

**Minutes of the February 12, 2025 meeting of the Sawyer County
Land, Water & Forest Resources Committee
of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Board Room, Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members (X) Present:

- ☒ Chair: Steve Kariainen
- ☒ Vice Chair: Randy Neumann
- ☒ Kay Wilson
- ☒ Jim Evans (late)
- ☐ Vacant

Andy Albarado
Liz Klein
Jay Kozlowski
Greg Peterson

Others Present:

Adam LaSalle
Seth Zesiger
Don Mrotek
David Todus
Josh Spangler

Call to Order – Chair Kariainen called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call was taken; a quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda – Set

Public Comments – Don Mrotek

Minutes from the previous meeting dated: January 8, 2025

Motion to approve made by: Mr. Neumann Second by: Ms. Wilson

Motion carried without negative vote.

Events - No applications received

Register of Deeds Update--

A written report was provided.

Land Records and County Surveyor Department Report –

Written reports were provided.

Sawyer County Forestry Department --

County Forestry Report- Written and verbal reports were provided by Mr. Peterson. There has not been a meeting with the Seeley Trails stakeholders yet.

DNR Forestry Report- Mr. Todus gave a verbal report on grant work for road reconstruction at Lake of the Pines in Winter; the road is usable, final grading will take place in the summer.

USFS Report- Mr. LaSalle stated that the USFS will plan to attend upcoming meetings of the committee. The USFS is working on a 22,000 acre project in the area of the Forest between Moose Lake and Loretta-Draper to rejuvenate aspens and create openings for the elk herd. There are 8 timber sales planned for 2025 with 13 million board feet to be offered for sale. The recreational trails are open for skiing and snowmobiling.

Town of Winter- Request for Assistance for a Temporary Bridge—

2024 bridge inspections found a Town of Winter bridge in the Thornapple Grade unsafe, prompting closure. This closure will impact the Sawyer County Forest financially and recreationally for three to five years. The Town of Winter Board is requesting county aid to install a temporary bridge. Mr. Albarado presented an option for the county

to purchase an \$85,000 temporary bridge that could be reused in the future, and Town of Winter would pay the \$55,000 cost to transport it from Pennsylvania and install it. The funds could be taken from excess stumpage revenues in 2024.

Motion for a resolution to purchase the temporary bridge and forward to Public Works and the County Board for further discussion and action by: Mr. Neumann Second by: Ms. Wilson
Motion carried without negative vote.

Zoning/Conservation Department -

Wildlife Damage Claims- Mr. Zesiger spoke on 2024 Wildlife Damage Claims submitted and managed on behalf of the county. A written report was provided. Mr. Zesiger recommended approval of the claims as presented, noting that the funds are reimbursed to the county by the state.

Motion to approve the Wildlife Damage Claims by: Mr. Neumann Second by: Mr. Evans
Motion carried without negative vote.

Mr. Zesiger introduced APHIS Animal Damage Specialist, Josh Spangler.

Conservation Report-

Mr. Kozlowski presented a written and verbal report.

Board Appointed Committee Updates -- None

Correspondence, Reports from Conferences and Meetings –

Mr. Albarado reported that the Lake District webinar was well attended and remarked that the item has been moved to the County Board agenda but the committee was still welcome to ask questions.

Future Agenda Items – Add Motorized Recreation Trail Report back to agenda under Forestry Department

Adjournment –9:03 am

Next Meeting: March 12, 2025 Time: 8:30am Location: Board Room
Minutes recorded by Liz Klein, County Clerk