**LOUISIANA FORESTRY COMMISSION**

HELD AT

LOUISIANA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION’S ANNUAL MEETING

New Orleans, louisiana

**wEDNESDAY, August 28, 2013**

**Minutes**

**Call To Order**

The Louisiana Forestry Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Poole at 7:50 a.m.

**Roll Call**

The roll was called by Epney Brasher.

**Members Present:** Scott Poole, Sam Pruitt, Mike Merritt, Mike Wolff, Tina Meiners, Kenny Ribbeck

and Dr. Allen Rutherford

**Not Present:**

A quorum was present.

**LDAF Staff Present:** State Forester Wade Dubea, Associate State Forester Epney Brasher, Don Smith, Jr.

**Others Present:** Buck Vandersteen, Louisiana Forestry Association

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** Kenny Ribbeck made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting for May 28, 2013.

Mike Merritt seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Public Comments**

Buck Vandersteen asked Dr. Rutherford to report on the Board of Regents decision that L.S.U. will no longer offer BS degrees in Forestry. Dr. Rutherford said that it has been consolidated into the Natural Resources Ecology and Management program. It is still accredited by the Society of American Foresters. There is really nothing that has changed. The problem is that they couldn’t keep the enrollment numbers up. Discussion followed.

**Division Reports**

Reports were not discussed due to time restraints.

**New Business**

**Use of FPP Funding**

Scott Poole was updating the board on a previous conversation he had with Wade Dubea about available funding through FPP or a percentage of the funding being used for research work. He said someone had asked at the LFA meeting if it was possible for a portion of FPP funding for research be utilized for La. Tech to fund a silviculture position. Or can they offset some of the cost in return for some research work out on the school and back to the Forestry Division. Scott Poole asked Wade Dubea if he looked into it. Wade said he had talked to the attorneys and the Commissioner. Wade referenced the statute RS 3:4411 & 3:4416, and reported that 25% of the fund can be used for research. Wade also said the problem is that it is set up as a competitive grant which means we would have to come up with an RFP, announce it, and grade the applications. Wade said there is a large amount of red tape and no quick fix. Discussion followed.

**Old Business**

**Enforcement Positions**

Epney Brasher reported that the enforcement position for Allen parish was announced last Thursday and that it should be closing today. Once it closes they will review the candidates, make a decision, and get it filled. Epney also reported they have four firefighter positions that were approved for announcement. Those are being concentrated in the southwest portion of Louisiana. Once they close they will be interviewing, making decisions for those positions, and filling them as well. Discussion followed.

Wade Dubea stated the budget has been hit again with a quarter of a million dollar cut to Forestry and there is anticipation of a mid-year budget cut. The Commissioner is cautious about trying to fill positions that he will more than likely have to turn around and lay-off any new hire or a probational employee. Discussion followed.

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** Motion was made by Mike Wolff to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Rutherford seconded the motion.

All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 a.m.