

Forestry Affairs
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
August 28, 2009

Present: Craig Engwall, Mike Polzin, Julie Miedtke, Jim Marshall, Terry Weber, Dale Sutherland, Kim Hanson, Tom Saxhaug, Paul Peterson

Advisory Members Present: Greg Morris, Greg VanOrsow, Art Norton, Gordy Blum

Chamber staff: Renee Thompson, Bud Stone

Craig Engwall called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the June 26, 2009 meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Terry Weber made a motion to approve the June 26, 2009 meeting minutes. Paul Peterson seconded the motion. Motion carries.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

FAMILY FORESTS ACTION TEAM

Jim Marshall gave the committee a Family Forests Action Team update.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

70 MILE TRAIL

Bud informed the committee that the 70-mile trail construction was awarded to Schwartz Excavating.

Craig Engwall added that the comment period for the 70-mile trail has been extended.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

“ADVANCING FORESTRY IN MINNESOTA” PRESENTATION

Adam Sutherland presented the committee with a Powerpoint presentation titled, “Advancing Forestry in Minnesota.” The presentation looked at forestry practices in Finland.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

MEMBER UPDATES

Jim Marshall informed the committee that things at Blandin are as usual.

Gordy Blum discussed the five timber sales Blackduck is offering. Gordy also spoke about an appeal that the Continental Divide received.

Greg VanOrsow discussed the budget issues and that extensions have been added to about 95% of their timber sales. Greg also discussed the Forest Leadership Team coming to visit the area in October 2009.

Greg Morris informed the committee that a decision notice was put out on the Upper East Winnie Project. Greg also reviewed a list of funded stimulus projects. The complete list will be listed in the Forestry article he wrote for the Chamber's newsletter. Greg then spoke about an appeal that was received regarding the Enbridge Project and that Congressman Oberstar will be attending the Grand Opening Celebration at the Minnesota Discovery Center on September 3, 2009.

Terry Weber informed the committee that the Forest History Center will be focusing on education opportunities now that the tourism season is coming to an end. Terry also discussed the bow hunt that will be taking place at the Forest History Center.

Dale Sutherland reported that he has been focusing on invasive species.

Bud informed the committee that he will be Washington, DC September 21-23, 2009 and discussed a possible pellet business that may be going into part of the Ainsworth building.

Julie Miedtke spoke about a Woody Biomass Workshop that Extension will be offering in September; as well, as some workshops for women that the extension is able to provide due to a Federal grant they received. The workshops are titled "Kitchen Table Gatherings." Julie also informed the committee that Extension Store is offering a new book for sale titled, "Woodland Stewardship."

Art Norton discussed a Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council meeting he attended. More information regarding the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council is available at www.lohc.org

Paul Peterson discussed a new hire who will be working on filling the "hole" in the market created by wood based businesses closing.

Kim Hanson discussed the MN Deer Hunters Banquet that is coming up.

Mike Polzin discussed MN Power entering a third year growth cycle and discussed biomass.

Craig Engwall informed the committee that Bob Schroeder resigned from the LOHC, leaving an opening that will need to be filled by the Governor.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, September 25, 2009 at the Depot Commons meeting room.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by: Renee Thompson, Administrative Assistant & Finance Coordinator.