

AGENDA

Eau Claire County

• **Committee on Parks & Forest** •

Monday, February 12, 2024, 5:00 p.m.

Room AG 103 and 104

Join from the meeting link.

<https://eauclairecounty.webex.com/eauclairecounty/j.php?MTID=mb2ee3476e25aa45fe87d26ec81fd9c9e>

Join by meeting number.

Meeting number (access code): 2533 733 9036

Meeting password: FHjpf6jjK72

For those wishing to make public comment, you must e-mail Kimberly Watnemoe at Kimberly.watnemoe@eauclairecounty.gov at least 60 minutes prior to the start of the meeting. Comments are limited to 3 minutes per person and 30 minutes maximum for the public comment period.

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Meeting Notice
2. Roll Call
3. Review/Approval of Committee Minutes - **Discussion/Action**
 - a. January 08, 2024
4. Public Comment
5. Ordinance 23-24-074 To Amend Section 16.30.040 B. Of the Code: Fees and Charges; To Amend Section 16.33.015 of the Code: Rental Rates for Non-Profit and Government Organizations - **Discussion/Action**
6. Altoona Schools Request to Use Tower Ridge for Cross County Races - **Discussion/Action**
7. Request from Chippewa Valley Grouse Dog Association to Build Shelter Near Knights Pool in County Forest – **Discussion/Action**
8. Resolution 23-24-073 Authorizing the Parks & Forest Department to Participate in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Municipal Dam Grant Program for the Lake Altoona Dam and Eau Claire River Dam - **Discussion/Action**
9. Annual Report from Chippewa Valley Trailriders – **Discussion**

Prepared by Kimberly Watnemoe, Parks & Forest

Please note: Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through sign language, interpreters or other auxiliary aids. For additional information or to request the service, contact the County ADA Coordinator at 839-4710 (FAX) 8391669 or (TDD) 8394735 or by writing to the ADA Coordinator, Human Resources Department, Eau Claire County Courthouse, 721 Oxford Ave., Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54703.

10. Expo Center Updates – **Discussion**
11. Director’s Report
12. Future Committee Meetings and Items for Discussion

Next Meeting – March 11, 2024, at 5 pm

13. Adjourn

Prepared by Kimberly Watnemoe, Parks & Forest

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MINUTES

Eau Claire County

• Committee on Parks & Forest •

Monday, January 08, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Agricultural and Resource Center

227 1st Street West., Altoona – Room 103 and 104

Members Present: Joe Knight, Missy Christopherson, Jodi Lepsch

Others Present: Josh Pedersen – Director, Jody Gindt – Supervisor, Kimberly Watnemoe – Administrative Specialist III (Committee Clerk), Kyle Johnson – DNR County Forest Liaison, Todd Johnson – Park Manager, Sarah Christensen – LAP Ranger, Charles Ellefsen – Corporate Counsel, Tim Mcmanus – Lighting Display Presenter, Brian Chapit, David Bertrang – Fairchild Representative, Tim Wucherer – CORBA, John Vinopal – Altoona Resident, Rich Lafave - Ski Sprites, Tim Skutley - Ski Sprites, Jereme Rauckman – Eau Claire Youth Cycling, Jon Olstad- CORBA

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 December 11, 2023, Committee Meeting Minutes

Supervisor Christopherson motions to approve the minutes from December 11, 2023. All in favor.

Free Ski day Tower Ridge January 21st

Director Pedersen spoke briefly on this topic as this is an event that has been held in the past. Volunteers and ski instructors are available to help anyone interested in learning how to ski.

Supervisor Lepsch motioned to approve the Free Ski Day at Tower Ridge on January 21st. All in favor.

Naming Rights for Skills Park at Lowes Creek Park

Chauncey from Corporate Counsel provided clarification on what CORBA was requesting as far as naming rights for the new skills park. CORBA would like the right to name the trails, have a sponsor board, and allow for the naming of the small playground area, not the large skills park. However, Director Pedersen reserves the right to approve the final location of the donor board. Currently, CORBA has an agreement with Corp Counsel, so these changes would not require a resolution just an addition to the current agreement.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to approve CORBA the right to name the trails, put up a sponsor board, and to name the playground within the small skills playground. All in favor.

Sale of County Owned Land Adjacent to Lake Altoona County Park

Landowner John Vinopal spoke about wanting to purchase an open lot that the County owns near Lake Altoona Park. He currently lives on Kewin Street and is unable to expand his current home due to construction restrictions. He expressed interest in purchasing the land to build a garage with living quarters above for family/friends to stay in when they visit. Director Pedersen then provided some background on the empty lot. The County purchased four lots surrounding Lake Altoona in the 80's. One of the lots was sold to the City of Altoona to build a water treatment plant, while two of the other lots were developed into boat trailer parking. There are no direct plans in the Altoona master plan to build on this empty lot, however, Director Pedersen usually would not recommend selling land connected to a park in case further expansion is needed/wanted. All committee members were in fair agreement that selling the land would not be in the

Counties' best interest as further development could be done. Similarly, if the land was put on the market, they would need to allow for bids which means anyone could win the bid and build a structure.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to deny the request. All in favor.

Ski Sprites Partnership Proposal for Two Aqua Thruster Units for Blue Green Algae Management at Lake Altoona Beach

Director Pedersen introduced this topic stating that the Ski Sprites would like to purchase aqua thrusters to help push the blue green algae out of the beach area. Rich and Tim from Ski Sprites provided further input with their main goal being to reduce the number of cancelled Ski Sprites shows. In 2022, the beach was closed 54 days. Similarly, in 2023 it was closed 38 times due to algae blooms. This resulted in a \$11,000 loss of revenue for the Ski Sprites over the last two summers. One aqua thruster unit cost roughly \$5,000 as they would need a 150-foot cord to connect to electricity. They would like the County to provide funding for an additional unit. Supervisor Lepsch was hesitant that the aqua thrusters would be a solution. Supervisor Christopherson asked if the Ski Sprites had spoken to the Lake Association about possibly funding. They had not. Consensus from the committee was not to provide financial support for a project that may not work. They advised the Ski Sprites to purchase one and test it out. If they had good results, then possibly they could revisit the committee for further support of additional units.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to allow for the use of county electricity and for placing aqua thrusters in front of county land. All in favor.

Request for Free Entrance to Lake Altoona County Park June 15th and 16th for Adaptive Ski Lessons

Tim and Rich from the Ski Sprites also touched on this topic. They have done this event in the past and ask that the county provides free parking passes for their learn to ski event over Father's Day weekend. They provide both regular and adaptive ski lessons.

Supervisor Christopherson motions to approve the free parking tickets for adaptive and regular ski lessons. All in favor.

Request from Town of Fairchild to Make Forest Road 5 an ATV/UTV Route

David Bertrang requested the county allows Forest Road 5 to be opened for ATV/UTV traffic. There has already been a public hearing in Fairchild on this topic which was well received. Opening this road would allow for the road to connect to another ATV/UTV trail and would help to alleviate traffic on Camp Road. Director Pedersen stated that the Parks and Forest staff have no objections to this.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to approve making Forest Road 5 an UTV/ATV route. All in favor.

Drive Through Lighting Display at Eau Claire County Expo

Tim Mcmanus and Brian Chait presented on this topic. They are proposing a commercial operation for their lighting display. They would like to utilize the Expo Center grounds for roughly 40 days around the Christmas Season. They are anticipating roughly 100-300 cars a night. The display would have roughly 400-500 props that are tuned to music on an FM transmitter. No one would have to leave their vehicle. The charge per car would be \$20 with \$25 during peak times. He proposed two routes, one being through the parking lot the curler use during that time. Committee members were hesitate on that route, but Tim stated he has been in contact with the curlers to work out the best possible option between the groups. Tim stated their main goal is to work out an agreement with Parks and Forest to be charged a flat rental fee similar to the Curling Club.

Supervisor Christopherson motions for Director Pedersen to move forward with creating an agreement with Corp Counsel for a set rental fee, agreement with the Curling Club for parking lot use (if that route is used), and for the committee to review the agreements once final draft is completed. All in favor.

Resolution 23-24/068 Adopting the 2024 Annual Work Plan for the Parks and Forest Department to Comply with the County Forest Administration Grant Program

Director Pedersen briefly spoke on this topic as this is done every year to receive grant money to pay administrative benefits, salary, etc. The work plan is broken into categories such as parks, administrative, expo etc.

Supervisor Lepsch motions to accept annual work plan as presented. All in favor.

Resolution 23-24/071 Authorizing the Parks and Forest Director to Submit an Application to the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to Apply for a Cost Sharing Recreational Boating Grant

Director Pedersen presented this topic. He would like to apply for this grant for the South Boat Landing project which is budgeted in our 2024 plan. He applied for this same grant for the North Boat Landing.
Chairman Knight motions to approve this resolution. All in favor.

Approval of 2024 Eau Claire Emergency Fire Wardens

Director Pedersen touched briefly on this. It is up to the local forestry committee to approve the volunteers.
Chairman Knight motions to approve emergency fire wardens. All in favor.

Director's Report

Director Pedersen provided an update on the groomer position. 5 people applied with only one accepting an interview for tomorrow, January 9th. He also mentioned Mike Schultz passing away. He made a lot of positive changes to the parks when he worked for the department. Director Pedersen and Supervisor Gindt would like to brainstorm a memorial in his honor for all the work he's done for the department.

Future Parks & Forest Committee Meetings and Items for Discussion

Next Parks & Forest committee meeting date is set for February 12, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Committee on Parks & Forest Adjournment

The Committee on Parks & Forest adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Kimberly Watnemoe
Committee Clerk
Administrative Specialist III

FACT SHEET

TO FILE NO. 23-24/074

This ordinance will implement a policy for addressing fee schedule charges for other Eau Claire County departments, as well as other state and local governmental agencies. This code change will help support current practices that have been taking place, as well as helping to define how future requests be handled. There is no fiscal impact associated with this change.

Respectfully Submitted,

Josh Pedersen
Parks and Forest Director

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3 TO AMEND SECTION 16.30.040 B. OF THE CODE: FEES AND CHARGES; TO AMEND
4 SECTION 16.33.015 OF THE CODE: RENTAL RATES FOR NON PROFIT AND
5 GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

6
7 The County Board of Supervisors of the County of Eau Claire does ordain as follows:

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9 SECTION 1. That Subsection B. of Section 16.30.040 of the code be amended to read:

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11 B. Fees. Fees shall not be charged to Eau Claire County departments. At the discretion
12 of the Parks and Forests Director, fees may be charged to other state and local governmental
13 agencies, groups, and associations. The following fees shall be charged, unless otherwise
14 specified:

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16 SECTION 2. That Subsection A. of Section 16.33.015 of the code be amended to read:

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18 16.33.015 Rental rates for nonprofit and government organizations.

19 ~~_____ A. _____~~ Nonprofit ~~and government~~ organizations shall be allowed a 20% discount for all
20 regular rental rates for buildings, grounds and equipment. Eau Claire County departments shall
21 not be charged rental rates. At the discretion of the Parks and Forests Director, fees may be
22 charged to other state and local governmental agencies, groups, and associations.

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24 ENACTED:

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35 Parks and Forest Committee

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37 VOTE: _____ Aye _____ Nay

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48 Dated this _____ day of _____, 2023.
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Altoona High School
Home of the Railroaders

711 7th Street W Altoona, WI 54720 715-839-6031 Fax: 715-839-6028

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to submit a formal proposal on behalf of Altoona High School and Altoona Middle School for the use of Tower Ridge County Recreation Area in Eau Claire County for our annual Cross Country Events in the years 2024 and 2025. We appreciate the opportunity to present this proposal and sincerely hope for your favorable consideration.

Event Details:

- Schools: Altoona High School and Altoona Middle School
- Events: Cross Country Races
- Event Dates: Saturday, October 5, 2024 and Saturday, October 4, 2025
- Set-Up Date: Friday Prior to Event Date
- Event Timing: Set up to be completed by 8:00 AM on the event date; the event will be finished, and all equipment will be taken down by 1:00 PM on the event date.

Venue Use Details:

- Area: Tower Ridge County Recreation Area (excluding the chalet)
- Facilities: We kindly request that the chalet be locked during our event.
- Additional Facilities: We will rent portable toilets for participants and attendees, ensuring the comfort and convenience of everyone involved.
- Event Setup: Our team will set up the event area on the Friday prior to the event date. We will ensure that the setup is organized, safe, and respectful of the natural surroundings of the recreation area.

Event Activities:

- Cross Country Races: The primary purpose of the event is to conduct cross country races for Altoona High School and Altoona Middle School students. The trails and natural terrain at Tower Ridge County Recreation Area provide an ideal setting for these races, challenging our athletes and showcasing their talents.

Benefits to the Community:

1. Promotion of Physical Fitness: The event encourages physical activity among students, promoting a healthy lifestyle and fitness awareness.
2. Community Engagement: The event fosters community spirit by bringing together students, parents, teachers, and local residents in support of our schools and student athletes.
3. Environmental Respect: We are committed to ensuring that our event respects the natural environment. We will implement eco-friendly practices, including waste disposal and clean-up efforts

cont.



Logistical Support:

1. Emergency Medical Services: Medical personnel and first aid stations will be on-site to address any medical emergencies promptly.
2. Insurance: We will provide proof of liability insurance covering the event and its participants.

Conclusion:

We are enthusiastic about the opportunity to utilize Tower Ridge County Recreation Area for our Altoona High School and Altoona Middle School Cross Country Events in 2024 and 2025. We assure you that we will be diligent in our efforts to preserve the integrity of the recreation area and will promptly address any concerns that may arise.

We kindly request an opportunity to discuss this proposal further at your earliest convenience. Please feel free to contact me at 715-838-7081 or eupward@altoona.k12.wi.us to arrange a meeting. We sincerely thank you for considering our proposal and for your continued support of educational and athletic initiatives within our community.

Sincerely,

Elissa S. Upward



PURINA
PRO PLAN

CHIPPEWA VALLEY
CANNON ROCK • SANDY CREEK

FACT SHEET

TO FILE NO. 23-24/073

This resolution would allow the County to apply for a cost sharing grant to help fund a modification to the Lake Altoona and Eau Claire River dams. The modification to these dams would allow for these structures to be converted to fully automated structures, with additional capability to be remotely operated. Currently, all gate adjustments need to be done onsite and manually.

This project was included in the 2024 capital budget plan, with a total project budget of \$600,000. If this grant application were successful, all eligible costs would qualify for a 50/50 cost share. A successful grant application would bring back \$300,000 in matching funds for this project. All project work would begin after the grant award was announced.

If these dams are converted to become automated, the county would have considerable cost savings on operations in future years. Policies for on-call pay for operation of the dams and mileage would be reviewed before automation is completed. These costs currently average approximately \$12,000 annually and would be greatly reduced with automation. While there would still be a need to monitor the system, the frequency of site visits to the structures would become minimal.

Respectfully Submitted,

Josh Pedersen
Parks and Forest Director

4 AUTHORIZING THE PARKS AND FOREST DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
5 WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES MUNICIPAL DAM GRANT
6 PROGRAM FOR THE LAKE ALTOONA DAM AND EAU CLAIRE RIVER DAM

7 WHEREAS, Eau Claire County owns the Lake Altoona Dam and Eau Claire River Dam
8 and requests financial assistance under Wis. Stats. §§ 31.385 and 227.11, and Wis. Adm. Code §
9 NR 335, for the purpose of Lake Altoona Dam and Eau Claire River Dam modification; and

10 WHEREAS, the state share for such a project may not exceed 50% of the first
11 \$1,000,000.00 of total eligible project costs, nor 25% of the next \$2,000,000.00 of total eligible
12 project costs; and

13 WHEREAS, the funding for this project is in the 2024 budget for the parks and forest
14 department capital projects account.

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Eau Claire County hereby authorizes the
16 parks & forest director to

- 17 • submit an application to the DNR for financial aid under Wis. Adm. Code § NR 335;
- 18 • sign grant agreement documents;
- 19 • take all necessary action to complete the project associated with any grant agreement; and
- 20 • submit reimbursement claims along with necessary supporting documentation.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Eau Claire County agrees to pay a share of the
22 eligible costs which is equal to the total project cost minus the state share.

23 ADOPTED:

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29 Committee on Parks & Forest

30 VOTE: _____ AYE _____ NAY

31 Dated this _____ day of _____, 2024.

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Chippewa Valley Trailriders

January 29, 2024

Josh Pedersen, Director, Parks & Forest
227 1st Street West
Altoona, WI 54720

Re: Chippewa Valley Trailriders Annual Report - 2023

Dear Josh,

The Chippewa Valley Trailriders (CVT) was organized in 1989 under a 501©7 Social Club status to unite a group of horseback riders interested in pursuing safe horseback riding options in Chippewa and Eau Claire County.

Following is an accounting of the volunteer hours the members of the Chippewa Valley Trailriders have expended in 2023 to develop, maintain and improve the horse trail systems in Eau Claire County.

Tower Ridge Recreation Area Horse Trails **147 hours**

Volunteer work included removing downed trees and branches from storms and general trail maintenance throughout the year. In addition to the manual labor perform club members also used their own personal chainsaws and ATVs (including gas) and various hand tools to clear trails.

The Tower Ridge Horse Trails are very popular and are used by many horseback riders.

Backwater Horse Trails – **129 hours**

Volunteer work included hand-brushing and clearing from winter and summer storms. Most of this work was performed on foot using chainsaws and hand tools for clearing. Work was also performed using an ATV for re-routing, marking and mapping trails on this property. Members also continue to exploring possible trail expansion options.

Hamilton Falls Horse Trails – **43 hours**

Volunteers worked to clear and maintain the trails. Tools used included chainsaws and various hand tools.

The total volunteer hours expended by CVT to maintain horseback riding trails in Eau Claire County totaled 319 hours. The Wisconsin Horse Council established a value for volunteer work at \$17/hour. Using this formula CVT has donated volunteer labor totaling **\$5,423** in 2023 to maintain horseback trails in Eau Claire County.

2024 Plans include continuing to keep the Eau Claire County established horse trails maintained. In addition, club members will work with you directly to make improvements to the Backwater trails and parking area. The club has pledged \$2,000 toward a permanent toilet facility at Backwater Trailhead. The Hamilton Falls horse trails also need some signing which will be discussed at an upcoming meeting with you this spring.

The Chippewa Valley Trailriders sincerely thank you and Eau Claire County for the opportunity to develop and maintain horseback riding trails in Eau Claire County. We remain dedicated to continuing a supportive relationship with the Parks & Forest Department.

Respectfully,

Jeanne Fox

Jeanne Fox

Public Liaison

on behalf of Chippewa Valley Trailriders