

**EAU CLAIRE COUNTY
COMMITTEE ON PARKS & FOREST**

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 11, 2018
Seymour Town Hall, 6500 Tower Drive, Eau Claire WI 54703

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gary Gibson, Patrick LaVelle, John Richie, Tami Schraugnagel and Kevin Stelljes

OTHERS PRESENT: Ken Thompson, WDNR Warden; Jed Kaurich, WDNR Liaison Forester; Sheriff Ron Cramer and Sgt Staber Eau Claire Co Sheriff Department; Lauren French, Leader-Telegram Reporter, Kathryn Schauf, Eau Claire County Administrator; Mark Karow, Augusta Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club; David Hainz, Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association Board of Director member; Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association members: Sarah Buschman, Zaphire Buschman, Kurt Grimm, Kris Grimm, Corey Gunderson, Randy Gunderson, Bowen Hallum, Travis Klonecki, Tim Kruse, Blake Liebzeist, Dustin Liebzeist, Galen Liebzeist, Loren Lone, Mark Mathson, Anthony Michels, Rick Nelson, Justin Pettis, Kesler Schuette, Gary Pettis, Joe Pettis, Ethan Solie, Paul Sosalla, Steve Tempski, Dustin Wampole, Jim Young. Others: Clifford Albrecht, Larry Barsamian, Chad, Sherry, Brittany, and Lacy Bergman, Dan & Sheena Bruder, Jon Couillard, Don Curtis, Justin Glenz, , Dan Gunderson, David Hofer, Tim A Holmes, , Jamie Kuhl, Terry Kuhnert, Dan Merriman, Randy Moldenhauer, Patrick Pettis, Daniel Solie, Zachary Stendahl, Chuck Wendt, Scott & Kaytlyn Wendt, David Zielke, several others with illegible signatures.

STAFF PRESENT: Bobbi Barone, Jody Gindt, and Josh Pedersen

The meeting was called to order by Chair Patrick LaVelle at 5:00 p.m.

1. Confirmation of meeting notice – Meeting notice was confirmed.
2. Approval of minutes from March 28, 2018 Meeting - Gary made a motion to approve the minutes from March 28, 2018 meeting; motion carried.
3. Public Input – No one was present for this item.
4. ATV/UTV Trail Regulations – Pat laid out the ground rules for the discussion. David Hainz, board director for Wisconsin Bear Hunters Associations, spoke about what the bear hunters are requesting – access to the River Trail, Channey Road Trail and Whitetail Ridge Trail during the summer months which recently prohibited vehicular traffic other than ATV/UTV's. Josh Pedersen did a presentation on the ATV/UTV trails. He stated there are 19.7 miles of State Sponsored ATV/UTV trails in Eau Claire County. 17.94 miles are county forest rails. The three trails the bear hunters are requesting being opened to vehicles total 12.59. Josh showed diagrams and photos of the three trail segments in question. He said there are safety concerns as the trails are narrow in some places and two-way traffic a concern. ATV's are 50 inches wide, UTV's 65" and trucks 80". He wasn't able to get an opinion from the state as to what rate maintenance would be paid at for work done on the trails should it be decided to open the trails to all vehicles. In addition, any grant funding would not be available should all vehicles be allowed on the trail if there would be storm damage or improvements to the trails.

Sargeant Staber from the Sheriff's Department said he has been doing the ATV patrol since 2009 and that the ATV trail use has increased dramatically. Pat asked the bear hunters what they were hoping would happen at this meeting and they stated the trails would go back the way they were – not prohibiting any vehicles in the summer months. Tami said the trails being closed to vehicles will stay that way until things are decided. In the meantime, Carl and Lucas with the Bear Hunters Association will be the contact to get information to the whole association. Kathryn Schauf, Eau Claire County Administrator, said this matter will be resolved in a timely fashion but there are channels that need to be followed and could take some time. Anyone who would have any information should vandalism of signs or the trails take place is encouraged to report it along with license plate numbers, if possible.

5. Next Meeting Date/place – Wednesday, March 28 at 5:00 p.m. at the Ag Center.

Pat adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbi Barone
Committee Clerk

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