

Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee

February 5, 2020

7:00-9:30, CCUBIC Boardroom, Amherst, NS

Attendees: Amherst Deputy Mayor Shelia Christie, Steven McLelan, Mac Davis, Jonathon McClelland, Wade Adshade, Ian Ripley, Norman Paupin, Matthew MacGillivray, Darrin Carter, Jason Stewart, Velda Fromm, Peter Spicer, Elizabeth Smith McCrossin, Frank Gallant, Jeff Black, Kevin Merriam, Meeting Chairman

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM by Co Chair Kevin Merriam

Kevin Merriam opened the meeting by explaining that the meeting was going to flow a little differently. Agenda had been set and an approximate time for each item. Peter Spicer had asked for a few minutes to make a statement regarding the January 29th meeting. Mr. Spicer indicated that he was not please with what happened at the meeting. He felt that a more formal approach should be taken during the meetings with regards to motions and voting. Need to be respectful of all ideas brought forth during the meeting and everyone should conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner. Kevin thanked Peter for his comments.

Item 1- Terms of Reference are in place. Action Teams have been struck and most have had an initial meeting.

Goals and Accountability: need to determine committee goals and autonomy. Frank Gallant provided an explanation of autonomy to the group and the levels of hierarchy of the committee. Elizabeth Smith McCrossin encouraged committees to talk to each other.

Item 2- Advisory Team Review

Immediate Action Team – need a response to the communication sent to the Transition Team. Had received confirmation of receipt of document, but no further response. Motion by Ian Ripley that a letter be written to the Transition Team asking for a response to the correspondence. Seconded by Peter Spicer.

Elizabeth Smith McCrossin suggested that Jonathon McClelland write the letter and that it be signed by the Co-Chairmen. Steven McLelan added that the letter should be copied to the Premier and to the Minister of Lands and Forestry.

Action Item: Official request be sent to the Transition Team asking for a definitive timeline for a response.

Ian Ripley provided an update on the Immediate Action Team. Clarification is need on the recently announced funding for silviculture. Need to know how the dollars will be spent and the timeline for the distribution of funds. How will the process work, who is eligible to apply for the money?

Need clarification from the Transition Team on Port Hawksbury Pulp. Information has been that pulpwood is coming from crown land and need assurances that crown not be put ahead of pulpwood from private lands.

Information is required regarding availability of funds for studies. Could these studies be funded by the Transition Team?

Elizabeth Smith McCrossin suggested that the Committee ask for funding for a staff person. This person could work with Cumberland Business Connector to work exclusively with the Committee. Jeff Black, Kevin Merriam, Elizabeth and Jonathon McClelland to discuss.

Kevin asked the committee if there were any concerns regarding the discussed action items being sent to the Transition Team. No concerns.

Policy Action Team: Nothing to report

Long Term Action Team: have not met yet

Market Access Acton Team: Have met and are working on several ideas.

Item 3: Shared Vision and Pathways – Solidify Future State of Forestry and Direction

Questionnaire was prepared and sent out to committee members – the responses to the 10 questions were accumulated during a meeting earlier today. Kevin Merriam then ceded the floor to Frank Gallant.

Frank Gallant led the committee through the responses to the questionnaires. 31 people were invited to complete the questionnaire and the committee had received responses from 21. The document had been sent to people outside of the committee, needed to cast a wider net to capture different perspectives.

Frank provided an overview of the content of the answers.

1. Challenges to Solve-
 - a. Market for low grade wood, chips and mill waste
 - b. Maintain labour force
 - c. Income Replacement
 - d. Over reliant on external
2. What is driving change?
 - a. Social approval license, expectations
 - b. Economic trends, event
 - c. Politics
 - d. Ecological expectations
 - e. Education (lack of /more of)
 - f. Social Media
3. Conventions of State of Thinking
 - a. High volume/low margins
 - b. Market concentration/dependency
 - c. Lack of leading change, wait and see, pause
 - d. Risk adverse. Embrace new practises
 - e. Leadership void
4. Barriers to Change
 - a. Conventional thinking, stuck in “do what we know” lack of innovation

- b. Politics, red tape, inhibit change
 - c. Public opinion/misunderstanding
 - d. Understanding and Knowledge gaps
 - e. Access to capital- financial, human and social.
5. Windows of Opportunity
 - a. Leverage the strength of our fiber
 - b. Volume of wood/natural resources
 - c. Best soil for forestry
 - d. Atlantic Gateway/central
 - e. Active Production (20%)
 - f. Champions and leadership open to change
 - g. Taking control of our future
 6. What is important to us.
 - a. Need to regain social license and earn public support/trust
 - b. Sustainable/responsible use of natural resources/stewardship
 - c. A pride and passion for a healthy and productive forest
 - d. Diversity -markets and species.
 7. Future Scenarios
 - a. Value added products. Higher Margins
 - b. Product diversification
 - c. Education and communications – public and Industry
 - d. Embrace new technology
 - e. Manage for higher volume
 - f. Collaborative teamwork

Pathways Forward

1. Healthy high value forest
2. Driving towards a low carbon economy
3. Renewable energy from forest products
4. Replace plastic with natural wood products – zero waste
5. Locally produced products
6. Innovative products
7. Champions of climate regulation through healthy forest (education)
8. Unified forest industry with public support
9. Diverse markets
10. Public education, public relations
11. System Change (approach) and policy change
12. Culture Change

Following Frank's debrief of the answers to the questionnaire, the committee discussed the information. Peter Spicer indicated that some of the items listed were not immediate and there needed to be a short-term fix for the contractors. Mac Davis suggested that there were other communities in NS that were dealing with some of the same issues, or had in the past, and should be contacted regarding what they had been done in those areas. Ian Ripley added that NB had survived pulp mill closures and might be an avenue for information. Kevin Merriam thanks Frank for the debrief.

Jonathon McClelland provided the committee with a report on the meeting that he and Ian Ripley had in Halifax with NS Innovation Inc. It was a good meeting with several ideas regarding chip/waste usage. Overall meeting message was there is a need to collaborate with each other and that the committee was doing good work and the Province is asking “who can we help?”

Item 4: Communications Plan

Who does the committee need to communicate with?

1. Transition Team
2. Media
3. Action Team Leads
4. Forest Industry Group
5. Members of the Legislative Assembly
6. Associated Groups
7. Cabinet
8. Anchor Partners

The committee needs to delegate – too much for just the co-chairs to handle. Need subcommittees –

Communication: Shelia Christie, Jonathon McClelland, Ian Ripley

Provincial Transition Team: Jeff Black, Mac Davis, Darrin Carter, Peter Spicer, Tory Rushton

Big Committee Meetings: Frank Gallant, Jonathon McClelland, Elizabeth Smith McCrossin, Ian Ripley

The large group need feedback from the committee, need to be provided with updates on all things positive (provide hope). Communications need to be more structured Media needs to be brought into the group.

Ian Ripley reported that he had spoke to Minister Rankin and there seemed to be a lack of panic. Need a vision of the future. Elizabeth Smith McCrossin indicated that she thought the Transition Team was just waiting to be asked for dollars.

Kevin Merriam thanked the meeting participants. Both the afternoon and the evening meeting were very positive, and a lot had been accomplished. Steven McLelan spoke to the committee and indicated that still need Premier MacNeil to answer the question about the vision for the future of the forest industry in Nova Scotia. He suggested that the question should be asked by Tim Houston and needs to be asked during Question Period in the House.

Elizabeth Smith McCrossin suggested that the Premier be invited to the next committee meeting. It was suggested by Frank Gallant that before a meeting with the Premier, the committee needs to have a strategy in place. Suggested the Premier be asked to attend a meeting at the end of February or early March. Committee agreed.

Kevin Merriam adjourned the meeting at 9:25pm