

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION
July 19, 2012

PRESIDING – Johnny McReynolds, Chairman

SECRETARY – Linda Casey, State Forester

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT – Don Heath.

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT – Linda Casey, Patrick Glass, Tom Conway, Dan Jackson, Roy Griffith and Regina Miller.

GUESTS – Rick Oats, Sam Duvall and Roy McAuley.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Chairman Johnny McReynolds called the meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. on July 19, 2012 in the Commission's state office executive conference room, 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

ROLL CALL – Regina Miller called roll. All Commissioners except Don Heath were present. Miller announced that a quorum was present. Commissioner Ken Real made a motion to excuse Heath's absence due to a business conflict and Commissioner Johnny McReynolds seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Miller stated that the meeting had been properly advertised.

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 12, 2012 MEETING – Commissioner Salem Saloom made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2012 meeting as presented. Commissioner Eatman seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

FY13 BUDGET UPDATE & OPERATIONS PLAN – State Forester Linda Casey explained that there are several scenarios in the coming months that could determine the Commission's budget and operating costs for the coming year. Factors to be considered include receiving or not receiving the agency's federal funding, reductions in expected revenue or operating costs, the upcoming Constitutional amendment and anticipated proration if the amendment fails to pass.

USDA FOREST SERVICE, OIG AUDIT UPDATE – State Forester Casey told Commissioners that the agency is waiting for the USFS and Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to resolve the issue that the Commission owes the USFS \$5.1 million.

LAND TRANSACTION – General Counsel Tom Conway informed Commissioner's that an adjoining property owner would like the Commission to give him the old Crenshaw

County property as well as the fire tower on the property. The tower does have communications equipment owned by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Crenshaw County E911. He stated that Crenshaw County will be removing their repeater from the tower.

Conway stated that talks with the property owner will continue when equipment is removed from the tower but that the Commission will not give him the property.

STATE FORESTER'S REPORT – State Forester Casey presented new Alabama Forestry Commission brochures and stated that grant funds were used to produce the brochures.

Casey mentioned that changes will be made regarding membership in the American Tree Farm System. At this point, changes are a work in progress with the goal of benefitting landowners.

Forest Operations Division Director Dan Jackson reported that 1,450 fires this year have burned 22,634 acres down from 3,295 fires that burned 65,000 acres last year. He reported that the average acreage burned per fire has risen which might be a result of less employees. He stated that over 40% of agency equipment is at or above the life span of a dozer which is 20 years.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ARRA GRANT SUMMARY – Assistant State Forester Patrick Glass stated that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants are in the process of being finalized. The three grants are summarized below.

Longleaf – This award furthered longleaf restoration efforts through two sub grants, one to the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and another, with the majority of funds, awarded to The Longleaf Alliance. The Commission received a benefit totaling \$1,661,410.87 and supported a portion of one employee's salary.

Prescribed Burning – This award benefitted the agency by supporting fuel reduction in the Wildland-Urban Interface and rural landscapes through prescribed burning and mulching. The benefit totaled \$2,497,251.65 and supported ten employee's salaries.

Cogongrass – This award supported one contract to Larson & McGowin for the development and delivery of cogongrass treatments to forest land in Alabama. The award supported seven employee's salaries.

LANDOWNER SURVEY DEVELOPMENT – Assistant State Forester Glass reported that an ongoing statewide landowner survey is a strategy included in the Commission's 2011-2013 Strategic Plan. The purpose of the survey is to determine landowner needs and their perception of services provided by the Commission. Glass reviewed the components of the survey and consideration for development and analysis of responses.

STATE OFFICE BUILDING UPDATE – Glass explained that a Life Cycle Cost Analysis for the state office had been obtained using software obtained from the Applied Economics Office Engineering Laboratory’s National Institute of Standards and Technology under the U.S. Department of Energy. The projected period for the analysis was based on the life expectancy of the newly installed HVAC system. The projected analysis only contained capital replacement expenditures and annual operating costs with timing of expenditures based on replacement needs and the availability of funds.

COASTAL PRE-HARVEST GUIDE FOR FOREST LANDOWNERS – BMP Forester Jim Jeter presented this new document to serve as a guide for landowners, foresters, and other natural resource professionals to ensure that forest management practices protect and enhance wetlands in Alabama.

SMOKEY BEAR HOT AIR BALLOON – Forest Operations Division Director Dan Jackson shared that the Commission had good exposure by participating in the Gulf Coast Annual Hot Air Balloon Festival in Foley June 15-17, 2012. The festival this year featured the Smokey Bear Hot Air Balloon and typically draws 80,000 visitors from eleven states each year with approximately 45 hot air balloons. The Commission assisted with the festival logistics as well as manning an exhibit and talking with festival attendees.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING – The next meeting was scheduled on October 30, 2012 at the Commission’s state office, 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama with the meeting to begin at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT – Commissioner Ken Real made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:24 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Irvin Eatman and passed by unanimous vote.