

***MINUTES OF THE
HIGHWAY, INFRASTRUCTURE & RECREATION COMMITTEE***

DAY & DATE: December 3, 2020
PLACE: Wood County Highway Dept, 555 17th Ave N.,
WI Rapids, WI 54495
MEETING TIME: 9:00 A.M.
ADJOURNMENT TIME: 10:58 A.M.
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jacob Hahn, Supervisor John Hokamp,
Supervisor Lee Thao, Supervisor David LaFontaine
PRESENT VIA WEBEX: Supervisor Al Breu

OTHERS PRESENT: Chad Schooley, Parks & Forestry Director; Fritz Schubert, Forest Administrator; Roland Hawk, Highway Commissioner; Supervisor Dennis Polach; John Kunding, Futurewood Forest Products; Pete Winistorfer, Rock Township; John Winker, Town of Port Edwards resident; Sandra Green, Parks & Forestry Office Supervisor
PRESENT VIA WEBEX: Chairman Lance Pliml; Supervisor Bill Clendenning

1. Call meeting to order. Meeting called to order at 9am.
2. Declaration of Quorum. Yes. Due to time constraints, we will move to 8c.
(8c) Timber Contract Extensions: (moved to beginning of agenda) #748, #749, #758, #762, #764.
John Kunding from Futurewood is here to discuss the contract extensions. Fritz Schubert, the County Forest Administrator presented his recommendations to extend all the contracts for one year with no increase in stumpage. **Motion by Dave LaFontaine to extend the contracts with no increase in stumpage and second by John Hokamp. Motion carried.**
3. Public comments. John Winker from Nekoosa is here from the ATV Intensive Use Area. He has some issues regarding Wood County Forestry. He feels that his property is being flooded out due to the ponds that have been dug and improvements to a forest road that is also part of the ATV and Snowmobile trail system. F. Schubert stated to him that it was due to recent wet weather patterns the last couple of years. The ATV trail is near the backside of the ATV Park off Kimball Ave. F. Schubert states that some of the work they have done is likely helping the situation rather than hurting it. The “ponds” are just little water diversions, on the north side of the road/trail. These water diversions are something done routinely on logging jobs for drying out roads. The water flows north to south and whether the ponds are on the north side or not, the water still flows that way. Mr. Winker’s property lies south of the road and county forestlands. F. Schubert states that he disagrees with Mr. Winker’s assessment and based on history, it is a very wet area, and high water table. D. LaFontaine asked F. Schubert to dig into whether or not some ditching can be done to alleviate the problem. Chairman Hahn recommends that Mr. Winker go to the Risk Management office to file a claim and we go from there to see if something can be done to at least reduce some of the damage in the lowland area that has a high water table. Chairman Hahn also asks that F. Schubert bring something forward to the next meeting in terms of further information so the Committee can have a better understanding, and possibly work towards a remedy if possible. R. Hawk gave his insight into the situation stated they (Highway Dept.) have been having drainage problems on County and State highways in the area. He concurred that recent significant precipitation trends and high water table are a problem.

Chairman with the Town of Rock – Pete Winistorfer (moving agenda #6). He thanks the ATV committee for coming together and creating a route system for the sport. There are many stakes in the ground and he was not sure what they were for so he did some digging and learned it was the county that put the stakes on certain town roads in the Town of Rock. It is a waste of money because all roads are open. He also received no communication from the county that anyone would be coming in to place

signs. Who maintains those signs? R. Hawk apologizes for not letting him know, he takes full responsibility. He thought that route was to be signed next year, not this year, but his sign crew must be ahead of schedule. He will speak with them. In addition, P. Winistorfer recommends keeping all signs and townships uniform.

As a reminder, all mainline routes are signed heavily because of people coming in from other areas. If a township has all roads open, the Hwy Dept., only mainline routes, does not sign the regular non-mainline routes. Sandra Green will send all Town and County Board Chairman's an updated ATV map.

4. Correspondence. R. Hawk received an email from a resident in Clark County whose family was affected by a fatal crash on V and H earlier this year. It was a double fatality. We have had another accident at that intersection and their complaint is that it is not marked well. They have asked the Hwy. Dept. to consider a solar powered blinking stop sign at this location. He asked his superintendents to look into the cost of this. They would put one on the N and S sides. This will cost approximately \$1500 each. The intersection warrants this upgrade as it has many issues. Roland will be creating some criteria in order to determine if future locations would require this upgrade.

C. Schooley would like to give the committee regarding Tom Witt from Consolidated Water & Power. He is responsible for writing recreation plans along the river that Consolidated Power owns. Because they own dams for power purposes, there is federal regulation that dictates having these plans. He will be meeting with him next week to go over existing plans and to go over CERA park campground and the future of this park. It is discussion only and wanted to give the committee a heads-up on this meeting.

5. Approve minutes from previous committee meetings.

Motion to approve by D. LaFontaine, second by A. Breu. Motion carried.

6. ATV Trail/Route System Update. R. Hawk stated that in September we approved a segment of C to get to 3rd Ave and is a part of that E/W long-term plan. They opened it all the way up to Hwy. O, which is a modification to the plan. When the updated map is final and approved, send to all committee members. C. Schooley states the ATV parking lot project is complete. The grant amount was \$33k. It turned out great. Sandy sent in the grant paperwork to the DNR and asked if there was a way to be reimbursed for exceeding dollars. They stated that could be considered. The total amount overage was around \$9,000.

7. HIGHWAY

- a. Highway Staff Reports. R. Hawk gave an update on transporting brine to Marshfield. They are looking at purchasing a tanker trailer. He will provide an update at a future meeting. Supervisor Hahn asked how everything is going in the department regarding COVID19 quarantines. R. Hawk gave an update on staff.
- b. Highway Revenue Report.
- c. Highway Vouchers.

Motion to approve by D. LaFontaine and second by A. Breu. Motion carried.

- d. Modification to Highway Entrance. This became apparent during COVID shutdown and security issues that when visitors come here, they are not really directed anywhere. This proposal will alleviate this confusion. R. Hawk presented the committee with a proposal on how this office reconfiguration will look. The estimate is approximately \$7k - \$10k. They will do as much of it as they can and have outside contractors assist when needed. He will be preparing this project so that is ready for spring/summer to begin. This front entrance would need to be controlled more. P. Winistorfer stated that it is possible that the "Cares Act Grant" could cover some of these expenses. R. Hawk should look into this.

- e. Wild Cucumber. B. Clendenning provided some background. How prevalent is it in Wood County? R. Hawk stated we do have a few sports in Wood County. Wild Cucumber is on the back of the right-of-way on Hwy. 10. It was not severe enough at that time where they need to do anything and it is in a number of places throughout Wood County.
- f. Highway Department Solar Options. Nancy Turyk made the committee aware of some PSC grants that could be available and would go in on the green space out front that currently is not being utilized. These projects have a very quick return on adjustments. This is contingent on other things, but to put it out there for a possible CIP project. R. Hawk states their roof is not stable enough for this system so that option is ruled out. The fixed ground panels have a higher ROI according to Chairman Hahn.
- g. Budget Resolution. **Motion by D. LaFontaine and second by J. Hokamp. Motion carried.**

8. PARKS AND FORESTRY

- a. Parks & Forestry Staff Reports. C. Schooley handed out information regarding the South Wood County Park location for the storm shelter grant application. C. Schooley stated that initial estimates were figured, and Wood County's 12.5% cost share comes out to \$80,350. We will submit everything as you see in this packet and wait for feedback on what would be covered in the grant. We would really improve and increase the number of rentals for the adjacent open shelter. The storm shelter could be utilized year round. We are trying to maximize under-utilized areas in the park while at the same time providing a safe area during inclement weather. Emergency Management will be finalizing the application and submitting shortly. It is possible, if awarded, to begin construction in 2021. We are hoping that the majority of the county's cost percentage could be covered by in-kind work and/or available funds from our non-lapsing Capital Projects account. D. LaFontaine would like to see an entrance to the kitchen entrance from the main gathering area in case individuals are confined and need access. C. Schooley explained the reasoning behind having two separate kitchen areas, for the purpose of two events occurring at the same time.

C. Schooley stated we do have the updated trails map for Powers Bluff for all the snowshoe and biking trails. We are excited about this and for the new concessionaire starting this season, which is Northward Peddle & Paddle, LLC who will be providing concessions to our winter recreation enthusiasts this winter, as well as renting snowshoes and small inventory of skis/snowboards.

- b. Special Use Permits. None.
- c. Timber Contract Extensions: (moved to beginning of agenda).
- d. Chapter 800 of the Forestry 15-Year Plan. Informational purposes only. Note: D. LaFontaine would like a copy of Chapter 800 sent to him. Is there a page for definitions? Yes eventually. As for hard copies, that number will be decided later. Current 15-year plan is on Wood County website, as are draft chapters as they are completed.
- e. 2020 ATV and Snowmobile account budget amendment resolution.
Motion to approve by D. LaFontaine, second by L. Thao. Motion carried.
- f. Parks Revenue Report. C. Schooley discussed a 2017 resolution, which allows the P&F Dpt. to retain excess revenues under certain conditions. The resolution allow carryover of specific Parks and Forestry revenues above budgeted amounts if the amount exceeds the 5 year average, and only allows a maximum of \$750,000 in the account (Parks and Forestry Capital Projects account), unless otherwise approved. We really need to wait until end of year to see what actual revenues are. C. Schooley stated that he spoke with P. Kastenholz, and he indicated that the resolution is still valid and legitimate at this point. At this time, a rough estimate of the amount would be \$180,000.

C. Schooley stated this year has been unique. When you have a large increase in park revenues, you also have increased operational expenses. For this reason, there may be a resolution needed due to exceeding budgeted expenses for 2020, but C. Schooley stated he would do his best to stay within the budget. If a resolution were needed, the additional revenues in 2020 would be identified as the source of funding.

- g. Forestry Revenue Report. Revenues have taken a huge jump due to recent logging activity on a final harvest red pine timber contract. 2020 timber revenue is looking much better and should be close to/slightly exceed 2020 budget. Harvest activity is completed and final billings and payments are almost wrapped up.
- h. Parks and Forestry Vouchers.

Motion by D. LaFontaine, second by A. Breu. Motion carried.

- i. 2021 HIRC meeting dates. Approved.

- 9. The committee may go into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 19.85(1) (c) to conduct performance evaluations of the Highway Commissioner and Parks and Forestry Director.

Motion by D. LaFontaine and second by A. Breu. All ayes. Motion carried.

- 10. Return to open session at 10:55 am.

- 11. Future Agenda Items. Winker property update; F. Schubert, Wood County Forest Administrator.

C. Schooley stated that if the committee has anything they would like him to have for 2021 goals please forward those so that he can include in the 2021 Work Plan.

- 12. Set next regular meeting date: January 7, 2021 at the Wood County Highway Department, 555 17th Ave North, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

- 13. Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 10:58 AM.

Recording Secretary: Sandra Green, Parks & Forestry, Office Supervisor