



Aitkin  
County

# Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

3A  
Agenda Item #

**Requested Meeting Date:** May 12, 2020

**Title of Item:** Land Dept. Timber Extension Policies

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	<b>Action Requested:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
<b>Submitted by:</b> Rich Courtemanche		<b>Department:</b> Land
<b>Presenter (Name and Title):</b> Rich Courtemanche - Land Commissioner		<b>Estimated Time Needed:</b> 10 min
<b>Summary of Issue:</b> Aitkin County Land Dept. requests to change its timber sale policies:  1) Removing the penalty fee for applying for first timber sale extensions but charging the sale holder to put additional monies down, and 2) Granting limited authority to the Land Commissioner to grant second timber sale extensions for adverse weather conditions.  (see attached)		
<b>Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:</b>  		
<b>Recommended Action/Motion:</b> Recommend a motion to change the Land Department's timber sale extension policies		
<b>Financial Impact:</b> Is there a cost associated with this request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i>		

Legally binding agreements must have County Attorney approval prior to submission.

Aitkin County Land Department (ACLD) auctions timber and grants loggers three full winters to harvest the trees. For ecological reasons, frozen ground provides optimal conditions for loggers to harvest timber and prevent rutting and soil compaction. Within the last ten years, there have been several warm winters that have prevented loggers from harvesting and they have had to request timber extensions. In addition, tight markets and declining prices are making it difficult for local loggers to make a living. ACLD would like to change its policies regarding first extensions on timber permits.

Currently:

One-year extension penalty fee: \$20.00 or 10% of uncut balance, as determined from the County Land Office sale record, whichever is greater.

Proposed:

One-year extension: \$20.00 or 10% of uncut balance to be applied to the timber sale balance, as determined from the County Land Office sale record, whichever is greater.

This change would remove the penalty fee and not financially penalize the logger. The result would be that the Forfeited Tax Sale (FTS) Trust would receive 10% in the current year and ACLD would extend the permit but the logger would not receive a permanent penalty beyond ACLD holding their funds for an additional year.

The County Board grants authority:

The Land Commissioner, with sufficient evidence as determined by the Land Department, may grant second extensions to timber permits if adverse weather conditions have prevented harvest. As a condition, the timber sale and the performance bond are paid in full; no penalty fee. The Land Commissioner may grant up to an additional two years to cut the sale.