

# Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee

November 30, 2023 / Meeting notes

7:00 – 9:00 pm in person @ CCUBIC and Zoom

## Call to order 7:00 pm

### Meeting Chair – Jonathan McClelland

**In Attendance:** Co-Chairs – Jonathan McClelland and Jeff Black; Sec / Treasurer – Ron; Directors – Mac, and Steven; Members – Alice, Emily, Ernie, Katrina, Murray, and Peter.

### Item 1 – Admin

Jonathan opened the meeting. He welcomed everyone, acknowledged those in attendance and asked if there were to be additional agenda items.

**Approval of Agenda:** Ernie moved for the approval of the agenda, seconded by Jeff, Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2023, meeting was made by Ernie and seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.

### Item 2 – Business Arising from the Minutes

**CFAC Signs and placement (Report Ron)** – Conversation zeroed in on the need to make a decision on where the signs should go and to assign specific individuals to oversee their placement. As previously discussed, one of the new signs should replace the original at Harrisons in Amherst and the other could potentially be placed at the Athol Forestry Co-op property. Ron accepted the role of approaching Ian Ripley of Athol Co-op, while Jeff is to follow up on placement on the Oxford pond fence and Mac to see about one in Parrsboro at the Harrison's store there.

### Item 3 - Reports:

**Forestry Contractors group update** – There have been two member meetings of the NS Forestry Contractors group since our last CFAC meeting. While Angela continues to work on support initiatives including new markets for low value fiber, Katrina shared some of the details around the eco-forestry equipment grant program. This is the biggest line item for forestry support in Nova Scotia since the closure of Northern Pulp.

Currently they're working on fine tuning the requirements and application process. There is a commitment to checking with the individuals working in the forest industry to ensure that the program fits with real needs of the industry.

**Ministerial Advisory Committee update (Mackie)** - Mac provided an update of the categories of issues they are addressing. Mac noted that over the summer period they met with

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the Minister and the two main topics of discussion were the lack of a pulp market, and Ecological Forestry on private lands. While Mac reported that the Minister was sincere in his participation of the issues identified by the Advisory Committee, he didn't have any ready or immediate answers. Mac was however comfortable that the discussion was heard and will lead to realistic interventions down the line. Those in attendance at this CFAC meeting this evening agreed with Mac that the Minister coming back to the Advisory committee with additional issues for the Ministerial Advisory Committee to work on is a positive sign of the Minister recognizing the value of the Ministerial Advisory Committee.

**CFAC Newsletter Update (Emily)** Emily provided an update on the newsletter reminding the committee that the next newsletter is scheduled for Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> with a need to get information for publication into her hands ahead of her sending out the draft copy on December 27<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion was to have a link to the meeting minutes in the newsletter so that they are available to members. They are currently hosted on the Cumberland Business Connector website and the link to this section could be what is published in the newsletter.

**Financial Report (Ron)** – Ron provided an update of the financials for the CFAC. As of the end of October 2023 we have \$670 on deposit.

## Item 4 – New Business

**Discussion Lack of Pulp Markets** – General consensus is that we have passed the point of hoping for the return of Northern Pulp or any other pulp processors to want to locate in Nova Scotia. We need to find a market for low value fiber that does not depend on the pulp industry. If it does recover it will be at least five years out and should be treated as a bonus, not a solution.

**Update Funding Forestry Equipment** – The Ecological Forest Equipment Program is to support the access to equipment specialized for ecological forestry. This is a grant program funded at 7.5 million dollars to help transition to specialized equipment. The max. a single business can access under the program is two applications to a total of \$500,000 in grants. New equipment can be funded at 35% up to \$250,000. Used equipment can be funded at 30% up to \$125,000. And, retrofits can be funded at 30% up to \$100,000. As noted in the previous discussion there are a number of items and requirements to yet be determined but equipment purchased after January 1, 2023 can be considered once the application process is opened.

Discussion recognized the high value of the program and acknowledged the work those responsible have put into it. The only caution was that if there continues to be no market for low value fiber even great programs like this aren't going to save the industry.

**Lack of Silviculture Workforce** – Consensus was there are more issues with silviculture than the persistent lack of workers. Public opinion and interest group pressure have generalized forest treatments, defining any chemical or physical intervention as intrusive and destructive of something of value to someone. This public disinformation campaign has complicated both

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management of the forest and recruiting into the industry. Discussion was around ways CFAC can use it's credibility in educating the general population on forestry practices in Nova Scotia that support a health forest and a healthy forest industry.

**Item 5 – Closing Comments** Jonathan thanked everyone for participating and remarked on the energy of the meeting.

**Next Meeting – February 29th, 2024. Call to order 7pm, Date and location (TBA)**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm**