

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 8, 2021

Held virtually through Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Fred Strand, Chairperson; Jeffrey Silbert, Larry Fickbohm, Steve Sandstrom, David Zepczyk

Staff in Attendance: Jason Bodine, Administrator; Lindley Mattson, Office Manager; Steve Probst, Assistant Administrator, Charly Ray; County Board Member

1. Call to Order of Forestry and Parks Committee Meeting.

This meeting was called to order at 6:01pm.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Approval of the February 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Sandstrom) to approve the minutes as presented. All: Yes. Carried.*

4. Monthly Reports. Discussion of general activities, events, issues and accomplishments. Possible action on report(s) only.

a. Forestry (all updates):

- a) 2021 Budget. Revenues for February are average. Slightly above the three year average. First quarter is looking good. No unexpected expenses yet. We are beginning to see some repair expenses pop up with equipment and yurts.
- b) Carbon Project. Moving forward quickly. We are in negotiations with Bluesource. Corp Counsel has reviewed it, we are now waiting for comments from the DNR. Expecting to be under contract with Bluesource in the next 2-3 weeks. Note: we are not able to put non-county forest land into the project (unless we enroll them in a certification program i.e. SFI or FSC).
- c) Wildlife Monitoring Project. Tags for the Sharp-Tailed Grouse have been ordered. NRRI is in the process of developing the process for capturing and banding. The breeding bird survey is also in the works. Monitoring should begin this spring hopefully!
- d) Stewardship Land Acquisition Project. TPL is still exploring funding sources. Red Cliff has officially submitted the GLRI application for their next acquisition project. We will wait until we hear back from Red Cliff and TPL before developing the next steps. There are two parcels of property near our Lost Creek Falls property that are going to be up for sale. They are high priority for our department.
- e) Access Permits. Two more access permits will be renewed this month. Town of Bayview and Bell. No changes to the previously approved permits.
- f) Trespass in the Town of Bayview. While foresters were establishing a timber sale near Friendly Valley Road a potential encroachment was discovered. The surveyor confirmed the encroachment. Bodine presented a Plat of Survey highlighting the issue. A letter was sent to the landowner. As of the time of the meeting, the office has not heard back from them.
- g) Timber Professionals Cooperative Survey. There is discussion within the cooperative to try and revive/reopen the Verso mill as well as the Park Falls mill. Bodine presented the letter from WCFA as well as the survey to the committee. Committee would like Bodine to investigate this further and bring it back to the committee next month.

- b. Parks (update). Seasonal balances are due the end of the month. Still a few sites at Delta available.
- c. Trails and Recreation:
There is an American Rescue Plan (Federal Stimulus) that is currently under discussion in Washington. This stimulus package has the potential to bring \$3 million to Bayfield County. Mark asked that the Department develops a list of projects in the \$250k-\$300k range that would bring more jobs and encourage recreation in the county.
 - a) Motorized Trail Updates: Trails closed as of midnight 3/8/2021. There has been a lobby to increase weight limits on the trails from 2,000 pounds to 3,000 pounds. Generally increased weight means increased maintenance. As of yet, there has not been a proposal to increase maintenance dollars.
 - b) Non-Motorized Trail Updates: The contractors will finish up the work at Siskiwit this spring.
 - c) Yurt Updates: Bodine presented occupancy rates. Some repairs have been popping up at the yurts. Door locks, handles, etc.
 - d) Events. No new events.
- d. Delta Landfill Update: More Q & A. We are hopeful we are now at the point that all information has been provided. We are hoping to have the Highway Dept do the majority of the repair.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) Receive and place on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

5. Bayfield County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan Revision.

- a. Review of Public Comment:
 - i. Received comments from the DNR, all of their comments have been addressed in the final drafts. Some items to highlight:
 - i. The DNR recommended removing the language on the public participation process in Chapter 100 and moving it to a dedicated new chapter. As a result, Chapter 5000 was created and now contains the public participation process. It also contains copies of all public comments received to date.
 - ii. The DNR also requested that a new table be created in Chapter 2000 (2000.3). This table summarizes the projected sustainable harvest goals over the next 15 year period.
 - ii. To address some of the more recent public comments, a few modifications were made:
 - i. Chapter 800, in the aspen section, additional language was inserted to further emphasize a goal of increasing species diversity within stands.
 - ii. Also, one of the long-term management goals for aspen is to maintain to slightly decrease acreage. The slightly decrease part was re-emphasized in numerous sections.
 - iii. Chapter 800, in the landscape management section (840), the following paragraph was added on habitat connectivity (to essentially set the stage for future developments):
 - 1. The development of landscape level management strategies that recognize the importance of maintaining connections between habitats will also be considered. This can include, but is not limited to, short and long-term management strategies that focus on: mapping existing riparian buffers (RMZs), and other areas that have already been removed from future timber harvest considerations (i.e. some SMAs), to analyze for opportunities to develop, improve and/or maintain connections;

emphasizing the placement of retention areas to enhance connectivity; and establishing timber sale design protocols that include considerations for the development of habitat corridors, at both the stand and landscape level. Refer to the Workplan for more information on habitat connectivity strategies.

- iv. Chapter 700 (access management), also inserted a statement to underscore the fact that existing infrastructure can be closed and/or obliterated if determined to be a priority. This is already stated in the document, but it was included in a few additional locations to further emphasize that fact.
- v. All tables have been numbered sequentially and other minor housekeeping edits have been completed.

b. Approval of Final Draft (all chapters): Link was sent to the committee for viewing all final drafts of the plan.

c. Approval to submit the Final Draft to the Full County Board.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Zepczyk) Formally approve the resolution written by Jason and recommend its adoption of acceptance at the County Board Level. All: Yes. Carried.*

6. Joseph LeBouton, DNR – Congratulations on finishing up that Comp Plan.

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, April 12, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM

Submitted by,
Lindley Mattson