

**MINUTES**  
**ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION**  
**April 17, 2008**

PRESIDING - Jerry Smith, Chairman

SECRETARY - Linda Casey, State Forester

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Jerry Smith, Chairman, Melisa Love, Vice Chairman, Don Heath, Jett Freeman and Kenneth Real.

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT - Linda Casey, Bill Baisden, Tom Conway, Regina Miller, Jerry Dwyer, Stephen May and John Pirtle.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - Chairman Jerry Smith called this special meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. on April 17, 2008 in the Forestry Commission's Executive Conference Room located at 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

ROLL CALL - Regina Miller called roll. Commissioners Jerry Smith, Melisa Love, Don Heath, Jett Freeman and Ken Real were present. Commissioners Jerry Lacey and Randy Gilmore were absent. Ken Real made a motion to excuse Randy Gilmore who had a conflict and could not attend the meeting. Jerry Lacey stated at the previous meeting that he would not be able to attend this meeting.

Miller announced that the meeting was properly advertised.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2008 MEETING - MOTION NO. 342: Randy Gilmore made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2008 meeting. Jerry Smith seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Chairman Jerry Smith presided over the meeting at this point.

BUDGET - Jerry Dwyer presented the FY '07-'08 balance sheet as of April 16, 2008 to Commissioners. Discussion ensued with possible reductions of expenditures and revenue ideas presented. Items discussed included reductions in fuel consumption, discontinuation of BMP aerial flights (will also meet US Forest Service regulations) and grant opportunities.

TIMBER SALES - John Pirtle reported that the Commission has contracted with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to handle our timber sales. The AFC will pay the appraisal fees for the timber to be sold from Geneva State Forest and Stauffer Nursery property. Sales are expected to be finalized by the end of August.

CHOCOLOCCO STATE FOREST INVENTORY - John Pirtle stated the March 17-21, 2008 over 930 acres in Choccolocco State Forest had been inventoried and stewardship boundaries can be drawn.

CENTRAL SHOP - Bill Baisden recommended that the Central Shop be maintained only as an RCFP/FEPP facility and to discontinue truck and tractor repairs. Staff reduction at the shop would be handled through attrition. The AFC will continue to receive and disperse FEPP property.

Recommended parcels for sale by Baisden include the 5-acre home site, 74 acres leased as a nursery site until July, 2009 and 41 acres of timber land including a dirt pit. He recommended that 80 acres, the shop area, be kept.

**MOTION #**

: Don Heath made a motion to proceed by obtaining three appraisals to determine the fair market value on the parcels and to investigate any potential environmental issues. Melisa Love seconded the motion and the motion carried.

SAFETY - Bill Baisden noted that the number of AFC accidents year-to-date is 18 with only 11 accidents in 2007. Efforts are underway to increase awareness of possibility of issues involving safety. He stated that a statewide safety manual is being developed with procedures developed by rangers and other field personnel. The manual should be completed in July.

Chairman Smith convened the meeting at 12:05 p.m. for lunch.

Smith reconvened the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - Tom Conway reported that with only 7 legislative working days remaining, the General Fund Budget appears dismal. The Forestry Commission budget has passed the House with \$500,000 less than the total recommended in the Governor's budget. The AFC appropriation is \$14,624,983 of which \$1,586,806 is a conditional appropriation. This conditional funding will only be awarded (in whole or in part) if the Governor's budget is fully funded in the General Fund. The budget will next be considered by the Senate.

OUTREACH - Tara Johnson reported on the status of forestry camp which is scheduled June 1-5, 2008 at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives in Epes, AL.

FIRE UPDATE - Fire Division Director, Stephen May reported on activities of the Fire Division. He also stated that the number of wildfires in the state is currently low due to adequate rainfall in the state.

STATE FORESTER'S GOALS FOR 2007/ 2008 – Commissioners stated their approval of State Forester Linda Casey's job performance by stating that she had not only met but exceeded their expectations. Commissioners voiced their approval of the direction in which the Commission is moving and felt very positive of Casey's leadership.

MOTION NO. : Don Heath made a motion to give Linda a 5% merit raise for her performance. Jett Freeman seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Linda expressed her thanks to the Commissioners but, in leu of the budget situation, asked that her raise be tabled until the budget is determined.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING – MOTION NO . Ken Real made a motion to tentatively meet at 10:00 a.m. on July 10, 2008 in the Executive Conference Room of the state office in Montgomery. Don Heath seconded the motion and the motion carried.

MEETING ADJOURNED – MOTION NO:: Ken Real made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:05 p.m. Ken Real seconded the motion and the motion carried.