January 1, 2024, Timber Extensions. All in favor.

### **Ordinance 23-24/054 to Reletter 16.30.005 of the Code I through BB. To J. Through CC: Definitions; To Create Section 16.300.005 M of the Code; Definitions; to Amend Section 16.30.140C. of the Code; Vehicular Traffic**

Director Pedersen presented the code change for allowing Class 1 Electric bikes within the parks.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to approve the ordinance. All in favor.

### **Ordinance 23-24/050 to Amend Section 16.02.020 of the Code: Restriction on Timber and Pulp Cutting – Eau Claire County Forest**

Director Pedersen requested they remove the portion of the code that includes language to extend the harvesting restricted area to the landward side of the floodplain, while also allowing for conifer stands to be rotated if they will be regenerated by seeding or hand planting. This would allow not only for additional Carbon Credits to be generated but would also provide better disease control to stop infestations. DNR Liaison Kyle Johnson expressed this would also aid river water quality as they are able to remove trees before they fall into the river etc.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to approve with additional information added to the fact sheet regarding BMPs management. All in Favor.

### **Use of Contingency Funds and Application for Wisconsin Municipal Dam Grant to Make Repairs to Lake Altoona Dam**

Director Pedersen reported on this issue. The Lake Altoona Dam was inspected back in 2022 and the report finally came back last month for repairs needed next year. This was an expense not planned into the 2024 budget, so Pedersen is requesting to take this to the County Board for approval of contingency funds for the project. The total cost for the

engineering and repair would be roughly \$105,000. Pedersen will be applying to the Municipal Dam Grant as well which, if approved, covers 50% of the cost.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to draw up the resolution to allow the usual of contingency funds and authorized Pedersen to apply for the Municipal Dam Grant. All in Favor.

### **Director's Report**

Director Pedersen provided an update on the Trails Gala which he spoke at on Saturday November 11th. Supervisor Gindt shared an end of season update as the department gears up for the winter season. Winter storage is complete at the Expo Center and docks come out this week at Lake Altoona/Lake Eau Claire. He also reported on the completion of the Lake Eau Claire Boat Landing including a new picnic pad area. The Coon Fork Garage project is also nearing completion. Lastly, the department obtained the Sheriff's Department boat.

### **Future Parks & Forest Committee Meetings and Items for Discussion**

Next Parks & Forest committee meeting date is set for December 11, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

### **Committee on Parks & Forest Adjournment**

The Committee on Parks & Forest adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Kimberly Watnemoe  
Committee Clerk  
Administrative Specialist III