

**Minutes of the May 12th meeting of the Sawyer County
Land, Water & Forest Resources Committee
Of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Assembly Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members (X) Present:

- Chair: **Bruce Paulson**
- Ron Buckholtz – Vice Chair
- Jesse Boettcher - Virtual
- Brian Bisonette - Virtual
- Marc Helwig
- Kevin Sheptick

Others Present:

Lynn Fitch
Alex Butterfield
Jay Kozlowski – Virtual
Greg Peterson
Don Mrotek
Ben Popp
Roy Zubrod

Call to Order – Chair Bruce Paulson called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call was taken; a quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda –

Public Comments --

Minutes from the previous meeting – A motion was made by Mr. Buckholtz to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2021, meeting; second by Mr. Helwig. Motion carried without negative vote.

Events –

Sawyer County Treasurer's Department – An over-the-counter land sale in the Town of Bass Lake #002169033100 was presented for sale. A motion was made by Mr. Helwig; second by Mr. Buckholtz to approve this sale and move forward to County Board for approval. Motion carried without negative vote.

Land Records and County Surveyor Department Report –

Sawyer County Forestry Department Report – Written reports were provided. Mr. Peterson advised that the timber sale bid approval rate is at 23 out of 25 possible bids and they are looking at the highest bid on each track. Spring 2021 timber sale remains high. A motion was made by Mr. Buckholtz; second by Mr. Helwig to approve the timber sale bids. Motion carried without negative vote. Mr. Peterson reviewed the timber sale bid summary.

A request to approve a budget amendment for the replacement of a forestry tractor was presented. The existing tractor no longer meets OSHA requirements. A motion was made by Mr. Buckholtz; second by Mr. Boettcher to approve this request and move forward to the Finance Committee and County Board for approval. Motion carried without negative vote.

Mr. Peterson and Mr. Popp presented a request from the Birkie to begin a solar project on county forestry lands at the Highway OO Birkie location. The project would involve the maintenance building, the community building and all trail lights. Mr. Popp will ask the True North Solar company to provide additional information about project specifics for the next meeting.

LCO Resolution for ATV/UTV Trail Application – Mr. Peterson presented a request from LCO Tribal Governing Board that identifies Sawyer County support for trails aid grant applications. The grant funds, if approved, would aid in maintaining

the trails that cross tribal land, approximately five miles of trail. A motion was made by Mr. Buckholtz; second by Mr. Helwig to approve this Resolution and forward to County Board. Motion carried without negative vote.

Carbon Tax Update – Mr. Peterson has been working with a forester from Steigerwaldt to determine feasibility of this project for the County. Thus far, the opportunity for significant County revenue appears promising and he will continue to investigate and report back. It is a 40-year commitment once begun.

Mr. Mrotek reported that all bike and ATV/UTV trails are open and a busy season is expected.

County Forestry Report – A written report was provided. There were three sales in April and the month's sale revenue was just short of \$80,000. There are six trail rehab bids out now and due to return by May 28th. Efficiencies of staff working remotely remain good.

DNR Forestry Report – A written report was provided. The County will be stocking walleye and musky in the lakes this year. There have been twelve fires thus far and fire danger remains high at the moment.

Zoning/Conservation Department Report – A written report was provided. Mr. Kozlowski advised that the Conservation Department presented its 5-year plan review to DATCP; it was then recommended for approval to the State Land and Water Board. The level of zoning permit requests is up 25% over the past four years and is at a peak level similar to 16 years ago. The staff are all working on-site and are extremely busy.

Mr. Bisonette stated that LCO is doing a lot of maintenance work on the reservation lands and are they are working on grounds clean-up, picking up debris from illegal dumping. The fish hatchery is up and running at 50% capacity.

Future Agenda Items – Birkie OO Solar project; review the Economic Development/UWEX mission statement for compatibility with this committee

Other Topics for Discussion Only -

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Land, Water & Forest Resources Committee will be Wednesday, June 9, at 8:30 am in the Assembly Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 am

Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk