

**MINUTES  
ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION  
April 19, 2016**

PRESIDING – Jerry M. Dwyer, Chairman

SECRETARY – Greg Pate, State Forester

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Jerry Dwyer, Jane Russell, Tommy Thompson, Salem Saloom, Stephen May, Robert Turner and Katrenia Kier.

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT – Greg Pate, Dan Jackson, Scott Rouse, Brandy Sponsler, Arthur Hitt, Michael Older, Benji Elmore, Hank McKinley, Becky Jackson, Greg Wood, Walter Cartwright, Allen Varner, Bruce Springer, John Goff, Benji Elmore, Brad Smith, Greg Piland, Chris Cotton, Keith Stephens, Dearl Driggers, David Kelley, David Davis, Marti Davis, Amy Smith, Patrick Willoughby, Ray Metzler, Bethany Elliott, and Regina Miller.

GUESTS – Sam Duvall, Roy McAuley, and Matthew Durdin.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Dwyer called this special meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) to order at 10:04 a.m. on April 19, 2016 in the Alabama Forestry Commission's State Office Executive Conference Room located at 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104. He introduced and welcomed new Commissioners, Robert Turner and Katrenia Kier. Dwyer then asked Saloom to give the invocation which he did.

II. ROLL CALL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – Regina Miller called roll and announced that a quorum was present. Miller then announced that the meeting had been properly advertised.

III. SPECIAL STATE FORESTER COMMENDATIONS – Pate recognized SE Region employees Chris Cotton, Greg Piland, Keith Stephens and Dearl Driggers with State Forester's Letters of Commendation and coins for their efforts in retrieving victims in a recent med flight helicopter crash in Coffee County.

IV. RECOGNITION OF NEW EMPLOYEES – Assistant State Forester Dan Jackson introduced the agency's new Human Resources Manager Brandy Sponsler and Forest Management Division Director Walter Cartwright introduced Ray Metzler who will be working part-time as the agency's Threatened and Endangered Species Coordinator.

V. MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 19, 2016 MEETING – MOTION #2016-1: Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2016 meeting as presented, and Commissioner Saloom seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed on a 6-1 vote, with Commissioner May abstaining.

VI. BUDGETS - Budget reports for fiscal years 2014, 2015 and 2016 were discussed. Pate reported that the AFC ended the year with \$6,900,000 which was down from \$7,200,000 the previous year. Equipment and capital improvements were purchased which had previously been approved by the Commission. Pate stated during the 2014 and 2015 budget years the AFC has not exceeded its spending authority and has brought cash forward each year. The Commission used a portion of the cash and spending authority brought forward into 2015 to purchase much-needed firefighting equipment and to set up a capital

spending account. No large-scale equipment purchases are anticipated for fiscal years 2016 or 2017, as part of AFC's cost-saving strategies, given the continued General Fund budget cuts. **(Attachment #1)** Dwyer requested a report approved by the Commission for the capital outlay purchases.

COST-SAVING MEASURES – Administrative Division Director Arthur Hitt discussed the hiring of Ken Elkins as the agency's Energy Conservation Officer in an effort to make the agency's buildings more energy efficient and therefore reduce costs. Elkins is currently assessing energy use in the state office. The highest costs in the building are the heating and air conditioning system and lighting. Lights are already being converted to LED bulbs to save money. Some heating and air conditioning units that run continuously have and will be replaced with more energy efficient units. Heating and air conditioning units replaced last week cost \$21,000. Air conditioning units were previously replaced July 19, 2012. Research is being done to find grants to pay for energy conservation efforts, including a grant to pay for an energy audit of the state office and all field offices, a possible TVA grant for the northern region of the state, and possibly some ADECA grants (\$10,000 - \$15,000) which are geared toward increasing energy efficiency. The estimate to replace the roof is \$1,000,000 (last year's quote). Hitt stated that an engineer must be used to assess the roof. Implementing an energy efficient agency would cost approximately \$326,000 resulting in a projected savings of \$60,000 - \$80,000 per year. LED lighting for the state office will cost \$2,700 per year with a one year payback. It is projected there will be a reduced cost to DORM by the agency of \$76,000. Thompson applauded efforts to explore and implement cost-saving measures.

Discussion ensued regarding the boot purchase policy with Pate explaining that the policy allows for the purchase of one pair of boots annually with the employee being reimbursed at the allowed cost of \$125. The policy was recently modified to allow employees to purchase Nick's boots, which are higher quality and cost \$355 per pair. Dwyer asked if the \$125 boots are safe. SE Regional Forester Mike Older, uniform committee member, stated Nick's boots are better constructed than the less expensive boots. It was stated that wildland fire boots can be rebuilt (resoled at a reduced rate). FEPP Coordinator David Davis stated the boots costing \$125 are paid for out of pocket which could be inconvenient. May asked about the boot purchases. Pate said the boots were on contract and purchased with 2015 funds. Boots were purchased for ninety three employees at a cost of \$33,000. Everyone that was eligible received boots in 2015. If an employee purchased the more expensive Nick's boots, he or she is not reimbursed for another boot purchase for three years (2016, 2017 or 2018).

Dwyer asked why office personnel were approved for boots. Pate stated they were qualified in the ROSS system. Dwyer requested verification and also pointed out that an employee received boots in mid-January and retired maybe February 1 or March 1. Dwyer felt this employee should not have received boots.

The purchase of new uniforms was also discussed with Older explaining that employees have not had new uniforms in three years and uniforms were badly needed. He explained the different uniforms, stating that Class A uniforms are more formal and should be worn in a more professional manner such as meetings. Class B uniforms have no name badge and are for everyday wear while employees might be working in the woods.

May commented no new uniforms in three years had some employees going to meetings with holes in their uniforms and commended Pate for employees looking sharp. Pate commended the uniform committee.

Kier stated a policy and procedures for uniforms was needed. Pate responded policy and procedures are already in place.

TIMBER SALES STATUS – State Lands Coordinator David Kelley reported revenues from timber sales, prescribed burning, and management fees. (**Attachment #2**)

- The Commission earns 10% commission on timber sales handled for other agencies
- Geneva State Forest (120-140 acres cut) will naturally regenerate
- Little River – clear-cut
- Choccolocco – part of lead remediation process
- Mental Health – charge \$1 per acre to manage their land
- State Parks – depends on work done as to what the charges will be.

It is projected the agency will receive \$450,000 in revenue from prescribed burning by year-end. Dwyer stated there are costs associated with doing prescribed burning/fire break installation.

2017 BUDGET – Pate stated the Legislature had passed the General Fund Budget with the AFC funded at \$6,700,000 with \$1,042,000 earmarked for volunteer fire departments which is a 4% reduction (\$350,000) from last year's budget. Pate stated that we need to prepare a spending plan by the end of July and asked for Commissioners' direction. Pate also stated employees are our most important asset. Dwyer asked that a draft plan be presented for Commissioners to review at the July meeting.

May asked if there has been any discussion regarding selling the state office building and moving elsewhere. He discussed the major building issues facing the state office, including problems with the roof and the presence of mold. Kier stated that if the roof is compromised the building is compromised and the value of the building would need to be appraised. Hitt stated the building has been in bad shape for a long time and we are trying to maintain this building. Hitt stated part of the \$1,000,000 air-conditioning system hopefully will resolve the mold issue downstairs as it will dehumidify air better. We should be able to determine if this has helped resolve the mold issue in July. May stated that if the RSA bought this building, the AFC might have space and that we should go see David Bronner. Thompson suggested we explore options: Is the building meeting our needs and that of the State?

May initially made a motion to explore the value of the property and to bring the information back to the commissioners, but he withdrew that motion. **MOTION #2016-2: Commissioner May made a motion to obtain a formal appraisal of the state office property. Commissioner Kier seconded the motion. Following discussion, Commissioner May amended his motion to have a broker provide an informal value of the property with Commissioner Kier seconding the motion. Commissioner Kier stated that there should not be any cost for an informal appraisal. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – (The executive session was moved to this point on the agenda because it was noon and plans were to eat lunch during this session.) General Counsel Scott Rouse explained the reason to call an executive session at today's meeting is to update Commissioners regarding pending or threatened litigation. The executive session would involve no deliberations and no votes would be taken. Rouse stated that the reason for going into executive session complied with the Alabama Open Meetings Act.

**MOTION #2016-3: Commissioner Thompson made a motion to enter into executive session for the reason stated. Commissioner Saloom seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, Commissioners Dwyer, Russell, Thompson, May, Saloom, Turner and Kier voted in favor of the motion to enter**

into executive session at 12:06 p.m. Chairman Dwyer stated the meeting would reconvene in the regular session at 12:37 p.m.

Dwyer reconvened the meeting at 1:12 p.m. and stated that no deliberations were made and no votes were taken during executive session.

MAJOR PURCHASES FOR THE YEAR - Hitt reviewed the agency's major purchases and discussion followed regarding the need to update various phone systems in the agency as well as the inability to move funds from Capital Projects Account to the General Fund. Currently, the AFC has a statewide phone bill of \$159,000. Kier stated that new digital technologies should make phone systems less expensive. Hitt stated that the Building Commission has authority over the design and construction of all state buildings and we must get their approval for new construction and remodeling projects. Dwyer asked Hitt to refrain from saying that the Building Commission goes overboard. **(Attachment #3)**

VII. FEDERAL GRANTS – Pate reviewed the open federal grants and explained there is a three year life span for these grants. Currently, there is only one grant left open from FY13. The agency matches these grants at the rate of 50% with employee time and reimbursement submissions are done quarterly. He informed Commissioners that Consolidated Grants in the amount of \$2,500,000 will be awarded and these grants will be added to the FY 2016 Grants. **(Attachment #4)**

IX. LAND ISSUES: LEAD REMEDIATION PROJECT AT CHOCOLOCCO STATE FOREST – NE Regional Forester Jason Dockery explained that portions of this property are contaminated with lead due to previous use of the land as a military weapons range. The U.S. Army is paying the costs of excavating and removing the lead-contaminated soil. Other soil will be brought to the site to replace the lead-contaminated soil. The Commission will be reimbursed for the value of the timber that is currently on the site and must be removed as part of the lead remediation process. The land will be reforested in Longleaf. There has been no monetary cost to the AFC on this project. The agency's only obligation will be to enter into an environmental covenant that will prevent certain portions of the property from being used for residential purposes. This covenant will be monitored by ADEM, and the AFC will be required to make annual reports on the status of the property. **MOTION #2016-4: Commissioner Saloom made a motion to approve the AFC's completion of this project, noting that the environmental covenant should be executed by Greg Pate instead of Jason Dockery. Commissioner Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (Attachment #5)**

VIII. FISCAL OVERSIGHT – Accounting Director Becky Jackson reviewed the agency's purchasing oversight policy by explaining the various purchase levels that supervisors are allowed to approve. **(Attachment #6)**

- Work Unit Managers have a \$500 limit.
- Regional Foresters have a \$1,000 limit.
- State Forester approval is needed if over \$1,000. All purchases over \$1,000 must have 2 quotes.
- State Forester also approves all major equipment purchases and capital outlay projects.
- If cost is \$15,000 or higher we must follow state bid laws.
- Computer purchases must be approved by Amy Smith and Patrick Willoughby in IT.
- Professional service agreements must be approved by the Contract Review Committee (i.e. physicals, consultants).

Dwyer applauded the system. Russell suggested sending professional services agreements (RFPs) to several vendors and then evaluate. Teaching or instructional contracts are used for prescribed burning instructors, physicals and architectural services.

X. ACCOMPLISHMENTS – Jackson reviewed the accomplishment scorecard process. (**Attachment #7**) The scorecard process will be worked on to see how long it takes to accomplish goals.

XI. PROGRAM TIME REPORT –Pate explained that hours and salary data by program area is taken from the grants database 2013-2016 YTD where employees entered time working in the various areas. The chart shows hours worked in each area along with payroll for each program shown. (**Attachment #8**) This database was created by East Central Regional Forester Bruce Springer. Commissioners liked this sheet. Thompson suggested three years be rolled together instead of each year so trends could be seen.

XII. PERSONNEL STAFFING –Sponsler explained that prospective employees must apply and be placed on a state register with the State Personnel Department. Sponsler explained the hiring process in detail for the benefit of the new Commissioners. (**Attachment #9**)

Dwyer recessed the meeting at 3:05 p.m. for a break and reconvened the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

XIV. OUTREACH ADVISORY COUNCIL –Pate reported that the Council originated several years ago and that over time attendance has dropped to only one or two landowners attending the meetings. A list of the current members was provided. The Council met the prior week with liaisons and/or regional foresters in attendance from each region. The north and northwest region liaisons reported on their accomplishments. Cornelius Blanding, the new Executive Director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives//Land Assistance Fund, updated attendees on the activities of the Federation. Blanding also gave details of the upcoming Alabama Forestry Camp being held at Epes June 20-24. At the meeting, attendees discussed how they might encourage more landowner involvement with attendees agreeing that each person would try to bring someone new with them to the next meeting which is scheduled on July 14.

May noted how former State Forester Linda Casey destroyed the outreach program and Dwyer stated the program is important. May also stated minority outreach has disintegrated, minority hiring has decreased on the county level as well as in the agency hierarchy. He stated that minorities have all but disappeared in upper management positions. May questioned what is being done with recruitment. May said he that Greene County is 85% minority (black) and asked why we can't recruit one person to hire in that county. Dwyer said we may need to look into hiring at Assistant Forestry Worker level. Kier stated that the outreach group was a good networking group, a social outlet, and encourages people to get to know forestry. Kier also stated this is a minority not a black and white issue. Turner mentioned his involvement with LRLEAN. Saloom stated it needed to be restructured. Russell said the energy level needs to be raised.

XV. FEDERAL PROPERTY PROGRAM –Springer reported that a review of the AFC's participation in the program (through which the AFC is able to procure excess federal equipment to be used by the AFC and VFDs for fire suppression work) had recently been completed. The results of the review were very complimentary of the AFC. The review found that the AFC had maintained a high level of accountability in the Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP) and Firefighter Property Program (FPP). The review further reported that the AFC staff demonstrates professionalism and attention to detail in items assigned to the agency, including tankers, brush trucks, generators, transports, flatbeds, dozers, and fire engines.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Coordinator Greg Wood produces a rotation list with priority lists supplied by the agency's regional coordinators to issue equipment when available. The order of issuing property begins with the SW Region and proceeds in a clockwise rotation with the NW Region, North Region, NE Region, EC Region and SE Region. **(Attachment #10)** Wood stated that when multiple requests are received, the oldest request is filled first.

Dwyer stated one county has a lot of equipment and says equipment is not distributed equally. Since concerns were raised as to how equipment is issued to counties, as well as the type of equipment screened and why and how that became a problem in the past, Springer stated we may need to develop a policy on issuing equipment to AFC offices as we do to VFDs. Springer also reported the Central Shop will remain in Autaugaville. Davis reported that equipment inside the fence at the Central Shop will be given to an AFC office or a VFD. There was discussion about selling unneeded equipment, but the agency would not currently get to keep any of the money. Under a new program (not yet implemented) the agency could sell through the state after one year and be able to keep some of the proceeds.

XVI. - NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM –  
Pate explained that the National Incident Management System – Incident Command System (NIMS-ICS) is a national organization and communications structure used by emergency response agencies. The Incident Command System is the way we train our firefighters. All grants related to fire must use the ICS training which is the national standard. Even though the system has been in existence since the 1980s, Governor Bob Riley signed an executive order in 2005 requiring that emergency response agencies in Alabama utilize the NIMS-ICS System. Also in 2005, the U.S. Forest Service began requiring NIMS-ICS compliance in all their fire grants. Since 2008, over \$14,000,000 in federal grants has been issued to the AFC with the requirement that the system be used.. The ICS is used on all fires the agency responds to and almost all AFC employees have ICS training at some level. Pate said that his goals for the agency include having two Type III qualified teams, one in the North and one in the South. A goal is to put together a Type II team when we can. He would also like for the agency to have an 'All Hazards' statewide Incident Management Team (IMT) that would work with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on statewide incidents which would require higher qualifications than a Type II team.

The AFC has deployed several personnel to work with AEMA during various severe weather-related events, the Selma-to-Montgomery 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and some regions have used a portion of a team to conduct training in their region.

Our Type III teams consists of 23 individuals who can fill the team to the level the incident may dictate. Depending on the needs of the incident, the sections expand with positions to fill various roles. The Type II team consists of 26 individuals and functions the same way. The needs of the incident dictate the size of the team. This system of two Type III teams and one Type II team has been ongoing for several years with the AFC. The same personnel who fill the two Type III teams fill the Type II team. Based on current personnel and employees with advanced training, we cannot expand to more teams. **(Attachment #11)**

Dwyer asked the cost of training and Pate replied that the average cost of training per employee is slightly over \$13,000. Pate stated that employee retention is always an issue. It was also mentioned that the agency had its own training program years ago. May said the EMA Director convinced Tim Boyce, a former State Forester, to get on board with the program and went on to say that Lou Hyman, a former AFC employee, started the program for the AFC.

May stated the downside to ICS is when a team goes out for a period of time the work load is heavier for those at home causing a backlog of work. Another downside to ICS is a morale problem due to an "elitist attitude." ICS personnel are used to handle natural disasters and employees are always training for these teams.

Kier asked the costs of training and was told Type III was on the job experience and cost \$13,000 - \$15,000. Type III is the lowest training class we can use to qualify for federal dollars. Do not have to go to Type II training. Kier indicated we better plan to train when necessary and need a plan in place. Keir also said she keeps hearing of a morale problem, and May questioned about how to rectify a morale problem. Pate stated training is being done now as we have a Safety and Training Officer.

Jackson indicated the Task Force Leader is ultimately the Section Chief with the bottom level being a Firefighter I which is all employees. Type III go to Maxwell as a staging area. April tornadoes were the agency's first experience with it.

**MOTION #2016-5: Due to the length of the meeting, Commissioner Saloom made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. Commissioners May, Russell, Turner, Kier and Dwyer voted against the motion, and the motion thus failed.**

XVII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE –Rouse reported that the Legislature had already approved a General Fund budget that included cuts for most state agencies, including the AFC. Rouse stated that the Legislature had not produced any new General Fund revenue streams and that Medicaid and Corrections costs have continued to consume more and more General Fund monies.

Rouse also reported on the AFC's efforts to amend the state's outdated VFD certification statute. Under the current statute, the AFC is the certifying agency for VFDs, but the AFC has no explicit authority to decertify a VFD. Rouse stated that the legislation was passed by the House of Representatives without a dissenting vote but that the Senate companion bill had stalled in committee. Senator Gerald Allen is the sponsor of the Senate bill, and May shared that Allen said no one talked to him about the bill ahead of time. Rouse said he had not had an extended discussion with Allen. Further discussion followed about possible reasons why the legislation is not being supported. Rouse stated that two Senators had wanted to hear from the VFDs, while other objections were somewhat vague. Wood stated that there may be some underlying issue, noting that another fire-related bill had also become stalled in the same committee.

Legislative packets that employees had been given and asked to present to legislators was then discussed. May expressed concern over employees doing so and the timing of the packet distribution. Thompson stated that the agency needs to develop a relationship with legislators and Saloom said VFD check presentations are a good avenue for such interaction.

May said the involvement of AFC employees handing out the information packets caused two problems. Some did not want to hand them out and the packets should have been handed out way ahead of time. May stated some employees do not want to do it in a social way on their own time rather than AFC time. May said it was unwise to do this. Rouse said it was a part of the job and field personnel can be asked to talk with legislators. Pate said the same type of information has been sent in the past year after year. May replied timing was the key. May also stated Commissioners need to develop a relationship with their legislators.

### XVIII. UPDATE ON ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

**FORESTRY TEAM** –Cartwright reported that this group is inactive but still shares economic development requests and data. Cartwright stated Pate has asked him to reinvigorate team. At one time, the group included the directors of the International Trade Center at the University of Alabama, Alabama Forest Products Development Center, Alabama Industrial Development and Training Center and the former Alabama Center for Advanced Woodworking Technology. The purpose of the Team was to encourage job creation and promote foreign trade. Cartwright reported that next month the group is trying to get together. **(Attachment #12)**

**FOREST MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE** – Cartwright stated the first meeting of this group was March 30. The group plans to make recommendations to assist field personnel in forest management program delivery, to ensure that forest management work is included in employee work plans, and to emphasize correct coding for time and accomplishments. At the next meeting, scheduled on May 4, the Task Force will review the Forest Management section of the policy and procedures manual and will then present recommended revisions to the Leadership Team for its approval. **(Attachment #13)**

**INTERNAL FIREARMS POLICY** –Rouse stated Commissioners had approved the new firearms policy whereby employees are allowed to carry a concealed weapon on the job if they have a concealed carry license or are APOST-certified. Prior to the implementation of the policy, all employees are required to attend a training session on the policy. He emphasized that the training is not about instructing employees how to use handguns, but the training is on the policy itself. Plans are to conduct the training at regional meetings and at the state office, with the training being completed in a couple of months. Saloom recommended, as he had at the previous meeting, that conflict management training also be conducted. **(Attachment #14)**

**VENDOR FOR HARDWOOD ORCHARD AT STAUFFER NURSERY** – Springer updated Commissioners by saying that efforts are continuing to try to lease this property. Plans did not work out with a vendor last year but Springer stated that five other vendors are being contacted about the possibility of leasing the property.

**DISPATCH – FEASIBILITY AND COST OF MOVING TO THREE DISPATCH CENTERS** – Protection Division Director John Goff discussed establishing three dispatch centers located in the northern, central, and southern areas of the state as opposed to the current statewide dispatch center (one dispatch center) located in Montgomery. He reported that to establish one dispatch facility within an existing AFC office building with all new equipment the approximate cost will be \$78,935.90. However, by salvaging parts from the existing dispatch center in Montgomery and the backup dispatch center at the state office, the cost should be reduced to approximately \$56,583.90 for each of the two proposed centers. The proposed locations would be in Gardendale, which would serve the North and Northeast Regions, Montgomery (existing), which would serve the Northwest and East Central Regions, and Loxley (Baldwin County), which would serve the Southwest and Southeast Regions.

Discussion followed with Saloom suggesting that forest industries might assist with the costs of the dispatch centers. He also mentioned the possibility of developing a brochure that would explain the benefits of the additional dispatch centers. Thompson expressed concern about additional funding for the operation of three dispatch centers. Dwyer indicated funding would come from the 2017 budget. Dwyer also indicated we might partner with AFA and ALFA and someone should talk or go see them. He also said Goff presented a great proposal. **(Attachment #15)**

XIX. DISCUSSION ON HOW MEETINGS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED – May stated that he would like for motions in the minutes to be numbered for easy reference as they were several years ago. Miller said she would reinstate this practice.

BYLAWS – Following discussion regarding the bylaws, Dwyer appointed a Rules and Regulations Committee composed of May, Kier and himself. The Committee will review the bylaws and present recommendations for amending/updating the current document. Dwyer asked Rouse to research the Open Meetings Act concerning the possibility of holding a meeting by video conference. Rouse then cautioned Commissioners about using email to discuss Commission business, stating that any deliberations communicated amongst a quorum of Commissioners could violate the Open Meetings Act. It was stated that all bylaws changes must go through this committee.

CODE OF ALABAMA –Dwyer acknowledged that the Code of Alabama states the roles and responsibilities of Commissioners beginning with Title 9, Chapter 3. The statutes describe the general duties of Commissioners, including proper oversight of the agency and due diligence regarding management of the agency.

XX. DISCUSSION OF COMMISSIONERS' RESPONSIBILITY OF OVERSIGHT OF STATE FORESTER AND ASSISTANT STATE FORESTER POSITIONS: Dwyer said that one role of Commissioners is to provide guidance to the State Forester and Assistant State Forester. He stated that the agency's core mission to protect, sustain, and educate is what Commissioners want accomplished. Dwyer said there should be detailed goals (scorecard concept), what it will take to make things happen (nuts and bolts), the hours it takes to achieve accomplishments, and how our work is benefiting taxpayers.

XXI. DISCUSSION OF STATE FORESTER'S PERFORMANCE FOR LAST TWO YEARS: Saloom expressed concern that Commissioners are micromanaging the State Forester and Assistant State Forester. He said that the State Forester has been up-front, reports goals, and that the agency has moved forward. Pate stated his focus has been the same as the goals he provided Commissioners in January 2015, but will do what Commissioners ask him to focus on. He went on to say that when he started work with the Commission, Commissioners were against consolidation of the agency and that he felt efforts have been successful to avoid that happening. He said the agency's budget has been cut the past seven or eight years, comparable to other state agencies, and asked for guidance from Commissioners. May said that there are some concerns regarding Pate's leadership.

Thompson recommended reviewing Pate's goals in an open meeting, identifying any problems and working toward solutions for a pathway to success. He stated that Commissioners have the responsibility to work together to formalize goals so the State Forester can meet expected objectives. He said this had not been done and needs to be put in writing.

May and Dwyer expressed concerns about the State Forester's management of the agency that ranged from expenditures, political skills, fire clothing and personnel issues. May stated he understood concerns about micromanaging, but that the State Forester must have political skills. He said that during the previous legislative session, one Legislator stated that the AFC will never receive more funding so long as Pate is State Forester. May stated that Pate was wounded and could not recover. Saloom disagreed, stating that the agency can move forward.

Dwyer questioned how the State Forester can manage millions of dollars without knowing details. He said Pate has not been looking at accomplishments while he's been busy buying equipment. Dwyer said it's the agency's mission to keep things safe in Alabama and he is not concerned about what is happening in

the West or what the U.S. Forest Service is doing. Dwyer also questioned Pate's approval of black PPE jackets instead of yellow reflective jackets, stating that the color presents a safety issue. Dwyer said he had expressed his concerns, but that Pate had merely blown them off. Dwyer also questioned why Pate had not been looking at employee comp time. Pate said he did not understand why comp time was such a great concern.

Russell stated she needed more information regarding Pate's performance as State Forester.

Thompson stated the Commission needs to give direction and advice to Pate. He proposed that Pate bring information about Commissioners' concerns to the next meeting, that budget numbers be looked at, and to see if things are being accomplished. Thompson said the Commission should move forward from there.

Kier said things are difficult on both sides. She said there is no job description or performance guidelines for Pate. Kier said the Commission should give him guidance and determine if he is meeting performance guidelines. If not, the Commission should show him how he has not. Kier said it is difficult to vote not knowing if Commissioners have done their jobs. She added that she is still learning about the Commission, noting that she saw that Dwyer was about accounting and budgets, while May was into politics. Kier said the State Forester needs specifics and needs to know expectations. There has to be communication, and the State Forester's objectives and goals need to meet those of the Commission.

Turner stated he did not believe Dwyer was micromanaging. However, he added that if everyone does not communicate, then there is a problem. Pate said he agreed. Turner stated that Pate should discuss matters with the Commission as a whole.

Rouse said that statutorily the State Forester is essentially CEO of the agency, but the Commission can put parameters around what he does. He stated that since Pate was appointed State Forester, he has received only broad direction from the Commission. Politically, Rouse said he talks to legislators but has not heard any negative feedback from them about Pate. He noted the agency had recently had to push back against a bill introduced by Senator Arthur Orr that would have consolidated the AFC with Agriculture. May said AFA did not think the consolidation bill was written well. When dealing with legislative matters, May said to go talk to AFA and ALFA. If they say no, the agency should forget about it. We must learn to work with them; they are the first people to go and see. Rouse said he appreciated the input, as he is more of an attorney than a lobbyist.

**MOTION #2016-6: Commissioner Stephen May then made a motion to remove Greg Pate as State Forester. The motion failed for lack of a seconding motion.** Dwyer asked May if he wanted to withdraw his motion and May declined. Thompson and Kier stated that Pate should have a job description and performance guidelines and there should be communication between the Commissioners and the State Forester to move forward.

XXII. DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING – Commissioners scheduled the next meeting of the Commission at 10:00 a.m. on July 21, 2016 at the Commission's state office in Montgomery.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business, Dwyer adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.