



Board of Forestry Meeting

March 15, 2018
Charlottesville, VA

Convene Meeting, Call to Order:

The Board of Forestry meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Worrell at the headquarters board room in Charlottesville, VA. Chairman Worrell reminded the Board of the Anti-trust acknowledgement and policy.

Roll Call:

Board of Forestry Members Present

Anne Beals, Don Bright, John Burke, III, Joel Cathey, Keith Drohan, Ken Morgan Jr., Franklin Myers, Greg Scheerer, Dr. David Smith, William Snyder and Glen Worrell

Members Absent

James Harder and Beth Flippo Hutchins

Recognition of Guests and Visitors:

Virginia Department of Forestry Present

Rob Farrell, State Forester; Ed Zimmer, Chief of Operations; Andy Alvarez, Chief of Administration; Dean Cumbia, Director of Forest Resource Management; Todd Groh, Forest Resource Management Coordinator; Robbie Talbert, Central Regional Forester; Brian Lacey and Peter Eales, Pine Resource Specialists; Mary Weaver, Executive Assistant

Recognition of Guests and Visitors

Bettina Ring, Secretary of Agricultural and Forestry; Jonathan Harding, Virginia Agricultural Business Council; Ron Jenkins, Virginia Loggers Association; Sarah Kammer, Virginia Forestry Association; Elizabeth Buhl, Virginia Forestry Association

Adoption of Agenda:

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented; seconded. All present were in favor.

Hearing of Citizens:

None

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the January 4, 2018 minutes as presented; seconded. All present were in favor.

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Update:

Secretary Ring congratulated Rob Farrell for being appointed as the new Virginia State Forester and the VDOF for a great job containing the fires during the high winds Virginia received. Secretary Ring discussed her transition into her new role and the many new legislators in office.

Secretary Ring discussed the following:

- ◆ Proposed budget has not been approved yet:
 - One hundred percent match for Reforestation Timberland (RT).
 - One-time funding to increase capacity at Garland Gray nursery for containerized seedlings for Loblolly and Long Leaf Pine.
- ◆ Attended the Ag Trade Conference and talked about how to move forward with trade.
- ◆ Transition planning, how to give family's tools to keep property intact.
- ◆ More focus on land conservation efforts.

State Forester's Report:

Rob Farrell reviewed with the Board how the State Forester changes but the Agency mission does not. Rob would like to take a hard look at the limited resources VDOF has and how do we do what we do to the best we can. Rob updated the Board on the following:

- ◆ General Assembly – lots of support for forestry in General Assembly and the state.
- ◆ 5-day workweek – will begin transitioning on July 1, 2018 and will be completed by October 1, 2018.
- ◆ Strategic Plan close to final draft, plan to get that out the end of April.
- ◆ Tremendous fire response, no accidents or significant injuries.
- ◆ SGSF preformed a Water Quality Audit – VDOF has a great Water Quality program.
- ◆ Received \$150,000 from DGIF to support longleaf restoration efforts.
- ◆ Working on filling the Deputy State Forestry position soon.
- ◆ Garland Gray lifted 33 million seedlings, planters and lifters working hard.
- ◆ Augusta Nursery planting 2.5 million hardwood.
- ◆ Close to completion on the State Forest certification.
- ◆ Pipelines are happening; cutting trees – how do you mitigate for forest fragmentation – discussed what is the right-away and is it to be maintained.
- ◆ The Timber Theft group will meet again soon.
- ◆ Holding an Agency wide meeting on July 18, 2018.
- ◆ Honoring Jim Garner the end of April, naming the building after him.
- ◆ Gave a Bulldozer to Dabney Lancaster Community College.
- ◆ The Virginia Incident Command Center (VICC) is moving from Roanoke to Charlottesville and will be located at the VDOF Headquarters building.

Secretary Ring mentioned VDOF is hosting the SGSF Conference in Richmond, VA June 4-7 and discussed the opportunities for the BOF to attend events at the conference.

Informational Items:

Legislative Update

Mr. Andy Alvarez briefed the Board on the following legislation;

- ◆ General Assembly adjourned on March 13, 2018.
- ◆ House Bill 844 - amended the definition of “Orchard” and “Vineyard” for the purposes of the exception to the ban on burning brush where such burning is done to prevent frost damage to orchards or vineyards - **passed**.
- ◆ House Bill 125 – amended the definition of forest products to include rough-sawn green lumber – **passed**.
- ◆ House Bill 436 - Replaces the existing voluntary renewable portfolio standard program with a mandatory renewable portfolio standard program that requires each investor-owned electric utility to generate or purchase, from facilities in the Commonwealth, increasing percentages of electric power that is generated from qualifying renewable sources – **passed**.
- ◆ House Bill 636 – Prohibits the Department of Forestry from adopting any regulation barring the use of an electric personal assistive mobility device by a disabled veteran in any state forest, or on any road or trail traversing the same, except where necessary to ensure the safety of such veteran, other park visitors, or the well-being of state forest lands and resources – **no action taken**.

Pine Resources Specialists

Ed Zimmer reminded everyone of how and why the Pine Resource Specialists positions were created and introduced Brian Lacey and Peter Eales, VDOFs Pine Resource Specialists.

Brian Lacey discussed with the Board what he has been doing and his future plans for this position:

- ◆ Identifying counties in work areas in pine sustainability areas.
- ◆ Trying to find baseline numbers, went back through IFRIS to 2009 looking at anything pine related.
- ◆ Looking at where VDOF is currently at with Pine sustainability and how to improve.
- ◆ Attended a southern silviculture conference, learned a lot.
- ◆ Working on a new training program for new foresters with less than five years’ experience.
- ◆ This fall will be working on a more consistent approach of recommendations for landowners and reviewing VDOFs procedures for loblolly seedling survival.

Peter Eales explained what he has been doing in his area:

- ◆ Visiting different mills and industries to see where VDOF can help.
- ◆ Assisted with putting articles together to get educational information out to the public.
- ◆ Worked with Ward Burton on YouTube videos to educate landowners on options they have.
- ◆ Showed the Board the “Growing Virginia’s Future” signs that will be put up on reforestation sites.

The Board had a discussion on the information they received from Brian and Peter.

- ◆ They suggested putting a website or number on the bottom of the “Growing Virginia’s Future” signs.
- ◆ Would like to see an emphasis on Public Relations, wonderful opportunity to have short articles on pine sustainability in local newspapers.
- ◆ Asked VDOF to revisit putting more articles in newspapers.
- ◆ Concerned on perception of how much land is converted to pine.
- ◆ Need to get the data on what is being converted from pine to hardwood.

The Board is very pleased with the progress the Pine Resource Specialists are doing and keep up the great work.

Mr. Greg Scheerer suggested looking into a hardwood harvest cost share.

Action Items:

None

Committee/Liaison Reports:

Reforestation of Timberlands (RT) Sub-Committee

Mr. Greg Scheerer shared with the Board the discussion at the sub-committee meeting on February 10. The committee discussed changes to the policy and procedures for approving applications along with proposed changes for the RT Project Rates for the 2019 fiscal year, as follows:

- ◆ Add a project for Herbicide for Hardwood Only - \$30 per acre
- ◆ Tree Planting – Loblolly Pine \$22 per acre - change from \$25 per acre.
- ◆ Site Preparation – Herbicide (Pine & Hardwood) \$50 per acre - change from \$55 per acre.
- ◆ Herbicide Release by Air – All pines except white pine \$18 per acre - change from 20 per acre.

Chairman Worrell mentioned that there was no need to vote on the rates because the Board is an Advisory Board. All Board members present were ok with the proposed changes.

Mr. Todd Groh reviewed with the Board the final RT accomplishments, allocations and budget for FY 2017 along with the interim accomplishments, allocations and budget for FY 2018

Hardwood Management Sub-Committee

Mr. John Burke shared with the Board that the sub-committee met on February 1 and looked at the need to build a group of passionate partners for hardwood. This will be a long-term project and want to make sure we have all players on board before it is pushed forward. Rob will be sending out a doodle poll out to get a meeting together of 10-12 people that can help set up an initiative for down the road.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

The next meeting will be August 24 in Williamsburg, VA in conjunction with the Virginia Loggers Association. There will be dinner the evening prior, August 23, with the Virginia Loggers Association Board.

Adjournment:

Chairman Worrell called for a motion to adjourn; motion was made to adjourn the March 15, 2018 meeting at 12:06p.m. and seconded. All present were in favor.

Minutes recorded by Mary Weaver, Executive Assistant