MINUTES

TENNESSEE FORESTRY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

6/8/2022

Tennessee Forestry Commission meeting was held in the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, Bruer Building Oak Training Room in Nashville, TN, June 08, 2022

Participants:
Forestry Commission Members: Johnny Heard, Chairman; Tom Midyett, Vice Chairman; John Charles Wilson (remote), Secretary; Alex Richman, Mike Witt, Sharon Jean-Philippe, Bill Legg.

Forestry Commission Ex-Officio Members:


Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA): Jeff Akin, Deputy Commissioner; Shannon Klonowski, Assistant Commissioner; Samantha Wilson, Budget Coordinator

Tennessee Department of Agriculture - Division of Forestry (TDF): Heather Slayton, Assistant State Forester; Rachel Greene, Forest Data and Analysis Unit Leader; Robert Elliott, Forest Health and Sustainability Unit Leader; Dyshea Brown, Executive Administrative Assistant.

Tennessee Forestry Association: Candace Dinwiddie, Executive Director

Farm Service Agency (FSA): John Litz, Executive Director of TN; Greer Gill, Public Affairs/Outreach Coordinator; Christina Boles, Agriculture Program Specialist

Chairman Johnny Heard welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. CDT

Farm Service Agency

- Foster a relationship with Forestry and Farm Service Agency.
- Encourage landowners to serve on County Committees and be a voice.
- Loan Services offered thru FSA: Emergency, Direct and Guaranteed

John Litz
Approval of the Minutes of the April 5, 2022 meeting

Tom Midyett motioned to approve minutes as presented. Bill Legg seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Approval of Commission Officers

- Bill Legg, Mike Witt and John Charles Wilson served on nominating sub-committee.
- The following individuals were nominated for the Commission Officer positions: Tom Midyett, Chairman; John Charles Wilson, Vice-Chairman; Sharon Jean Philippe, Secretary.

Sharon Jean-Philippe motioned to accept the nomination of slated officers as presented. Alex Richman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Voting members: Johnny Heard, Bill Legg, Mike Witt and Alex Richman approved the one-year appointment of nominated officers. The motion carries. Nominated officers abstained from voting.

Vacancy update

- The division has a 14% FTE vacancy rate which is down from 15%. Currently 76 total vacant positions which include 28 FA1s (seasonal firefighters) from 59 total vacancies.
- The vacancy percentage has increased from April due to FA1s being separated since last report. The vacancy percentage for all positions increased from 15% to 19%.
- Positions experiencing the most vacancies are FA2s. The majority of those vacancies reside in West TN district for FA2s.
- Aware that pay is an issue but also reviewing our recruiting efforts.

Timber Sales update

- Andy McBride new State Forest Unit Leader.
- Timber Sales - target $3.2 million, currently $2.67 million, pending: 3 sales at Chickasaw SF. Currently, sales are $1.8 million in hardwood and $850k in pine.
- Timber Sales will be approximately $150K short of target.
- Salvage operation sales at Natchez Trace SF.
- FY23 - $335k allocated for operational plan to reset state forest inventory.
Forest Industry support update

- Next fall a Forest Industry Career Camp will be conducted to highlight different careers with Forest Industries.
- Forestry Camp to attract students that are interested or garner interest in a field in Forestry. Foster a relationship with school guidance counselors.
- Workforce Development funded for 3rd year.
- TFA has acquired 501(c)(3) status.
- Department of Agriculture provided TFA with a grant to provide safety training and safety equipment for loggers.
- Opinion leader’s meeting is conducted annually to bring together leaders of forest industry and discuss how the forest industry can be supported. The meeting is scheduled for June 21, 2022.

Approval to change September 7th meeting date to August 24th

Tom Midyett motioned to approve changing the September meeting to August. Bill Legg seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Presentation of plaque to Johnny Heard for his 10 years of dedicated service as Tennessee Forestry Commission Chair and member.

Future Meeting Dates

- August 24, 2022 – Approve Division Budget (fourth Wednesday in September).
- January 10, 2023 – Discuss budget, timber sales (second Tuesday in January).
- April 4, 2023 – Approve Nursery seedling pricing/production and appoint sub-committee to nominate Commission officers (first Tuesday in April).
- June 14, 2023 – Approval of Commission officers (second Wednesday in June).

Sharon Jean-Philippe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Midyett seconded the motion. The Meeting was adjourned at 2:00PM CDT.