

**Forestry & Recreation Committee**  
**May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor County Board Room**

**Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:08 p.m. by Scott Mildbrand.

**Members Present:** Scott Mildbrand, Myron Brooks, Gary Beadles, Rollie Thums, Jim Gebauer.

**Members Absent:** None.

**Other Attendees:** Jake Walcisak, Jordan Lutz, Jim Metz, Larry Brandl, Brian Wilson Star News, Doug Brown WI DNR, Jill Nemecek WI DNR, Adam Schneider Ayres Engineering (Zoom), Rebekah Luedtke Wisconsin County Forest Association (Zoom).

Chairman Mildbrand apologized to the committee and other attendees for being late. The Finance-Personnel meeting went over schedule.

**Approve Agenda:** Gebauer moved to approve the agenda of 16 items; Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried. Mildbrand announced he would be jumping around the agenda to be sure the committee covered everything that was important. Mildbrand also announced a County Board initiative to limit meetings to between an hour and an hour and 15 minutes.

**Approve Minutes:** Brooks moved to approve the minutes of the April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Introduction of New Members:** Each of the new members introduced themselves.

**Approve Bills:** Walcisak presented the monthly bill spreadsheet. Mildbrand requested the bills to be provided in advance of meetings in the future. Brooks moved to approve the bill spreadsheet as presented; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Timber Sales Updates:**

#683: Finished harvesting late winter and just started hauling again, from wood that was decked through spring break up.

#704: Wood has been decked up through spring break up and just beginning to haul first loads.

Per committee chair request, Lutz explained the following informative handouts: information pertaining to average historical bidding acreage, allowable cut, current sales and contractors on the books, and a location map and sheet with proposed fall timber sale locations.

**Approve Timber Sales for Advertising:** The following sales were proposed for advertisement.

- Tract #1-22: 44 acres, northern hardwood, with summer opportunity. Minimum bid value: \$19,083.00
- Tract #2-22: 36 acres, with summer opportunity. Minimum bid value: \$16,368.00
- Tract #3-22: 99 acres, northern hardwood, summer ground opportunity. Minimum bid value: \$82,543.50
- Tract #4-22: 87 acres, aspen, Minimum bid value: \$38,363.00

Four sales on 266 acres, total minimum bid: \$156,357.50. Motion made by Gebauer to approve sales for advertising, as presented. Second by Beadles. Motion carried

**Taylor County Dams Update:** Mildbrand asked Finance Director Larry Brandl to provide an update regarding the grants and financial status for the three current county dam projects. Brandl differed the question to Walcisak. Walcisak provided two handouts showing the cost incurred to date, cost to finish, reimbursable costs and pending grant awards for each project. In total these projects are estimated at \$729,800. Cost to complete all three projects \$627,950. Dam grant award and pending awards \$314,000. All projects reimbursable to date \$51,000. County Dam account balance \$275,200. This results in a \$12,000 surplus, pending the award of the Camp 8 and Chelsea Lake grant applications. The County has adequate funds budgeted to complete all three projects as planned. The County will likely be notified by DNR regarding grant award or denial in late May to early June. Mildbrand expressed his concern with rising material and labor cost in all industries. Schneider explained increased costs have been incorporated into these projects and their respective grant applications. Mildbrand would like to discuss the possibility of dredging Camp 8 Flowage and placing fish cribs while it is drawn down to create a better trout fishery.

**Miller Dam Sluice Gate Contract Extension Request – Nordic Group:** Walcisak and Schneider provided a project background and timeline for the committee. Replacement of the Miller Dam sluice gate was first discussed at the Forestry Committee in 2019 and brought to County Board in 2020. The current project deadline is June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Nordic Group is requesting a 60-day extension due to a gate manufacturing delay and seasonally high-water levels. Thums moved to approve Nordic Group's 60-day extension request; Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried.

**Disaster Damage Aid Grant – Flooding Damage to County Forest Roads:**

Lutz presented a grant opportunity, Disaster Damage Aid Grant (DDA), to pursue potential reimbursement of damage that occurred on county forest roads. A heavy rain event, on April 12-13, in combination with frozen ground conditions caused flooding and road washouts, with an estimated damage amount of \$11,000. There are 4 proposed eligible sites located on Camp 8 road (2), Trout Avenue (1), and East Lemke Creek (1). A DDA petition was presented by Lutz showing estimated costs and location map. Brooks moved to approve pursuing the DDA grant as proposed. Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Review and Approve Reforestation Site Preparation Bids:** No bids were received for the site preparation of an 11-acre reforestation project. This project was bid out with Marathon and Oneida Counties to help promote greater interest in potential contractors. Site preparation work will now be conducted internally with department staff and equipment as well as with DNR equipment and operators. Walcisak explained how dozer site prep is less desirable than disc trenching. Mildbrand asked what the cost would be for this project. Walcisak stated the most recent site preparation conducted with DNR was a 43-acre project for less than \$1,700. DNR annual time standards and DNR dozer training hours were applied to reduce the cost of this previous project. Walcisak informed the committee the total cost of reforestation is approximately \$500/acre which includes site preparations, seedlings and planting. No action required.

**Introduction to the County Forest Program:** Walcisak invited DNR County Forest Specialist Doug Brown and DNR Forestry Team Leader Jill Nemec to provide a presentation to the committee regarding the County Forest program. This included Wisconsin state statute 28.11 County Forests. Key points of the law: permanent program, timber production, multiple use for maximum public benefits, compensation to Counties (DNR's responsibility to counties), revenues to towns (DNR and County Forest responsibility). Key DNR roles: work collaboratively with County in managing the resources, manage forest certification, approval of every timber sale, annual work plans, comprehensive land use plan (15-year plan). DNR provides direct financial assistance through grants and loans. DNR also provides technical assistance at no cost, known as time standards. Taylor County receives approximately 770 hours per year. This is accomplished primarily through the DNR County Forest Liaison position. DNR also provides free access to specialists: forest health, wildlife biologists, ecologists, IT/GIS specialists, Silviculturists, forest products specialists, hydrologists, forest economists, etc. Brown and Nemec responded to several questions by the committee. Walcisak thanked Brown and Nemec for their presentation.

**DNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Jeff Sorenson provided a written report. I apologize for not being able to attend today's meeting, but I have my post-surgical follow-up appointment for my ACL reconstruction surgery at 2 pm today here in Wausau. With my surgery, I have not been able to do much in the field but had been mentoring Quinton Tlusty almost every morning up until my surgery on May 2nd. I want to again thank the Taylor County Forest committee for being forward thinking and giving back to the community in this fashion. The forest industry and all its partners need smart, motivated young people to join our ranks and this mentoring program is a great way to recruit quality individuals into the natural resources field. As far as monthly time standard, the DNR has approximately 50 hours remaining with a month or so left to fulfill our commitment. Jonathan Knusta has been, and will be, working on setting up a fall timber sale with Jordan Lutz and is also working on a TSI project so meeting time standards should be fairly easy. It is with much bittersweet emotions, that I have to inform you that I have accepted a lateral transfer to the Wausau office and will now be the Marathon County Forest liaison and private lands forester. I live in Wausau so the change will be good for me in terms of commuting. I can't begin to tell you how fulfilling and great it has been working with Jake and Jordan here in Taylor County. Both of these men are hardworking, knowledgeable and motivated foresters. Our partnership is based on teamwork, and I can't thank them both enough for all the help they have given me over the last 2 ½ years to fulfill our annual work goals.

DNR Forestry Team Leader Jill Nemec provided the following update regarding the County Forest Liaison vacancy and time standards. DNR is currently taking lateral transfers, with a new forester possibly in place as early as June or July. If an existing DNR employee doesn't transfer into the position it will be filled with the next forester hiring class sometime this fall. In the interim, to help with any Taylor County Forest needs, myself and the Wausau area team will be coming over to assist whenever necessary.

**Additional Items:** None.

**Accomplishment Updates:** Walcisak provided following updates.

- Acreage Share Payments increased from \$0.30 to \$0.63 per acre. Payments will be distributed to towns (Rib Lake and Westboro) June.

- 1<sup>st</sup> annual road grading will occur next week.
- Completed 2020 Sustainable Forestry Grant. Replant 43 acres. Forest health issue. Grant for \$19,600. Expenses \$22,300. Forest regeneration account will cover the balance.
- Spring 2022 Grant Applications Total \$587,000. Representing \$946,000+ in projects.
- Pine Line Marathon was April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Pine Line Commission spring meeting was April 26th.
- Walcisak has been elected as the Vice President of the Wisconsin County Forest Association.
- ATV trails opened this morning at 8:00 am. County Forest and USFS trails.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> annual CDAC meeting was May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Council approved the preliminary recommendations from the first meeting as final.
  - Reduce harvest quota from 3,100 bonus antlerless in 2021 to 2,750 in 2022.
    - 2021 public 300. 2022 public 250. Reduction of 17%.
    - 2021 private 2,800. 2022 private 2,500. Reduction of 11%.
  - Harvest authorizations stayed the same as 2021 at 11,200.
- Statewide Deer Advisory Committee meeting was May 12<sup>th</sup>. Walcisak is a member and attended virtually. This allowed Walcisak to keep the office open as Lutz and Gebert were both scheduled off. It also saved the County approximately \$170 in mileage and unproductive drive time.
- WCFA Board of Directors meeting will be June 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Summer Tour June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> in Ladysmith, Rusk County.
  - Brooks is a director on the board. Walcisak is the Vice President and Budget Committee chairman.
- Walcisak invited Wisconsin County Forest Association (WCFA) Executive Director Rebekah Luedtke to provide a presentation on WCFA at the June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 Forestry Committee meeting.

**Next Committee Meeting:** The next meeting of the Forestry & Recreation Committee will be Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, at 10:00 am in the County Board Room, third floor.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Beadles moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Gebauer. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

**Secretary:** Jake Walcisak and Jordan Lutz, Taylor County Forestry Dept.

**Forestry & Recreation Committee**  
**April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor County Board Room**

**Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chuck Zenner.

**Members Present:** Chuck Zenner, Myron Brooks, Gary Beadles, Mike Bub.

**Members Absent:** Gene Knoll, excused

**Other Attendees:** Jake Walcisak, Jordan Lutz, Karyn Gebert, Jim Metz, Larry Brandl, Brian Wilson Star News, Jeff Sorenson WI DNR, Jill Nemec WI DNR.

**Approve Minutes:** Brooks moved to approve the minutes of the March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Agenda:** Bub moved to approve the agenda of 13 items with striking item number 10 (as recommended by Walcisak); Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried.

**Approve Bills:** Walcisak presented the monthly bill spreadsheet. Brooks moved to approve the bill spreadsheet as presented; Seconded by Bub. Motion carried.

**Timber Sales Updates:** Lutz gave updates on timber sales. There are two (2) active timber sales:

- **#683 Northwest Hardwoods:** Final hauling remains. Waiting on road restrictions to lift.
- **#704 Czarnecki Direct:** This is a seven (7) acre direct, lump sum sale. Finished cutting and skidding before road restrictions went on. Final hauling remains. Waiting on road restrictions to lift.
- Lutz presented calendar year 2021 annual accomplishment reports from DNR regarding the County Forest program statewide. Lutz highlighted Taylor County and how we compare to other County Forest programs.

**Timber Sale Close Out #665 and #691:**

- **Sale #665 Steve Dassow:** Close out sale pending final payment. Total revenue of \$11,590.01, with a 4% volume underrun and 7% value underrun. Bub moved to approve the close out of sale #665; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried
- **Sale #691 Wilson:** Close out pending final payment with total revenue of \$32,490.98, with a 3% volume overrun and 11% value overrun. Brooks moved to approve the close out of sale #691 pending final payment; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried

**Resolution for participation in the Wisconsin DNR Municipal Dam Grant Program:**

Wisconsin State Statute has been updated since the last application period in 2020. A new resolution authorizing participation in the department of natural resources municipal dam grant program is required. Walcisak provided the updated resolution to the Committee. Bub moved to approve the new resolution as presented; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried. This resolution will be presented to County Board on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**Review and Approve Gravel Bids:** Walcisak presented the gravel bid results of the 2022 County Forest Gravel Project. There were four (4) qualified bids. Lowest bid was Brunner with a total of \$41,335.50, Wicso Materials at \$43,227.00, Haas Sons Inc. at \$44,110.50, Randy Thums Trucking at \$45,097.50. Haas Sons Inc. submitted a second bid with 1.25" crushed gravel as an alternative for 2" crushed gravel with a bid total of \$40,750.50. Brooks moved to award the contract to Brunner for \$41,335.50; seconded by Bub. Motion carried.

**Accomplishments Updates:**

- DNR Sustainable Forestry Grant award. Improve forest roads to allow for summer logging access. \$14,860.
- County Forest Administration Grant Award. \$39,250.
- DNR and Federal Recreation Grant Applications. \$532,900.
  - Snowmobile Maintenance
  - ATV Maintenance
  - Winter ATV Maintenance
  - ATV Route Maintenance
  - New Snowmobile Miles
  - New Winter ATV Miles
  - Camp 8 ATV Trail Rehab
  - Rib Lake Area Ski and Snowshoe Trails Maintenance
  - Chelsea Lake Dam
  - Camp 8 Dam
  - Spring 2022 applications total \$587,000. Representing \$946,000 in projects.
- Pirus Range opened Wednesday March 30<sup>th</sup>. We are seeing a high amount of use already.
- Schlosser potential land acquisition. Walcisak mailed an offer to purchase for the appraised value of \$156,000. Walcisak's letter requested a response by March 31<sup>st</sup>. No response was received. Walcisak also left a voicemail with the seller but did not receive a response. Walcisak will pursue alternative land acquisition opportunities.
- First annual CDAC meeting was held Wednesday March 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Walcisak and Brooks are both representatives on this committee.
  - County Forest update: Forest Regeneration Metric data collection continues to show deer browse damage is widespread and chronic in Taylor County. The County Forestry Department operates 5 Snapshot WI cameras. In the last 12 months these cameras have shown nearly a doubling in images captured over previous years. One camera documented 23 unique bucks in November 2021. Field observations of deer by Lutz, Walcisak and Sorenson have increased considerably in the past 12 months. DNR Wildlife Biologist Emma Doden offered County Forestry staff to participate in Operation Deer Watch this fall.
  - Preliminary CDAC recommendation to reduce harvest quota from 3,100 bonus antlerless in 2021 to 2,750 in 2022.
    - 2021 public 300. 2022 public 250. Reduction of 17%.
    - 2021 private 2,800. 2022 private 2,500. Reduction of 11%.
  - Public comments will be received April 9<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> annual CDAC meeting will be Tuesday May 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 7:00 pm MASH theater. This will be a hybrid meeting, offering both in-person and virtual attendance.

- Pine Line Marathon April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**DNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Jeff Sorenson reported they are at approximately 90% of county forest time standards for the DNR fiscal year. Jeff will be working with the County Forestry Department's student intern to accomplish time standards as Jeff is restricted to the office due to an injury. Fire season is off to a slow start with limited staff needs to date. Jill Nemec was introduced as the new DNR Forestry Team Leader for Taylor, Lincoln, and Marathon Counties. Jill introduced herself and provided the Committee with her background and work duties as the Team Leader.

**Additional Items:** None.

**Next Committee Meeting:** The next meeting of the Forestry & Recreation Committee will be Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 10:00 am in the County Board Room, third floor.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Beadles moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 am.

**Secretary:** Karyn Gebert, Taylor County Forestry Dept.

**Forestry & Recreation Committee**  
**March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor County Board Room**

**Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Myron Brooks.

**Members Present:** Myron Brooks, Gary Beadles, Mike Bub, Gene Knoll-Zoom.

**Members Absent:** Charles Zenner – excused.

**Other Attendees:** Jake Walcisak, Jordan Lutz, Karyn Gebert, Jim Metz, Larry Brandl, Emily Gajmerac Star News, Jonathon Knusta WI DNR, Les Lewis, Kyle Noonan.

**Approve Minutes:** Bub moved to approve the minutes of the February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Agenda:** Bub moved to approve the agenda of 14 items; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Bills:** Walcisak presented the monthly bill spreadsheet. Bub moved to approve the bill spreadsheet as presented; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Timber Sales Updates:** Lutz gave updates on timber sales. There are five (5) active timber sales:

- **#665 Steve Dassow:** No change with this sale since last month. Final billing pending receiving final mill slips.
- **#675 Steve Dassow:** Contractor plans on shutting down cutting and skidding today. Cut approximately 14 acres.
- **#683 Northwest Hardwoods:** No change with this sale since last month. Still waiting on final mill slips to generate final stumpage invoice
- **#691 Wilson:** This contractor started 2 weeks ago to finish what they started last summer. They will finish cutting and skidding on Monday.
- **#704 Czarnezki Direct:** This is a seven (7) acre direct, lump sum sale. Sale is a road improvements project and recently acquired Zettler easement. In addition to road project there was a 6-acre hardwood stand that was added to sale.

**Timber Sale Close Out #674 and #661:**

- **Sale #674 Wiitala-Vozka:** Total revenue was \$141,423.77, with a 28% volume overrun and 31% value overrun. They bought this sale two years ago, on high stumpage. Bub moved to approve the close out of sale #674 pending final road work and re-installing the gate; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.
- **Sale #661 Steve Dassow:** This sale closed out last week with a total revenue of \$48,245.61, with a 20% volume overrun and 18% value overrun. This sale was the oldest sale in our books. Bub moved to approve the close out of sale #661 pending final payment; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Gravel Bid Advertisement:** Walcisak presented to the Committee information regarding the 2022 County Forest gravel projects. These projects include the Camp 8 ATV trail rehab, Emil Drive turn-around, and Zuther Mill Grade improvements. All material must meet

Wisconsin DOT Specifications; 2" dense graded base-2,400 yards and 3" clean fractured stone-450 yards. This material is to be delivered onto roads and ATV trails owned by the Taylor County Forest in the town of Rib Lake. Material is to be delivered between the date of award and November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, depending on weather conditions. Contractor must provide minimum of four (4) trucks. Bids are due by 3:30 pm on Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and bids will be opened at 3:30 pm on Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A certificate of insurance and a 10% performance bond will be required within 30 days of a successful award. Bub moved to approve the gravel bid advertisement as presented; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Site Preparation Bid Advertisement:** Lutz presented to the Committee information regarding site preparation for tree planting in 2023. Contractor agrees to perform the following spray and disc trench 11 acres on the Taylor County Forest in Sections 8 and 4 of T33N-R2E. The goal is to prepare the site for reforestation. Bub moved to approve the site preparation bid advertisement as presented; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**LTE – Summer Intern (Occasional Employee):** Walcisak provided information regarding an opportunity to invest in a local high school senior who is interested in pursuing a career in natural resources. The recent shift in department authorizations, 2.5 to 2.0 employees, has placed additional workload on permanent staff. This position will accomplish a portion of the departments basic skills/core workload and will allow permanent staff more time to focus on complex projects and tasks. This intern may also assist occasionally with parks maintenance. Surrounding county forestry departments pay \$12.00 to \$14.00/hour for 1<sup>st</sup> year LTE's. Golden Sands RC&D has asked Taylor County Forestry Department to partner with them to apply for a Federal LSRI grant. If successful, this individual would be employed and paid by Golden Sands while contracted to work for Taylor County. The grant application is due April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and will be announced either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week in June. Forestry department had excess revenue in 2021 in the Equipment Use Revenue Account and can utilize those carry-over funds to fund this position if the grant application is not successful. Bub moved to approve the LTE – summer intern position and provide as a recommendation to Personnel Committee; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Administrative Support Position Description Update:** Walcisak has concerns with the changes approved by Zoning Committee on February 17th. Most notably the striking of (shared full time) and striking the word "Forestry" from the Department served. Walcisak is not concerned about striking of the word Forestry from immediate supervisor or combining common shared duties. Walcisak stated he believes any changes to a job description that serves two (2) distinct departments should be reviewed by both departments impacted, even if supervision is held within only one of those departments. Walcisak has noticed changes in the function of this position since the start date in April 2021. Walcisak read the minutes from several Zoning, Forestry and Personnel meetings for reference. Several key items documented in the minutes of these meetings included: only the supervisor and department authorizations would change, operations would stay the same, time would be tracked and billed to Forestry, and there was to be a 6-month trial and then reviewed. Tracking of hours and the 6-month trial and reviewed have not occurred yet although Walcisak would like to see that happen. Zoning asked to focus Karyn's work with them for the first two (2) or three (3) months for proper training. This short-term focus has not changed and thus far has been working for the Forestry

Department. Walcisak's tracking of this position's time spent on forestry prior to the change came to 7.5 hours per week (Christina Schuld). Walcisak's tracking now shows utilization of this position 1.5 hours per week (Karyn Gebert). Walcisak handed out the draft changes to the position as approved by Zoning Committee. Walcisak also highlighted and struck job duties that are currently being conducted by Lutz and Walcisak due to the decrease in hours from the administrative support position. Walcisak is concerned the struck language by Zoning Committee, lack of tracking, lack of trial basis and review are measures intended to remove this position from the Forestry Department in the future. Lewis and Noonan were asked to shorten up the job description and it is not intentional for it to look like administrative support position was being taken away. No action taken.

#### **Accomplishments Updates:**

- Road restrictions for Taylor County effective Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at Noon.
- Snowmobile Trails Update: March 7<sup>th</sup> closed all trails south of Trail 64, also closed portion of G trail between 64 trail and Run-Down Bar. Conditions are icy and snow base is limited. Weather forecast looks very poor starting this Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup>. Trails will likely be closed early this coming week.
- Schlosser land appraisal conducted by Chippewa Land Specialists and paid for by the Ice Age Trail Alliance came back at \$156,000. Taylor County's first offer was \$143,000. Walcisak will contact the landowner, present the appraisal and make another offer to purchase, contingent upon full county board approval.
- Received letters of confirmation from WI DNR for approvable dam plans of both Chelsea and Camp 8 Dams. This confirms we have met the ranking requirements for the additional 20 points on each application.
- February 28<sup>th</sup> was the WCFA Legislative/Certification meeting in Merrill at the Lincoln County Service Center. Walcisak attended in person.
- March 8<sup>th</sup> was WCFA BOD meeting which Myron Brooks attend in person and Jake Walcisak attend via Zoom. Strategic WCFA Strategic Direction Plan draft was reviewed and approved. Report from DNR showed the county forest program statewide closed out 664 timber sales at 45,500 acres for \$45 million in stumpage in 2021. This was a 32% increase from 2020. 2022 Summer Tour is in Rusk County June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The tour will be based in Ladysmith. Tours will include Christie Mountain, Dairyland Dam, wood pellet mill, drone presentation, etc.

**DNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Jeff Sorenson and Jonathan Knusta have completed establishment of their spring County timber sale. Jonathan is working on general forest recon. Once the snow melts, they will start working on fall County Forest sale. Jonathan is anticipating fire season to start in early April. Approximately 80% of the annual County Forest time standards are complete with a goal of 90% completion by the end of the month.

**Additional Items:** None.

**Next Committee Meeting:** The next meeting of the Forestry & Recreation Committee will be Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 10:00 am in the County Board Room, third floor.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Beadles moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Bub. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 am.

**Secretary:**

**Forestry & Recreation Committee**  
**February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor County Board Room**

**Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Charles Zenner.

**Members Present:** Charles Zenner, Myron Brooks, Gary Beadles, Gene Knoll, Mike Bub.

**Members Absent:** N/A

**Other Attendees:** Jake Walcisak, Jordan Lutz, Jim Metz, Larry Brandl, Brian Wilson Star News and Emma Doden WI-DNR Wildlife Biologist (Zoom).

**Approve Minutes:** Bub moved to approve the minutes of the January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting; Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried.

**Approve Agenda:** Bub moved to approve the agenda of 13 items; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Bills:** Walcisak presented the monthly bill spreadsheet. Bub moved to approve the bill spreadsheet as presented; Seconded by Knoll. Motion carried.

**Timber Sales Updates:** Lutz gave updates on timber sales. There are four (4) active timber sales going on.

- **#665 Steve Dassow:** Finished cutting and skidding on February 7<sup>th</sup>. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest sale on our books. Only hauling and final billing remains. Will likely be able to close it out next month.
- **#674 Wiitala-Vozka:** Finished the sale on February 8<sup>th</sup>. This was a high-volume sale and was completed quickly with 30+ loads being hauled per week. Final hauling and final payment remain. Likely to close it out next month.
- **#675 Steve Dassow:** Froze down roads and moved equipment in this week. Plans to work on job until spring break up. He will likely not finish this winter and require an extension in June 2022. This sale requires frozen ground for access.
- **#683 Northwest Hardwoods:** Finished cutting and skidding last week. They have a limited mixed hardwood pulp market and indicated the decked wood would likely stay until after spring breakup. Lutz scaled these piles last week for invoicing. Continued issues of non-compliance including rutting, missed bunch piles and wood accountability. Lutz will address the Committee when more information is available.

**Timber Sale Close Out #661 – Pending Final Payment:** All wood has been hauled and roads are clean. Only a small amount of billing and final payment remains. Lutz expects a 15-20% overrun on value and volume and a sale value of approximately \$47,000. Lutz will present a revenue report next month when volumes are final. Brooks moved to approve the close out of sale #661 pending final payment; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Surety Bond Policy:** Walcisak provided a report regarding the current policy, the new policy/template, and the reasons for a proposed change.

- Taylor County has accepted surety bonds since the fall of 2017.
- Corp Counsel reviewed and approved the acceptance of surety bonds in 2017.
- Recent concerns have necessitated a more well-defined policy.
- Walcisak handed out the new policy and template which are currently being reviewed by Corp Counsel.

Knoll moved to approve the surety bond policy and surety bond template as presented, pending final review by Corp Counsel; seconded by Brooks. Motion carried.

**Medford High School Mentorship Program:** Walcisak presented to the Committee information regarding Department participation.

- The Department was presented the opportunity by teacher Lisa Porten to host a student through the school's Mentorship Program. This is semester long (approx. 19 weeks) program for the first two periods of each school day, 8:00 to 9:30, with opportunities for occasional longer days.
- Quinton Tlusty is our Mentorship student. He is genuinely interested in the work we do and has done well on all assigned tasks. He started on January 19<sup>th</sup>.
- The Committee praised the Department for engaging with this opportunity.

Knoll moved to approve participation in the Medford High School Mentorship Program; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**WI Department of Safety and Professional Services – Safety Training Audit:** Walcisak provided information regarding an upcoming safety training audit.

- DSPS received a complaint that training requirements are not being met.
- DSPS inspector is working with Taylor County HR and several individual departments to review all training records from 2020 to present to ensure compliance.
- An in-person audit will occur Wednesday February 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Accomplishments Updates:**

- We are receiving more request each year to assist ATV and snowmobile clubs with trail maintenance. Specifically brushing, grading and culvert replacements. This has required additional staff time, truck mileage, equipment hours, etc. I believe this trend will continue. Volunteer labor is decreasing as club members get older and are not replaced by younger generations. We should expect to allocate more time and equipment to these efforts in the future. Examples may include hiring an LTE and/or purchasing additional equipment. Bub commented that he doesn't want this to increase expenses to taxpayers. Walcisak clarified that expenses would not exceed grant funding.
- Snowmobile Trails Update. Grand Opening of Taylor-Price Trail. County trails are in fair to good condition. Lack of snowfall has limited the ability to groom, fill in rough areas and rejuvenate road crossings. Snowfall from last night is the first significant snow in several weeks.
- Travel Wisconsin Destination Assessment recommendation. Met with Jeff Anderson from Travel Wisconsin on February 1<sup>st</sup>. There is an opportunity for all recreational resources

countywide to work together in promoting Taylor County. This includes Tourism Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Forestry Department, Parks Department, and clubs. Walcisak currently publishes snowmobile trail and cross-country ski trail conditions on Travel Wisconsin website. The Committee supports taking this item to the Tourism Committee.

- Schlosser appraisal. IATA hired, at their expense, an appraisal for the Schlosser property. Appraisal will take place next week with a report by the end of February. Committee is thankful for the willingness of the IATA to fund this appraisal.
- Dam Grant Applications. Walcisak approved both dam grant applications on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ayres mailed us hard copies of the applications to sign and send to the DNR. This occurred on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Application deadline is March 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Finite Carbon – Provided Finite with all necessary data for their analysis. Anticipate receiving project analysis results mid-February. Reviewed NDA with Corp Counsel Koch. One addition requested regarding Wisconsin open records law. Finite Carbon Corp Counsel is reviewing our request.
- Government Days at Medford High School February 15<sup>th</sup>. Zenner and Walcisak, along with several other department heads and County supervisors, will be attending.

**DNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Jeff and Johnathan have completed establishment of their spring County timber sale. They both have significant fire training this month and were unable to attend today's meeting. Next week they will have time to cruise timber for general recon updates. Jordan is meeting with Jeff next week to discuss/assign new tasks.

Walcisak introduced Emma Doden via Zoom. Emma is the new Rusk and Taylor County DNR Wildlife Biologist. Emma addressed the Committee with her background and education. Emma was able to take a County Forest tour with Walcisak and Sorenson this past fall. Emma provided an update to the Committee on CWD, with 143 negative tests and 0 positive test for wild deer in 2021. Emma informed the Committee that she has been working on otter and elk surveys this winter. Although no elk are currently known to be in Taylor County. Knoll asked several questions regarding grouse population dynamics. Emma is excited to work with Department staff on upcoming wildlife and forestry projects.

**Additional Items:** None.

**Next Committee Meeting:** The next meeting of the Forestry & Recreation Committee will be Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 11:00 am in the County Board Room, third floor.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Bub moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 pm.

**Forest Administrator:** Jake Walcisak, Taylor County Forestry Dept.

**Forestry & Recreation Committee**  
**January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor County Board Room**

**Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Charles Zenner.

**Members Present:** Charles Zenner, Myron Brooks, Gary Beadles, Gene Knoll, Mike Bub.

**Members Absent:** N/A

**Other Attendees:** Jake Walcisak, Jordan Lutz, Karyn Gebert, Jim Metz, Larry Brandl, Brian Wilson-Star News and Jeff Sorenson (Zoom).

**Approve Minutes:** Bub moved to approve the minutes of the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting with the correction of next meeting Friday, January 7, **2022**; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Approve Agenda:** Knoll moved to approve the agenda of 12 items; Seconded by Bub. Motion carried.

**Approve Bills:** Walcisak presented the monthly bill spreadsheet. Knoll moved to approve the bill spreadsheet as presented; Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried.

**Timber Sales Updates:** Lutz gave updates on timber sales. There are four (4) active timber sales going on.

- **#661 Steve Dassow:** Has moved back into the sale last week. He has approximately 5 acres left and should finish the sale by the end of January.
- **#671 Gumz Logging:** They have cut approximately 60% of the sale. Steeper terrain and expiring timber sale contracts on other ownerships has forced them to move.
- **#Wiitala-Vozka Logging:** They moved into the sale last week. They have completed approximately 30% and likely to be finished in February.
- **#683 Northwest Hardwoods:** They moved back into the sale 2 weeks ago. They have approximately 11 acres remaining and likely to finish by the end of January.

**Approve Planting Bids:** Lutz presented the planting bids. There was one (1) qualified bid from Superior Forestry from Arkansas. Total bid at \$4,190.78 which is \$97.46 per acre (\$0.11 per tree). The County purchased the trees from PRT Nursery at \$0.26 per tree. This bid is less than the budgeted amount of \$106 per acre for planting. Taylor County received a Sustainable Forestry Grant two (2) years ago for \$19,600. Total project costs will now come in over budget by approximately \$1,800. Knoll moved to approve Superior Forestry's planting bid; seconded by Beadles. Motion carried.

**Snowmobile Trails Report:** Walcisak provided an update for the snowmobile trails.

- Pine Line and all trails that are both north of County Trail M and East of the Pine Line opened Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 am.
- All other trails EXCEPT West of State Highway 73 as well as south of County Trail A and east of County Highway E will open at 8:00 am on Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>.

- Price, Rusk, and Lincoln County trails are open. Marathon and Chippewa County are partially open while Clark County trails remain closed.

**DNR Time Standards Review:** Walcisak provided an overview of the DNR time standards. Time standards calculations are on a 5-year cycle. Time standards follow the state fiscal year of July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

- The Department provides technical assistance to Counties having lands entered in the County Forest program in a variety of ways, including a dedication of Department employee time working on projects on each County Forest. The County Forest time standards were established to provide each County with a specified amount of technical assistance to be provided by the Department each year. The time standards worksheet was developed and refined over time to fairly allocate the level of assistance provided among the Counties enrolled in the County Forest Program. The worksheet helps calculate the average number of hours that the Department shall spend on many different activities which may occur annually on a County Forest. The purpose of the time standards worksheet is to quantify the Department's technical forestry assistance commitments on County Forest lands.
- Calculated hours are very similar to the previous 5-year cycle (773 hours).

#### **Accomplishments Updates:**

- Dam Grant Applications.
  - Approvable plans and specification are due February 4<sup>th</sup>. Walcisak has submitted to the DNR on December 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - Walcisak has been in contact with Corp counsel Ruthann Koch and Ayres regarding the submission of applications for Camp 8 and Chelsea Lake dams. Ayres has agreed to submitting the applications at their expense.
  - Full applications due March 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - Governor's budget has increased the grant by 150% to \$10,000,000.
- Finite Carbon is a carbon developer that is interested in projects the size of the Taylor County Forest. Walcisak asked the Committee for guidance to pursuing the scoping of a forest carbon project. The Committee asked for Walcisak to pursue a project scoping with Finite Carbon.
- Walcisak testified before the Joint State Committee on Forestry and Finance on December 15<sup>th</sup> in Madison. He was one of seven individuals invited for expert testimony on the state of Wisconsin's forest industry.
- County Financial Audit – Interim fieldwork was this week. Successfully completed. Auditors will return this summer for the full audit.

**DNR County Forest Liaison Report:** Sorenson gave a brief report. Working on spring timber sale establishment and forest recon updates. Time standard hours, completed to date, are a little lower than Sorenson would like them to be at this time of year. Approximately 55% of hours have been completed as of year-end, 50% of the way through the state fiscal year. Sorenson and Knusta will be spending a significant amount of time on fire training in February.

**Additional Items:** Lutz and Walcisak presented a potential land acquisition of the Mary Ann Schlosser property. Lutz mailed Schlosser to notify her the County would be conducting a timber

harvest adjacent to her land. This is common practice and occurs whenever the County harvests timber adjacent to private lands. Schlosser responded to Lutz's letter and further informed Lutz she would be interested in selling her property to the County. Schlosser did not provide an asking price but did indicate she wanted to transact the property without a realtor. The Schlosser property is 89.32 acres, located at SWNE, NWNE, Section 9, T33N-R3E, Town of Rib Lake. Fair market value as determined by the County Forestry Department is \$140,000 to \$178,000. The 2021 assessed value was \$169,700. The property is enrolled as open in the MFL program with 2021 taxes at \$182.21 (\$2 per acre). The annual post-purchase revenue would be approximately \$2,794.83. Walcisak explained the revenue breakdown. The land is adjacent to County Forest on three sides, within the County Forest blocking boundary and identified as a priority acquisition in the County Forest 15-year management plan. While almost every acre is productive, not all acres may be accessible due to terrain, soil types or may not be salable due to current markets. Northern Hardwood 48 acres, selection harvest. Hemlock/Swamp Conifer 30 acres, thinning and seed tree harvest. Swamp hardwood 11 acres, clearcut with reserves. The property also has a small lake less than one acre. Good access via existing County Forest logging roads and roads within the property. Summer ground logging opportunity on approximately 48 acres. Sustainable timber harvest potential of approximately \$10,000 in 2022 within additional timber income in the future. The property does not have deeded access and relies on access via a County Forest logging road. Knowles-Nelson Stewardship fund eligible for 50% of appraised value and appraisal costs. \$163,000 estimated acquisition cost (assuming a purchase price of \$159,000). Knowles-Nelson Stewardship contribution \$81,500. First sustainable timber harvest \$10,000. County cost \$71,500. County Forest has adequate funds in the land acquisition account to cover costs.

**Next Committee Meeting:** The next meeting of the Forestry & Recreation Committee will be Friday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 11:00 am in the County Board Room, third floor.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Knoll moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Beadles. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 am.

**Secretary:** Karyn Gebert, Taylor County Forestry Dept.