

MINUTES

Eau Claire County

• Committee on Parks & Forest •

Monday, May 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Agricultural and Resource Center

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

Members Present: Joe Knight, Tami Schraufnagel, Michele Skinner, Christy Tomczak, Cory Sisk

Others Present: Josh Pedersen – Director, Jody Gindt – Supervisor, Kimberly Watnemoe – Administrative Specialist III (Committee Clerk), Erika Gullerud – Finance Analyst, Kyle Johnson – DNR County Forest Liaison, Brian Chapit – Lights in the Valley

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

Chair Pro Tempore Tami Schraufnagel called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m and confirmed public posting of the meeting.

Election of Committee Officers

1. Parks and Forest Committee Chair – Supervisor Skinner nominated Joe Knight for Parks and Forest Committee Chair. Knight accepted. All in favor.
2. Parks and Forest Committee Vice Chair – Chairman Knight nominated Tami Schraufnagel for Parks and Forest Committee Vice Chair. Schraufnagel accepted. All in favor.
3. Appointment of Clerk – Kimberly Watnemoe will remain Clerk.

Review of March 11, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes

Supervisor Schraufnagel motioned to approve the minutes from March 11, 2024, with the correction regarding the Ski Striders information. All in favor.

Discussion of new Parks and Forest Committee Meeting Date/Time

Chairman Knight opened this item for discussion across the Committee and staff. A consensus was reached to move the meeting to 4:00pm on the 2nd Monday of the month. Supervisor Schraufnagel motioned to approve meeting at 4:00pm on the 2nd Monday of the month.

Public Comment

No members of the public wished to make comment.

Lights in the Valley Agreement 2024

Director Pedersen introduced this topic and explained what it was to the new committee members. Lights in the Valley would be a public service, providing a light show at the Expo Center grounds. This event wouldn't interfere with the curlers or the Lowes Creek east park entrance. Brian from Lights in the Valley also provided background information and why they have interest in utilizing the Expo Center for their light show. This would be a for-profit event with an online timed registration required to enter. This not only alleviates the need for a cash box, but it helps traffic flow so there are no backups. The draft contract was provided to committee members which included the rental fee the Parks and Forest Department would charge Lights in the Valley, as well as other stipulations like insurance and utilities. Supervisor Sisk motioned to approve the draft contract and allow the event to move forward. All in favor.

Approve 2024 Spring Timber Sales

DNR Liaison Johnson spoke about the 2024 Timber Sales. Normally, the committee would've seen the individual sales before they went to bid in April. However, due to not having a meeting we are presenting the sales and the winning bids together. Supervisor Gindt and Director Pedersen provided an overview/background on the forestry side of the department to the new committee members and fielded any questions they had. Johnson then reviewed the winning bids and discussed the two sales that did not sell. One sale will likely be resold at another bid opening and the other will potentially be added to another sale in the area to make it more desirable to loggers. Supervisor Skinner motioned to approve 2024 Spring Timber Sales as stated. All in favor.

Approve 2024 Spring Timber Extensions

Supervisor Gindt spoke about the 2024 Spring Timber Extensions. These extensions are required if a logger has not finished a logging job during the contracted two-year agreement. Loggers have the option to extend their contract with an increase in stumpage added to the overall bid price. Supervisor Gindt also provided some further background on the start to finish of the timber sale process. Supervisor Sisk motioned to approve 2024 Spring Timber Extensions. All in favor.

Carryforward Requests

Director Pedersen went through the Parks and Forest carryforward requests from 2023 to 2024 budget. The focus was directed to the Lake Eau Claire Clubhouse project. This project is more than previously budgeted due to a multitude of factors, including low engineer estimate from 2021, two phase project, and low interest in the bid which drove up the cost. Phase one of the project was demo, which is complete. Director Pedersen stressed that while the project will be 100,000 over projected, the department was not asking for more money. The additional amount needed was moved from other projects. Supervisor Schraufnagel motioned to adopt carryforward requests as stated. All in favor.

Closed Session

Committee went into closed session to discuss land sale in Seymour.

Director's Report

Director Pedersen provided a brief update on ongoing parks projects as well as an update on seasonal staff hiring.

Future Parks & Forest Committee Meetings and Items for Discussion

Next Parks & Forest committee meeting date is set for June 10, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Committee on Parks & Forest Adjournment

The Committee on Parks & Forest adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Kimberly Watnemoe
Committee Clerk
Administrative Specialist III