

# Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee

September 22, 2022 / Meeting notes

7:00 – 9:00 pm Via Zoom

**Call to order 7:02 pm**

**Meeting Chair – Kevin Merriam**

## **Item 1 – Admin**

Kevin opened the meeting. He welcomed everyone, acknowledged the size of the in person attendance and asked for additional agenda items. Peter was asked if he would give a paper Excellence update and that was added to the Reports: section of the Agenda. Elizabeth asked to add an announcement of an upcoming meeting on low pressure distributed heating to New Business.

**Approval of Agenda:** Ernie moved for the approval of the agenda as amended, seconded by Peter Spicer, Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2022, meeting was made by Jennifer and seconded by Alice. Motion carried.

## **Item 2 – Business Arising from the Minutes**

**CFAC Signs and placement (Report Ron)** – The Signs were on display at the CCUBIC Boardroom and shown on camera for those on line to have a look. Conversation raised the potential for one of the new signs to replace the original at Harrisons in Amherst and that if it could be placed on the water hut rather than the fence. It's believed that that the hut is property of the Municipality of Cumberland so that may not be possible.

Conversation was that we should identify a number of locations and circulate the signs among those locations so that every few months it would disappear to reappear a couple of (three) months later. That way people would notice both the appearance of the sign and then its absence. Rather than it becoming invisible to those routinely going past.

Possible locations: Harrison properties; Amherst, Parrsboro, and Pugwash, and in Oxford on the fence of the former Lion's Park.

**Acknowledgement of Jeff Black (Kevin)** – Kevin took the opportunity to acknowledge the time effort and commitment that Jeff Black has put into the CFAC from the very first meetings, stepping up to co-chair and all of the work he's done between the meetings to make sure things moved forward and stayed on track. Kevin included a reminder to Jeff that having stepped down as co-chair should give him the latitude to continue to participate as a member of the committee and that his opinion and continued participation was not only welcome but encouraged.

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## Item 3 - Reports:

**CFAC Activity since last meeting (Kevin)** - Kevin reminded the meeting that even though there hadn't been any official CFAC meetings since March that there had certainly been lots going on since then. He then set up the next three reports. Forestry Contractor's group, Forestry transition group and a newsletter update.

**Forestry Contractors group update (Angela MacGillivray)** - Angela acknowledged how many of those on the call are Board members or members at large of the Contractor's group and that the NSFCA owes its roots to CFAC. For credibility with the Province the group tracks membership numbers and their employee numbers and currently represents 130 contractors and 1,250 employees in Nova Scotia. The President of the NSFCA is Ralph Stewart, Ryan Scott secretary, Alice treasurer. Jeff is co-chair of the trucking subcommittee. They frame conversations with the province in terms of the impact of the loss of the market for low value fiber rather than how that market was lost. They've also made a conscious effort to work with other groups to send the message that they're looking to work on solutions not just assign blame. When a contractor joins the group they provide the number of employees they have and who their MLA is so representation across the province can be tracked and when individual MLA's are being contacted they'll know how many of their constituent businesses are represented.

Currently they're working on an ask of the Provincial government on how the Province can work with the contractors to help solve problems. Examples are the thousands of dollars of insurance penalties paid if a machine operator or truck driver doesn't have three year's experience. The group represents all four aspects of: harvesting, trucking, silviculture, and road building contractors.

**Forestry Transition group update (Mackie)** – Mac reported that the original transition team has been disbanded in favour of what is now called the Ministerial Advisory Committee. This committee reports directly to the Minister and has meet only once so far in an orientation session to get the terms of reference and get to know each another.

Mac shared that his role on the committee is to represent land owners but as to be expected he has let them know that with his background in forestry they should expect him to weigh in on more than the one aspect of forestry.

On the agenda and currently assigned to separate committees are the following ten things:

- Revised Forest Management Guide
- PTAs, (pretreatment assessments)
- High Production Forestry
- Outcomes Based Forestry
- Natural Disturbance Regimes
- A Silviculture Program Review
- Old Forest Review
- Forest Environmental Assessments,
- Revised State of the Forest Report for the Province Species at Risk, and
- The Small-scale Wood Heat Initiative

The sub-committees will report in to the Advisory committee so everyone stays current but the majority of the work will be done in committee. Next one is scheduled for October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

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**CFAC Newsletter Update (Emily)** Emily provided an update on the newsletter. With the ongoing discussion of if the newsletter should continue as a quarterly or at all the summer months were more about maintain the readership rather than building it. We haven't lost anybody so it's a good time to see readership increase. As fall approaches and we have the Facebook page, Emily indicated that she was going to try posting more things to engage more people to sign up for the newsletter. She's working to keep people engaged in it, with more and more information. Discussion on a quarterly newsletter may be timely in the sense that then we can kind of pack more information into each edition.

Following Emily's report discussion confirmed that Emily was still committed to edit the newsletter if that's what was wanted and that there is a real need for an individual or committee to take on responsibility for building advertising revenue. As the newsletter is the single biggest tool we have for educating the public and for generating operating funds it should get some serious attention.

With respect to the operations of the newsletter, the first deadline for content coming to Emily is the Friday of the week before a board meeting. Discussion, suggestions, and reminders could then flow from that deadline at the Board meeting. Final deadline would be two weeks ahead of the publication date.

Other suggestions around the newsletter was to connect to the NSFCFA, and to Forest Nova Scotia. There will be an October newsletter and the next one would follow in January.

**Motion to move the newsletter to a quarterly publication - *motion made by Ron and seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.***

**Financial Report (Ron)** – Ron provided an update of the financials for the CFAC.

## Item 4 – New Business

### **Education Platforms and discussion on a direction forward -**

Discussion reconfirmed that a valuable role for CFAC was to educate the public. That the work we've done with the schools, the newsletter, and the signage (large CFAC signs and small lot treatment processes) have all been a part of that. That the Cumberland Colchester school board is looking to build relationships outside of its traditional network is something we should take advantage of and Ron has committed to follow up on the potential for that.

Previous conversation identified The Natural Resources Education Centre located in Middle Musquodoboit, They offer curriculum-based educational programs for schools and groups at all age/grade levels with the goal of fostering a sense of stewardship and sustainable development of our natural resources. We should connect with them to see what kind of help they could provide us.

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As a project for schools we could pose a question and have students answer, with the best answers published in the newsletter. A current buzzword in the environmental movement is carbon, low carbon. What if we were to ask something like, "*When the tree takes in carbon, what does it do with it?*" That may get students to actually dig in and find out that, well, that's what the lumber is, that's what the wood is, it is carbon stored. Then that opens a whole avenue of conversation, for example: by building with wood we're sequestering carbon. If we had something where there's a question a month competition going into the grade six class or similar, and there could be a little cash award and the answers are published. If schools aren't accessible, or not readily accessible it could even be done over social media.

What could be done as it is far enough away is taking tree seedlings into the classroom, or to work. The same with answering questions or talking about carbon and demonstrating that these new trees will be holding more carbon than the dead trees, things like that. Even if each student in a number of schools took tree seedlings home and took a picture where they got planted. You can assume that they would watch them grow. So by the time they're through high school, they might be interested in forestry. This plays into how to get people interested in working in any part of the forest industry.

The discussion included a number of things, but it came back to we just need to start hammering out a direction in what we want to do and start moving in that direction. This is going to be an ongoing discussion. We'll likely end up going down a path and then realizing that this is interesting but if went this route with it, we'd probably get more traction. So this is something that will have to progress and evolve over time.

It was suggested that to not lose momentum a subgroup of people could do the initial vetting of ideas and then bring those ideas back to the Board for approval. The initial sub group could consist of two or three out of CFAC, a couple more from the community, potentially someone with an educational background or someone with probably forestry and education or agriculture.

Another suggestion for moving the education component forward is to have CFAC host a conference call or forum of the various organizations interested in education in how to create synergies that have a real impact. (i.e. We're having a Zoom meeting on Thursday night. Here's the link and you're invited. This is what we're going to talk about... We'd love to have you join. We're trying to help kids. Something like that).

**Action Item:** Who's going to be invited to that? How are we going to get them there, who can list terms? Between now and the next meeting come up with ideas so that next meeting we can say, okay, this is what we want to do, let's pick a date.

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## **Succession Planning for CFAC group –**

With three years in it's time for a change of officers for CFAC. Our bylaws define or structure as a co-chair organization so the nomination committee should continue that approach. January has been identified as the time for the AGM so a new slate of officers should be available to be nominated at that meeting.

## **Friends of Northern Pulp Update (Peter Spicer) –**

The Friends of Northern Pulp have been meeting every two weeks during the summer. The group has met with most of the MLAs in the province and some of the MPs. Including Steven Ellis as Cumberland Colchester MP. He's very supportive of the forest industry and he wants to see it reopen. One of the head guys from Paper Excellence, J.P. has been in Nova Scotia three or four days a week almost the entire summer, meeting with groups, businessmen, politicians and trying to sell what they're trying to do with the mill. He hasn't been in Cumberland yet, although I've been asked to get some of the contacts, and I think they're going to try to pull some people from Cumberland County together, but that just depends on the time. Sasha Irving is the PR person and she's coordinating those meetings.

She's been hired full time by Paper Excellence to do their PR, because their PR, was the week link the last go at an environmental assessment, and we believe they're doing much better this time. Our group is getting new signs, and I'll have a bunch of those if anybody wants to put them on their lawn to replace the old signs that we put out a year ago. We're starting to change what we refer to the mill as. Instead of calling it Northern Pulp, they're trying to refer to it as the new mill. That was something that a number of people mentioned, that the northern pulp name is synonymous with bad. So we've tried to change that. The EA process is underway.

## **Low Pressure Distributed Heating (Elizabeth) –**

Elizabeth brought to our attention that we should feel welcome to attend a meeting that is to take place in Amherst September 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm about consideration of proposing a low pressure distributed heating system under consideration for New Glasgow. Individual heating plants can be designed to use low value fiber, waste plastics and other combustible materials that can be used to create heat and electricity rather than adding to landfills or being left to release carbon in the forest. The volumes under consideration are comparable to the volumes that Norther Pulp purchased. There would be a number of people there looking at the potential of this technology for Amherst.

**Item 5 – Closing Comments** Kevin thanked everyone for participating and remarked on the number of people who participated at tonight's meeting.

**Next Meeting - Thur. Nov. 17, 2022, at 7pm Virtual Meeting / in person (TBA)**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm**