

The regular monthly meeting for Jackson County Forestry & Parks Department was held at 9:00am on Tuesday, July 14, 2020. Those present were: Karen Thayer, Ed Chamberlain, Tom Clark, Jerrold Schmidt, Norman Stoker, Jon Schweitzer, Dave Spaude and Chris Repking

The regular meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chair Karen Thayer

A motion was made by Norman Stoker, seconded by Ed Chamberlain to approve the minutes from the June meeting with 2 corrections. Changing the word obtained to "abstained" and correcting the spelling of Tom Clarks last name. All members voted in favor.

Motion made by Ed Chamberlain, seconded by Tom Clark to approve the bills for as presented for payment. All members voted in favor.

Amanda Gunn was present for the Black River Chamber and updated the Committee on the current status of the Chamber.

Zach Clausing and Scott Roepke were present from the WI-DNR. Jackson County will take part in an SFC-SFI Audit in August. Most DNR staff continue to work from home unless fieldwork can be done alone.

Jon presented the Parks and Trails report. Revenue is up for 2020. The absence of the prison crew has made the seasonal park staff very busy, leaving little time to work on projects. The department obtained a \$20,000 RMEF grant with an additional \$17,000 from the WI-DNR to work on wildlife openings.

ORV (off-road vehicle) traffic has been up significantly this summer. The new tractor will be delivered this week as well. The Town of Brockway recently voted to open up their town roads to ATV/UTV traffic allowing access to businesses such as Re-Petes, Dairy Way and Sport Country ATV & Marine.

Forester Dave Spaude was present at the meeting for Jim Zahasky to talk about selling a direct timber sale to Lambert Forest Products. The sale has been advertised twice and not sold on bid so can be sold direct in accordance with the handbook.

Dave also updated the committee on the recent shut down at the VERSO mill in Wisconsin Rapids on June 9. By July 31 the mill will be closed permanently or put in an idle state, including laying off all employees. Currently the mill is not accepting any wood types. VERSO accounted for approximately 11% of Jackson County woods sales, roughly \$119,000.00 in revenue. The County will bring back an emergency resolution in response to the mill closure in August.

The re-classification of the current Forestry and Parks secretary was discussed. A motion was made by Ed Chamberlain, seconded by Tom Clark to pass the resolution and sign in August when changes are made.

Chris Repking was present at the meeting to discuss purchasing a tractor for the Forestry department. Originally \$40,000.00 was budgeted but later changed to \$30,000.00. After discussion a motion was made by Ed Chamberlain to allow the department to spend no more than \$40,000, the motion was seconded by Tom Clark. Karen Thayer, Norman Stoker, Ed Chamberlain and Tom Clark voted in favor of the motion, Jerrold Schmidt voted in opposition to the motion, motion carried.

The security of the Forestry and Parks office was discussed. Ashley Stetzer spoke with the committee about placing glass in the existing door and moving the front desk to allow for customers to be more visible before entering the building. A buzzer access system would be installed, much like the one currently used in the Courthouse. Total cost would be approximately \$3,000.00. A motion was made by Karen Thayer to go forward with the office security upgrade, the motion as seconded by Ed Chamberlain. Karen Thayer, Norman Stoker, Ed Chamberlain and Tom Clark voted in favor of the motion, Jerrold Schmidt voted in opposition to the motion, motion carried.

A motion to adjourn at 10:30am was made by Norman Stoker, seconded by Ed Chamberlain, all members voted in favor.

Next regular meeting date: August 11, 2020

These minutes will be approved at the August Meeting