

MINUTES  
Ashland County Forestry and Recreation Committee  
Ashland County Forestry Dept Office  
304 West Michigan St, Butternut, WI 54514  
January 3, 2018

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The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Gary Mertig at 9:00 AM.

Members present: Gary Mertig, Kathy Schutte, Pat Daoust and Marty Vitek.  
Absent - Carl Kubley - excused.

Others present: ACSA-Bill Chandler, Recreation Officer-Jim Clapero, DNR Forester-Sara Stack, Assist Forest Adm-Matt Schultz, Forest Adm-Chris Hoffman and Secretary-Marion Pohl.

Kathy S commented on the December 7, 2017 minutes that the visitor "Charlie" is Charlie Ortman and to add his last name in the minutes. Kathy also commented that the minutes read well and likes the large print.

The minutes were approved with the adding Charlie's last name (Ortman) to the December 7, 2017 minutes with a motion by Pat Daoust, second by Marty Vitek. Motion carried.

Snowmobile/ATV business - Bill C reported that the snowmobile season is going slow. The trail north of Marengo is still closed. Bill also reported that it cost over \$10,000 to open the trails this year due to so many trees to be cut from the trails from wind and heavy wet snow breaking tree limbs off etc. A bulldozer was used on Trail #11 to push the trail open from tree debris.

Bill said the groomer was stuck in the swamp south of Butternut. Bill said he was surprised at the amount of people that came to help to get the groomer out.

Recreation Officer's report - Jim reported that there are people out snowmobiling and issued a few citations.

Jim said he caught a person going off the trail onto Ball's field. He gave the person numerous fines and confiscated the person's snowmobile. The person was from out of town, but knew people in Butternut. Jim also got a written confession from the person. Jim said he let the landowner and the person who rents the fields know that he had caught a person running around their fields.

DNR Liaison/Forester report - Sara S reported she has been doing recon work. She said in the Spring timber sale marking will begin.

Forest Adm's report - Chris said the timber sale revenue for 2017 is \$785,650 which is good considering the weather conditions were not ideal most of the year for logging.

Other business - Marty V asked about the letter he received along with the other county board members about the grooming of the trails. The letter was written by the Mellen Snowmobile Club, the Glidden Snowmobile Club and the Clam Lake snowmobile Club. The clubs would like to have the trails groomed at night and also the weekends. According to the letter, people complain about Ashland County's trails being in rough condition on the weekends and do not want to ride in Ashland County. Bill explained to the Committee that grooming during the day is much safer and there is less snowmobile traffic. Pat D confirms what Bill said because he is a groomer operator and knows that grooming on weekends and at night is not safe. Kathy asked about communications with groomers that would go out at night. Bill said the operators have cell phones and the groomers are equipped with radios. Bill said with the radios, if the trails are not brushed good enough, the radio antennas get broke off and spend lots of money to keep the radios operational. Also a second person would have to go with the groomer operator just to cut branches out of the way. Bill said there are not enough people to go out and brush the trails. There are only a few active members. Bill said he receives little help from the clubs writing this letter. In fact, the Clam Lake club is not a part of the ACSA.

Gary M suggested that we let the representatives of the clubs that wrote this letter when the next Committee is and invited them to the meeting.

The vouchers were approved and signed with a motion by Kathy Schutte, second by Pat Daoust. Motion carried.

The next Committee meeting will be Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at 9:00 at the Forestry Dept Office, Butternut, WI.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Kathy Schutte, second by Marty Vitek. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

**Submitted by**

*Marion Pohl*