

MINUTES

FORESTRY AFFAIRS Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce July 27,2007

Chamber Members Present: Jim Marshall, Rick Utech, Terry Weber, Julie Miedtke, Andy David, Steve Arbour, Craig Engwall, Peter McDermott

Advisory Members Present: Catherine McLynn, Barb Knight, Art Norton

Chamber staff: Bud Stone, Renee Thompson

Steve Arbour called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the June 29, 2007 meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rick Utech made a motion to approve the June 29, 2007 meeting minutes. Terry Weber seconded the motion. Motion carries.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP

Jim Marshall and Bud Stone gave the committee an overview of the Timber Productivity/Availability Conference on October 16 & 17, 2007. The conference is being planned by the Minnesota Forest Resource Partnership. Bud encouraged the committee members to attend the conference.

Areas that will be addressed at the conference are: silviculture, family forest lands and information management.

Governor Pawlenty was invited to attend the conference but his attendance has not been confirmed.

Terry Weber suggested that the committee write a letter to the Governor expressing the importance of this meeting and how important it is for him to attend.

Bud Stone volunteered to write the letter from the committee.

ACTION: Bud Stone will write the letter from the committee.

(Prior to Bud writing the letter, it was determined that the Governor would not be able to attend, as he will be out of the Country.)

STATE FOREST LEGACY

Bud Stone gave an update regarding the State Forest Legacy Advisory Group. They will be having a meeting on August 28, 2007 to form a broader work involvement team and to begin to establish the legacy program for State owned lands.

On July 23, 2007 they had a forest land fragmentation meeting with Senator Saxhaug.

Bud Stone and Mark Johnson both are involved with this group.

Catherine McLynn informed the committee that the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan recommends that the County support Forest Legacy Programs and efforts to stem forest land fragmentation. Catherine indicated that some support documents, from the forest side, stating specific ideas for changes to zoning ordinances would be helpful.

ACTION: Bud Stone and Art Norton volunteered to work on zoning ordinance revisions recommendations.

GOVERNORS TASK FORCE REPORT

Jim Marshall read the sixteen recommendations listed in the Governors Task Force Report to the committee.

Committee discussion took place.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

MARCEL NE VEGETATION PROJECT

Steve Arbour informed the committee that a letter was sent from this committee supporting alternative D.

Steve then read information about a Federal Forest lawsuit-taking place in California

ACTION: No further action necessary.

MEMBER UPDATES

Art Norton talked about the Sugar Hills Forest Legacy Celebration on August 9, 2007 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Barb Knight informed the committee that the federal forest service is on track to sell 40 million board feet this year. They have nine sales left for the year. Sales are up 40 % compared to last year.

Julie Miedtke informed the committee that the University hired a Project Coordinator to do wildfire assessments in the county.

Bud asked Julie to get the wildfire assessment information to him via email so he can send it out to the membership.

Julie also informed the committee about the Biomass Conference on August 2, 2007. The conference will include a visit to Rapids Energy Center and equipment demonstrations.

Steve Arbour suggested that Julie contact ICTV to videotape the conference as a way to get the message out to a broader group. Julie accepted the idea.

Craig Engwall informed the committee that the head of the forest service will be in Ely August 2, 2007.

Andy David informed the committee that he gave a tour to their new silviculturalist, Tony D'Amato. The tour included Bemidji, Grand Rapids and Virginia.

Rick Utech talked about Job Zones in the Marcell area.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, August 31, 2007 at the Depot Commons meeting room.

Rick Utech made a motion to adjourn. Terry Weber seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

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