

800 CLERMONT STREET
 ANTIGO, WI 54409-1948
WWW.CO.LANGLADE.WI.US

LANGLADE COUNTY



TELEPHONE: (715)627-6200
 FAX: (715)627-6303

MEETING MINUTES

Committee: Forestry and Recreation Committee
Date: August 12, 2025
Time: 6:00 PM
Location: Highway Department Conference Room

The following discussion was held by the Committee at the meeting detailed above:

1. Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM by Vice-Chairman Medo
2. Silence cell phones
3. Conduct Roll Call:

FORESTRY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Status</i>
Steve Maier	The chair did not chair today's meeting	Present (arrived at 6:35 p.m.)
John Medo	Vice-Chair Chaired today's meeting	Present
Roger Buck	Member	Present
Rick Bina	Member	Absent
Reinhardt Balcerzak	Member	Present

Non-Committee Members Present

<i>Name</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Interest</i>
Al Murray	Forestry, Parks and Rec. Admin.	Robin Stowe	Corporation Counsel
Shane Sparks	Ice Age Trail	Charles and Jan Wetzel	Langlade County Recreation
Chris Dulmes	H/R Generalist	Judy Nagel	County Clerk/ Rec. Secretary
Kevin Bouche	Maintenance Director		

4. **The Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.**
5. **Approve previous meeting minutes of July 8, 2025:** Motion by Buck, second by Balcerzak to approve the previous meeting minutes of July 8, 2025. All ayes, motion carried.
6. **Correspondence for Committee:** Forest Administrator Murray provided the Committee with printed correspondence/posts regarding the Forestry Department.
7. **Forest Administrator's Report** – Written Report to be carried through the agenda.
8. **Langlade County Outdoor Recreation Plan:**
Requested 2025 modification – Elcho Area Health Request: Forest Administrator Murray stated that Charles Wetzel, Elcho Area Health Planning, Inc., regarding building a biking and walking trail through Elcho. Murray noted that this trail through Elcho is not identified in the Langlade County Outdoor Recreation Plan. Wetzel stated that his group is currently working on Phase 1 of the trail through Elcho, starting at the UCC Church and the east side of Highway 45 North, connecting Enterprise Lake Road to the park at the north end of Otter Lake. Phase 2 will be south of Elcho, on the east side, on DOT property, along with easements from property owners, going just south of Hunting River and linking up with County Road B, with the design 99% complete, and looking to start fundraising for the trail. Phase 3 will continue the trail north of Elcho to County Road G. Forest Administrator Murray presented the

Committee with Resolution #30-2025, Modify the 2022-2026 Lantlade County Outdoor Recreation Plan to Include Bike and Pedestrian Path in Elcho, to modify 6.2 Local Government Recommendations: Town of Elcho: Construct a 10-foot wide asphalt path on the east side of USH 45 within the right-of-way to extend from the existing asphalt path at Parkway Lane, north to CTH G, and improve the former railroad bed and other property with a new gravel surface, south of Elcho from Cole St, south to CTH B. Motion by Balcerzak, second by Buck, to Modify the 2022-2026 Lantlade County Outdoor Recreation Plan to Include Bike and Pedestrian Path in Elcho. All ayes, motion carried.

2026 New Plan Process: Forest Administrator Murray stated that the Outdoor Rec Plan will expire in 2026, and he will be working with NCWRPC to start the process early in 2026. Murray will be looking for input from the Committee and the citizens of Lantlade County for the new plan.

9. **Ice Age Trail: concerns with Bear Bait and Trail Damage:** Shane Sparks, from the Ice Age Trail Alliance, showed pictures of the ruts created by those who are baiting bears on the Ice Age Trail in the Lumber Camp Section. Sparks noted that the trail is for foot access for hikers, and bear baiting is not only damaging the trail but is a safety concern for the hikers. Discussion held. Sparks is requesting to close this portion of the trail to vehicle traffic 300 to 350 yards before the trail damage. Motion by Balcerzak, second by Buck, to place a berm on the trail 300 to 350 yards before the trail damage. All ayes, motion carried.
10. **2025 Sustainable Forestry Grant Applications:** Forest Administrator Murray shared with the Committee two County Forest Sustainable Forestry Grant Applications: a 2.2-mile Forest Road that provides the main access into the northwest corner of the Evergreen Block of County Forest, 1500 acres, improving a primary road access for logging operations. The second one, the improvement of 1.0 miles of Forest Road that provides access into a central section of the Evergreen Block of County Forest, including access to Norway Lake, a primary access into the forest, and for Norway Lake recreational use. Discussion held. Motion by Buck, second by Balcerzak, to approve the 2025 Sustainable Forestry Grant Application for a 2.2-mile Forest Road in the northwest corner of the Evergreen Block of the County Forest. All ayes, motion carried. Motion by Buck, second by Medo to approve the 2025 Sustainable Forestry Grant Application for improvement of a 1.0 mile of Forest Road that provides access into the Forest and to Norway Lake. All ayes, motion carried.
11. **2024 Annual Accomplishment Report:** Forest Administrator Murray presented a written report of the Forestry, Parks, and Recreation Department 2024 Accomplishment Report. The report was a requirement of the SFI Audit and is available from the Forest Administrator. Murray will present this report to the County Board in September.
12. **Off-Highway Motor Vehicle (OHMV) Trails:**

Official Naming of Trails: Forest Administrator Murray shared an article that will be published in Northology Adventures, noting that the article refers to OHMV trails and Crocker Hills Trails as the same trails. Discussion on the confusion of the trails, the Crocker Hills Equestrian Area, and the trails that are off Sherry Road in the Town of Evergreen. Motion by Maier, second by Buck, to formally name the OHMV Trails the West Evergreen OHMV Trails. All ayes, motion carried. Murray will be in contact with Northology Adventures and advise them of the name change.

Revenue: Disposition of 2025 Funds: Forest Administrator Murray stated that revenue from the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Permits, \$4180, consists of 69 vehicles and 78 operators, is revenue that was not budgeted for, and no expenses were budgeted. Discussion on using the unbudgeted revenue for trail maintenance and development. Motion by Buck, second by Balcerzak, to designate funds received in

2025 from OHMV trails be deposited in the Rec Fund and specified to be used for OHMV trail infrastructure, as needed. All ayes, motion carried.

Wisconsin Fall 4X4 Fest, White Lake: Forest Administrator Murray shared a flyer for the Wisconsin Fall 4X4 Fest to be held in White Lake on October 3-5, 2025, at River Forest Campground. Murray noted that the OHMV trails are an investment in the recreational offerings in Langlade County. No action, information only.

13. **2026 Budgets:** Forest Administrator Murray provided a copy of a proposed budget for each of the following budgets.

2026 Forestry Budget: Murray discussed the 2026 Forestry Budget, providing notes on changes to the budget. Discussion on Forestry Department leased vehicles, owned vehicles, and buy-out of the vehicles, using short-term borrowing or Forest Preservation Fund for the lease payments.

2026 Parks and Recreation Budget: Murray discussed the 2026 Parks and Recreation Budget, providing notes on changes to the budget for 2026: park equipment, aging boiler at VMP Shop, landscaping, re-establishing the boardwalk to trails and amenities on the island at CDL Park, erosion control at Sawyer Lake, and ADA Access improvements at Shooting Range.

2026 Campgrounds Budget: Murray discussed the 2026 Campgrounds Budget, noting requested changes to the 2026 Budget: electrical upgrades to VMP, table and fire ring replacement at VMP, and lake access pier, commercial washer, dryer, and water heater at VMP, and concrete at VMP.

2026 Recreational Trails Budget: Murray discussed the 2026 Rec Trails Budget, noting requested changes to the 2026 Budget: OHMV signage and kiosk, OHMV Trailhead restroom, Perch Lake ATV Trail construction, bear caves signage and trail development, and snowmobile bridge replacement.

2026 Fairgrounds Budget: Murray discussed the 2026 Fairgrounds Budget, noting requested changes to the 2026 Budget: roll-up door and ramp on the Exhibition Building, south track pedestrian trail and gate, track pit gravel and grade, and track pit speakers. Discussion on the buildings and infrastructure at the Fairgrounds. The Committee agreed to refer to Public Property a capital improvement audit of the Fairgrounds.

2026 Capital Projects and Capital Equipment Budget: Murray reviewed with the Committee the 2026 Capital Project Requests, noting that two items: Website Online Module for permits and credit cards at the Office, and to replace the boiler at the Shop at Jack Lake, will need to be budgeted for in 2026.

Motion by Maier, second by Balcerzak, to accept the preliminary 2026 Forestry, Parks and Rec, Campground, Recreational Trails, Fairgrounds, and Capital Projects and Capital Equipment Budgets, and forward those budgets to the Administrative/Finance Committee. All ayes, motion carried.

14. **SFI Certification – Third Party Audit:** Forest Administrator Murray stated that the third-party Audit was completed by SBC Global, under contract with the WI DNR. The Audit started on August 4, with an opening meeting, a field visit on August 6, and a closing meeting on August 8. The County was found to be in full compliance with the SFI standards, also conforming were Lincoln, Taylor, and Clark Counties.
15. **Wounded Warriors Fund Raiser Ride:** Due to the limited time, the information on the Wounded Warriors Fund Raiser Ride is in the Committee packet.
16. **At approximately 7:30 p.m., consider moving into closed session pursuant to:**
 - a) **Section 19.85(1)(c), Wis. Stats., considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body had jurisdiction or exercise responsibility, to review performance management of the Forestry, Parks, and Recreation Administrator position.** Corporation Counsel Stowe explained to the Committee the request above to move into closed session. Discussion held. The Committee, Forest

Administrator, and Stowe agreed that this closed session agenda item would be delayed until next month.

- b) **Section 19,85(1)(g), Wis. Stats., conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is likely to become involved, to discuss strategies in resolving timber sale debts and to review active litigation of timber sale debts with Corporation Counsel.** Corporation Counsel Stowe discussed the timber sale debts that have been referred to his office. Corporation Counsel Stowe stated that he would like the Committee to review the proposed resolution of one of the timber sales referred. Motion by Maier, second by Buck to move into closed session at 8:20 p.m. Voice Vote: Maier, aye; Buck, aye; Balcerzak, aye; and Medo, aye. Stowe, Murray, and Clerk Nagel remained in closed session.
17. **At approximately 8:00 p.m., return to open session with possible action on matters discussed in closed session:** Motion by Maier, second by Buck to return to open session at 8:30 p.m. All ayes, motion carried. Motion by Maier, second by Buck, to move forward with what was discussed by the Committee in closed session. All ayes, motion carried.
18. **Next Meeting Date:** September 8, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.
19. **Adjourn the Meeting:** Motion by Buck, second by Balcerzak, to adjourn the Forestry & Recreation Meeting at 8:35 p.m. All ayes, motion carried.

Minutes transcribed and submitted by:
Judy Nagel, County Clerk/Recording Secretary