

**MINUTES  
ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION  
January 10, 2013**

PRESIDING – Johnny McReynolds, Chairman

SECRETARY - Linda Casey, State Forester

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Johnny McReynolds, Tommy Thompson, Ken Real, Don Heath, Jerry Smith, Irvin Eatman and Salem Saloom.

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT - Linda Casey, Tom Conway, and Regina Miller.

GUESTS – Roy McAuley, Sam Duvall, Stephen May and Dana Byerle.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Chairman Johnny McReynolds called this regular meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. on January 10, 2013 in the Alabama Forestry Commission's State Office Executive Conference Room located at 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

ROLL CALL– Regina Miller called roll. All Commissioners were present. Miller announced that a quorum was present.

Miller announced that the meeting had been properly advertised.

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 30, 2012 MEETING – Commissioner Ken Real made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2012 meeting. Commissioner Tommy Thompson seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT – Commissioner Ken Real made a motion to approve the nominating committee's recommendations of Tommy Thompson as Chairman and Salem Saloom as Vice-Chairman. There being no other nominations, Irvin Eatman seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

10:06 a.m. – New Chairman Tommy Thompson presided over the remainder of the meeting.

STATE FORESTER'S REPORT – State Forester Linda Casey reviewed the budget and reported that the Commission could have \$3.5 million in carryover funds on September 30<sup>th</sup> but the estimate will depend on several factors including the number of fires, proration, and equipment. Salaries and benefits will cost \$1 million of this amount. The agency's operating cost of \$19.5 million should be about the same as well as revenue.

State Forester Casey reported that she has requested a budget increase of \$2.5 million in the State General Fund Budget with \$1.1 million for firefighting equipment at the agency's annual budget presentation to the Finance Director.

State Forester Casey stated that forty percent of our equipment is over twenty years old and 43 percent of our dozers are over twenty years old. She stated that the average mileage on pick up trucks is 147,000 miles. Commissioner Don Heath asked for a report at the next Commissioner's meeting on the agency's equipment as well as pick up trucks.

State Forester Casey reminded Commissioners that the agency experienced an employee reduction of 70 plus position in 2010. The state is no longer competitive with industry in forester employee recruitment. She stated the importance of maintaining experienced, trained employees. Commissioner Heath asked for a report at the next Commissioner's meeting of the agency's forester positions.

State Forester Casey reported that the USDA Forest Service is still conducting the ARRA grants audit and is including an audit of all federal grants from 2007-2012. A vast amount of documentation as well as time sheets for all employees working on any grant activity has been submitted. Due to the changes in grant auditing, the state forester reported that a grant coordinator has been hired, a grants management manual will be developed and teams for each grant will be established and receive training in grant management.

LAUDERDALE COUNTY – State Forest Casey reported that the City of Florence would like to purchase the Lauderdale County office building and shop. The city owns the land. The site is very difficult to enter and exit with a fire suppression unit therefore being a safety issue. Current restrictions of the property make it difficult to redesign the driveway. The Commission owns 3.9 acres on Highway 20 and would like to pursue selling the current buildings and using those funds to construct a new office building and shop on the property.

Commissioner Ken Real made a motion to proceed with exploring the alternate location for the county office as long as there is no cost to the Commission. Commissioner McReynolds seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. State Forester Casey stated that we will pursue employees constructing a building due to the State Building Commission's policy regarding construction costs over \$20,000.

Commissioner Don Heath made a motion to go into Executive Session at 11:17 a.m. and stated that the session would last approximately twenty minutes. The purpose of the session would be to address personnel issues. Commissioner Irvin Eatman seconded the motion and the motion passed with Commissioners Don Heath, Irvin Eatman, Tommy Thompson, Johnny McReynolds, Ken Real, Jerry Smith, and Salem Saloom voting in favor of the motion.

Chairman Thompson reconvened the regular meeting at 11:25 p.m.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING - Commissions scheduled the next meeting of the Commission on March 12, 2013 at the Commission's state office in Montgomery.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.