

**MINUTES**  
**ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION**  
**April 12, 2012**

PRESIDING – Johnny McReynolds, Chairman

SECRETARY – Linda Casey, State Forester

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Johnny McReynolds, Don Heath, Irvin Eatman, Jerry Smith, Salem Saloom and Tommy Thompson.

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT – Linda Casey, Patrick Glass, Tom Conway, Roy Griffith, Tonia Stephens and Regina Miller.

GUESTS – Rick Oats and Sam Duvall.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Chairman Johnny McReynolds called the meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. on April 12, 2012 in the Commission's state office executive conference room, 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

ROLL CALL – Regina Miller called roll. All Commissioners except Ken Real were present. Miller announced that a quorum was present.

Commissioner Don Heath made a motion to excuse Ken Real's absence due to the recovery process from an ATV accident. Commissioner Irvin Eatman seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Miller stated that the meeting had been properly advertised.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 19, 2012 MEETING – Commissioner Tommy Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2012 meeting as presented. Commissioner Don Heath seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

FY2012 BUDGET UPDATE – State Forester Casey explained that the House passed its version of the general fund budget Tuesday night and the budget is now in the Senate for their consideration. With the funding cut passed by the House, our FY2012 appropriation is down \$2 million before proration. Casey stated that the agency needs to get back to the Governor's recommended budget to avoid personnel layoffs.

Casey stated that she and General Counsel Tom Conway had met this morning with Senator Arthur Orr, Chairman of the Senate Finance & Taxation Committee who is very supportive of the Commission.

Conway stated that Senator Orr considers the Commission as one of the best managed agencies in the state regarding financial management and making the most of finances we receive.

USDA FOREST SERVICE, OIG AUDIT UPDATE – State Forester Casey reported that she had received notice that the amount the Commission must repay the USDA Forest Service had been reduced from \$14.4 million to \$5.1 million. She stated that the Cooperative State & Private dollars are being withheld by the Forest Service due to the OIG report recommendations. Only pass-through grants such as those to volunteer fire departments and Legacy will be allocated until the issue is resolved.

LAND TRANSACTION – General Counsel Tom Conway requested Commissioner's approval to sell 1.7 acres owned by the Commission in rural Crenshaw County near Luverne. This property is the site of the old Crenshaw County office and an abandoned fire tower. The tower does not have communications equipment owned by the Commission but does have such equipment owned by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Crenshaw County E911. A mobile home that had been used as the county office is being disposed of by the Commission. The property is owned by the Commission fee simple with a warranty deed acquired in 1950. Conway requested approval to sell the property at fair market value with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Crenshaw County E911 given the first opportunity to purchase the property.

Commissioner Heath made a motion for the State Forester to obtain an appraisal on the property at or above fair market value. Commissioner Saloom amended the motion to first inquire if someone else is interested in purchasing the property prior to obtaining an appraisal and obtain a verbal commitment; then an appraisal, if needed. Commissioner Saloom seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

STATE FORESTER'S REPORT – Organization - State Forester Casey stated that she reorganized the agency in 2008 to improve efficiency and to share resources across county lines which had not been a prior policy. She discussed and shared handouts showing AFC employees by location and percentage of employees by location, comparing December 31, 2008 with March 20, 2012. For the same time periods, she provided charts showing the total AFC employees by regions/divisions as well as the percentages of both. The State Forester also provided charts showing classifications of employees for both time periods stated above. (Charts-Amendment #1)

Casey stated that a primary goal has been to match resources with the work load and to partner with other agencies and organizations to leverage funding opportunities that will benefit landowners.

State Office Building - Assistant State Forester Patrick Glass explained that two compressor units for the heating/ventilating/air conditioning system for the state office had failed leaving the entire second floor and half of the first floor with no cool air. With recommendations from the State Building Commission, two engineering firms were contacted to obtain initial cost estimates for replacing the two systems. The Commission also contacted a third firm to provide a temporary solution to the problem as well as a

replacement option for the two failed units. Glass stated that a life cycle analysis should be conducted for the building that would also include capital repairs for the life expectancy for any solutions that is anticipated in the next 15 years. Glass recommended that Commissioners approve replacing the two failed units and coils at a cost of \$250,000, HHB Engineers proposal for temporary cooling at \$150,000 and to conduct the life cycle analysis. Commissioner Irvin Eatman made a motion to approve Glass's recommendations. Commissioner Don Heath seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ORIENTATION FOR COMMISSIONERS – Personnel Manager Tonia Stephens presented Commissioners with information including an organizational chart, annual report, statement of operations, and a hiring process chart.

TREASURE FOREST LOGO – Commissioner Don Heath reminded Commissioners that the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) HAS trademarked the TREASURE Forest logo as well as another similar logo. ATFA has stated that the Commission may use the logo. State Forester Casey recommended that the logo, belonging to the Alabama Natural Resource Council, is not worth the time and expense it would take to pursue legal action.

FSC BOARD TOUR – Commissioner Tommy Thompson discussed the FSC Board Tour held March 26, 2012. The tour, on Westervelt lands, was held in conjunction with the organization's quarterly board meeting. Thompson explained that some industry representatives feel FSC is better recognized than SFI and access to markets will more than offset the cost. He stated that FSC board members he talked with were pleased that Westervelt and Buchanan would serve as a nucleus for certification. Both will serve as group certificate holders. He stated that he felt the Commission's role should be one of educating landowners of the program.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING – The next meeting was scheduled for July 19, 2012 at the Commission's state office, 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama with the meeting to begin at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT – Commissioner Don Heath made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Irvin Eatman and passed by unanimous vote.