MINUTES – Executive Committee Meeting

07/16/2026 at 9am Room 102 Curran Building, Rhinelander

Present: Bill Bialecki, Steve Heimerman, Bob Mott, Wayne Plant.   Excused: Arlyn Tober
Staff Present: Tracy Beckman   Special Guest: Ryan Wempe

1. Call to Order – Bialecki called the meeting to order at 9:06am
2. Approve Agenda – Motion by Mott/Heimerman to approve the agenda with the addition of 'project fund discussion' added to the Council Meeting Agenda topic. Motion Carried.
3. FIA Updates
    a. Performance Reviews – there were none
    b. Expanding CFI Program Discussion – The committee would like to research what would be needed to expand the CFI program. Do we need software and hardware? Are there proprietary claims against the current software? Regarding a strategy to improve Forest Health, can we expand our Forest Inventory Program to include more county forests and other areas like state natural areas, legacy forests and other protected public lands such as those in land trusts. Also, can we use the data we collect for any other purpose, ie: invasive species inventory, control, monitoring and restoration services. Has anything changed regarding Forest Management Plans or Timber Sales, is that something we should look at again? Beckman will discuss topic with Kaiser and then we'll discuss it at the next Executive Committee meeting.
    c. Additional Call application updates for MI UP & NOR IL – Beckman reported that the inventory supervisor accepted the MI UP Call and noted that we've also been offered the NOR IL Call, but Kaiser is on Isle Royale until next week. Beckman will ask him to give an update at the council meeting or within his quarterly report.
    d. Plan visit to USFS Building – this was an idea from a prior meeting so the committee could learn what type of space is required by the Forest Inventory staff. Since the supervisor was out of town, the visit was postponed.
4. Review/Vote Proposed At Large Member Policy Change – Members reviewed the proposed policy change and on a motion by Mott/Plant, agreed to recommend forwarding the proposed policy change to the full council for a vote at their 7/30 meeting. Motion Carried.
5. Review/Vote Proposed Bylaws change – Members reviewed the proposed bylaws change and on a motion by Heimerman/Mott, agreed to recommend forwarding the proposed change to the full council for a vote at their 7/30 meeting. Motion Carried.
6. Investment Options: Members welcomed Ryan Wempe from Financial Planning & Information Services. He was invited by Bill Bialecki to describe his work helping other nonprofits (such as the County Forests' Association) with investment funds. Wempe presented his company's services and choices for strategic investing. He asked what our investment goals are, then answered questions. He explained he would be our contact and that there is no fee to add or withdraw funds from an account. The committee excused Mr. Wempe then discussed options. They would like Beckman to prepare a worksheet for the council meeting explaining how our former annuity investment worked, what we made, what we could have made, what they feel is a wiser investment decision, what our goals are. Then on a motion by Bialecki/Heimerman, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend the council approve $300,000 over the next three months in $100,000 increments to be invested with Mr. Wempe's firm. Motion Carried. Beckman will prepare a workpaper for the Council Meeting.
7. Strategic Planning Continued/Updates from last meeting
    a. Communications Plans with Counties/County Con Letters/Welcome Packets: Beckman presented a communications plan along with two packets, one for county conservationists and the other for new council members. No action was taken.
    b. Website & Outreach Updates – Beckman explained she'd done a refresh on the Lumberjack logo using

ChatGPT and made some initial website updates, specifically making applying for a Lumberjack Grant easier by clicking a button on the home page. At the suggestion of Bob Mott, Beckman has been in contact with Don Schindhelm from Nicolet College. He is an IT/Website instructor and has helped non-profits before. Beckman reported she had made contact and will meet with him in early August.

c. WHIP/TIP/FLOW Budgets – Beckman noted she has yet to complete these proposed budgets but hopes to have them ready for the Lumberjack meeting on 7/30.

d. Continued discussions – Heimerman stated he feels there are no further items to discuss at this time and nobody else had other items.

8. Project Fund Calculation – Members reviewed the Annual Project Fund Calculation which is used to set the amount to be transferred to the project fund for the next year. This year for the first time, the calculation shows a negative balance which would leave the fund with less than two full years of project funds. There was a lot of discussion about how to proceed, whether to put reserves in the fund, put a moratorium on projects for 2027, approve funds for the next two years or just leave the fund as is and see what happens next year. After a lengthy discussion, the committee decided to let the council debate this topic. Beckman will check all the figures again and then prepare the calculation worksheet for the 7/30/26 meeting. One note is that the interest balance breakdown box should be the 1st/2nd quarter interest on ONLY the project account #1319, and not all accounts that collect interest. Beckman will make the changes, check the figures again and update the calculation sheet for the meeting.

9. Set Council Meeting Agenda – Members reviewed the agenda and made a couple revisions for the 7/30/2026 meeting.

10. Employee Performance Review – at an ad hoc June meeting of the Executive Committee, a request was made to have this topic be a standing agenda item, so Executive Committee members are aware of employee performance reviews. For today's meeting, there were no performance reviews from the prior quarter, however, Beckman's 12th anniversary is 7/28/2026 so two days prior to the meeting, she sent members a copy of the finalized agenda along with a standardized employee review form, letting them know the next employee review is her own and it is conducted by the Executive Committee. She also reminded the committee how they performed her previous review, which was very informal, the committee, rather than completing the form individually, excused Beckman, then as a group, made motions and approved a salary recommendation and then called Beckman back to tell her their decisions. Heimerman asked if anyone had completed Beckman's review form and nobody answered that they had. He expressed concerns about the form, saying it is subjective and doesn't give a true picture of employee performance and wants there to be more emphasis on goals and growth for employees. He stated it is also not acceptable to receive a review form only two days prior to conducting the review. Others agreed the time was too short and decided to table Beckman's review until further notice.

11. Adjourn – the meeting adjourned at 12:34pm.

Submitted by Tracy Beckman for Secretary Arlyn Tober

07/27/2026