

Forestry Affairs
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
September 23, 2011

Committee Members Present: Larry Sommer, Tom Saxhaug,

Advisory Members Present: Jason Kuiken, Art Norton, Dave Roerick, Patty Thielen

Chamber Staff: Bud Stone, Renee Thompson

Bud called the meeting to order. .

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bud asked if anyone had any corrections to the September 9, 2011 meeting minutes.

Hearing no corrections to the meeting minutes, Bud asked for a motion to approve the September 9, 2011 meeting minutes.

Larry made a motion to approve the September 9, 2011 meeting minutes. Tom seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

THIS WEEK IN FORESTRY

Bud informed the committee that authors were needed for "This Week in Forestry" for 2012.

Rick Horton volunteered to write the January 2012 article.

Art will check with Peggy Ladner regarding writing the February 2012 article rather than the December 2011 article as the February spot fits their timeline better.

ACTION: Bud will check with Mark Johnson about taking the December 2011 spot.

2012 COMMITTEE GOALS AND MISSION

Bud explained to the committee that it is time to review the committee goals and make any changes necessary for 2012.

Bud then informed the committee that in August the Chamber Board of Directors held their 2012 Planning Retreat. At that retreat, the board recommended that the committee set a goal of providing better education and communication regarding forestry issues and to work with the logging community.

The committee reviewed their goals and made several changes to them.

Tom made a motion to accept the discussed changes to the goals. Larry seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Rick suggested that it might be beneficial to have one of the logging businesses present "A Day in a loggers boots." at a Chamber luncheon.

ACTION: Renee will make the discussed changes to the 2011 goals to formulate the 2012 goals.

MEMBER UP-DATES

Rick gave the committee his employment background and discussed what his new position as the Regional Wildlife Biologist of the National Wild Turkey Federation consists of.

Rick also spoke about being involved with the Lessard-Sams grant to help control buck thorn.

Tom informed the committee that Lessard-Sams did their final allocations on Tuesday. Tom feels that outcome was good.

Larry spoke about upgrades that are taking place at the Forest History Center. They are putting in a new HVAC system and a bio-mass system is being considered. Larry also informed the committee that Ed Nelson is going to retire.

Patty informed the committee that the DNR will be posting for 5 new hires. The DNR has not hired any new foresters in 3 years. Patty also spoke about the 100th year DNR celebration. The Governor has confirmed that he is unable to attend.

David spoke about planning Field Days which will be held at the Forest History Center on May 18 & 19, 2012. Tentatively plans for Friday include a tour of Camp Rabideau and the Avenue of Pines. Tentative Saturday programs include "Living with Wolves", "Women in Forestry" and "Land Owner Incentives". David also spoke about working one on one with landowners to educate them and help them overcome obstacles preventing them from managing their lands.

Art informed the committee that the "Community Report Card" is currently being compiled. There was a request this year to add acres of publicly accessible land to the report. The committee suggested adding in a section for assessable trails on the report. Art stated he is hoping to have an update to report on conservation easements next month.

Bud thanked the Forest Service for hosting the September 9, 2011 meeting. Bud also spoke about meeting with federal legislators in D.C. where he was able to talk to them about the importance of national forest funding. Lastly, Bud spoke about a tour he took of ESSAR steel.

ACTION: No further action necessary.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. in the Depot Commons meeting room.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Renee Thompson, Administrative Assistant & Finance Coordinator