

**LOUISIANA FORESTRY COMMISSION  
BATON ROUGE, LA  
DECEMBER 12, 2016  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Louisiana Forestry Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Poole at 3:36 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The roll was called by Epney Brasher

**Members Present:** Chairman Scott Poole, Gradon Clemons, Wayne Hagan, Michael Hudson & Dr. Allen Rutherford, whom arrived late, to which a quorum was present

**LDAF staff present:** Wade Dubea, Epney Brasher, David Campbell, Patricia Dayberry, Lindsey Hunter, Roy St. Pierre & Don Smith

Guests included: Buck Vandersteen

With the weather conditions bad while waiting to see if any additional Commission members arrive Wade discussed the set of bylaws for the Forestry Commission and explained what needed to be changed or done away with completely. Most of the rules are set up in statutes and in the Constitution and are redundant. The only thing not addressed in the statutes is the election of officers. That can be done by proclamation or rule instead of in bylaws. Lindsey Hunter advised more changes to be made if the bylaws were necessary at all.

**MOTION:** Mike Hudson made a motion to do away with the bylaws; Dr. Allen Rutherford seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Wayne Hagan made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on August 31, 2016; Dr. Allen Rutherford seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**BUDGET**

Epney informed the board that the rule changes to FPP had gone thru the 120 days announcement period with no opposition so are now in effect. She also explained about the Forestry office budget and what is being done for the planes so far this fiscal year. Wade explained that there are mid-year cuts coming in January. Part of the arrangement that Dr. Strain is negotiating with the Division of Administration is to sell the King Air back to DOTD. The compensation from that sale goes to DOA to go toward the mid-year cut. Also the Department's part of the sale of the other executive plane at auction will be applied toward that mid-year cut for the Department. The budget for next fiscal year has been cut for the whole Department, but the numbers will not be final until after the legislative session ends. Some of the monies are usually replaced during the session. Wade also discussed the statutorily dedicated accounts and what may happen with them during the session.

Wade explained that the Office of Forestry is a service organization. It is not like some of the other sections in the Department of Agriculture. It does not bring in monies by regulating licenses or checking scales or anything like that. There have been suggestions to use the severance tax to fund the Forestry Office. If that was used, the Forestry office would use very little or no state general funds. The initial purpose for the severance tax was that 75% of the tax would stay in the parish and was to be used for road construction and maintenance. Rapides parish is the only parish to have a statute to cover the tax's use

properly. Other parishes use it to fund the police juries and parish government. They are counting on that money just as much as we would like to have it. Discussion followed about funding the office and assessments of timber and statutory dedicated accounts. The FPP fund was questioned. The new rates and maximum amounts have gone into effect, so the changes to the fund have not been seen yet.

### **DIVISION REPORTS**

Division reports were handed out for review. It was noted that Jeremy Coffey has moved over to DOTD to fly the King Air for them. Damian Johnson has been detailed into taking over many of those functions that Jeremy had covered.

APHIS is looking into deregulating the control over trying to handle the problem of the ash borer. It is mostly green ash being damaged by the borer. It is also a problem in the urban settings for the white ash being affected. There is still a five parish area here in Louisiana under quarantine for the borer.

The southern pine beetle (SPB) is monitored and tracked here in Louisiana. They have migrated into Connecticut and New York and are causing a lot of serious damage. The Ips beetle is causing the most damage in Louisiana now in ways that are not usual for that species.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business.

Executive session was called for 15 minutes to review private industry submissions in relevance to setting the severance tax values for 2017.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The severance tax submitted by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry will be adopted with the exception of hardwood pulpwood. It has been agreed on \$10 per ton for hardwood pulpwood for the calendar year of 2017. Prices for other types were as recommended by the Department. All were approved and the prices will be sent to Revenue.

### **ADOPTED SEVERANCE TAX VALUES FOR 2017**

<b><u>PRODUCT</u></b>	<b><u>VALUE PER TON</u></b>	<b><u>TAX RATE</u></b>	<b><u>TAX PER TON (2017)</u></b>
Pine Sawtimber	\$32.64	2.25%	\$0.73
Hardwood Sawtimber	\$35.93	2.25%	\$0.80
Pine Chip-n-Sa	\$16.74	2.25%	\$0.38
Pine Pulpwood	\$10.20	5.00%	\$0.51
Hardwood Pulpwood	\$10.00	5.00%	\$0.50

**MOTION:** Wayne Hagan made a motion to nominate Scott Poole for Chairman; Mike Hudson seconded the motion.

**MOTION:** Dr. Allen Rutherford made a motion to nominate Mike Hudson for Vice Chairman; Gradon Clemons seconded the motion. All were in favor of the nominations for the year 2017.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Dr. Allen Rutherford made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mike Hudson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.