

Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee

June 6, 2024

7:02 – 8:23 pm in person @ CCUBIC and Zoom

Call to order 7:02 pm

Meeting Chair – Jonathan McClelland

In Attendance: Co-Chairs – Jonathan McClelland and Jeff Black; Sec / Treasurer – Ron; Members – Alice, Emily, Ernie, Keith, 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. There were no additions to the published agenda.

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

Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of the February 29, 2024, meeting was made by Jeff and seconded by Peter. Motion carried.

Item 2 – Business Arising from the Minutes

CFAC Signs and placement – Ron is to look at resizing and costing the existing sign design as an 8' x 4' sign. This format would be to meet the requirements of placement on the fence of the former Lion's property in Oxford across from the Tim Horton's. One of the two signs we currently have has been installed on the fence in Harrison's yard in Amherst across from the wellhouse. You will have seen a photograph of it hanging there in the last CFAC Newsletter. It was mentioned that we should check to see if the new fence is up at the Parrsboro Harrison's site yet, as that was identified as a second potential site for one of the big 3' x 4' signs.

Archived CFAC Newsletter – Copies of both the newsletters and the minutes are now archived on the Cumberland Business Connector website under "Resources / Forestry". You will also find a link to them in each newsletter as they are published.

Potential funding of the Newsletter – There is no update available from the NSFCA on discussions to provide funding for the newsletter in exchange for sharing NSFCA information to its members and our readership. Discussion centered on continuing as if that funding will not be available until it is. A number of opportunities for potential advertisers were discussed.

Mechanical Pre-Commercial thinning – Following up on the exploration of using a hydraulic shear head designed for a small excavator (six tonne) to mechanize pre-commercial thinning it has been determined that there's a significant interest from members of CFAC to see a demonstration of one of the units in the field. Either by video or even better, an in person

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demonstration. The cost of operation data currently available suggests that it would operate at a premium above manual thinning but not so much to exclude it in those situations where manual thinning isn't practical or where it isn't available. We will see what we can do to either get a demonstration set up or an invitation to a planned one. One side note that came out of the discussion is that part of the problem potentially addressed by the hydraulic shear head is that the rate for manual pre-commercial thinning hasn't changed in 20 years. This may be something we can check with the NSFCA on, to see if they are working on getting that reviewed.

Item 3 - Reports:

Forestry Contractors group update – The NS Forestry Contractors Association held its AGM in Debert on April 19. From that meeting the new President is Denis Bedford and the new Vice President is our own Jeff Black. Unfortunately, they lost Alice as treasurer, but we hope that she continues to play the vital role with us as she has since our founding.

Ministerial Advisory Committee update (Mackie) – As Mac was not in attendance this evening there was no update available.

CFAC Newsletter Update (Emily) Emily provided an update on the newsletter letting us know that while the readership remains in the 200-subscriptions range, it has a 50% open rate. One more reminder of the importance of the newsletter. It was noted that even though Don Cameron has retired, he continues to support the newsletter with articles. Thank you, Don! The next edition should be released around July 8th, so it doesn't get lost in the July first weekend activities.

Financial Report (Ron) – Ron provided an update of the financials for the CFAC. As of the end of May 2024 we have \$476 on deposit.

Item 4 – New Business

Provincial News Conference on Northern Pulp – It was reported that a settlement has been reached between the Province and Paper Excellence as owner of Northern Pulp. Peter reported that there were four key points from the press conference:

1. *A New Mill Might Be Possible* - Paper Excellence is funding a feasibility study to determine whether a new Northern Bleached Softwood Kraft (NBSK) pulp mill is feasible. If so, the Northern Pulp group will seek third-party project financing to design, construct, and operate the mill.
2. *The Pictou Site Will Be Maintained* - Paper Excellence will maintain the former Northern Pulp site in Pictou for potential future woodland logistics operations. The Pictou site will remain in cold hibernation during the feasibility study. Northern Pulp will continue to comply with its obligations under the existing ministerial order, environmental laws, and regulations and provide ongoing care and maintenance of the site.

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3. *Pensions Are Fully Funded* - Former Northern Pulp workers' pensions will be fully funded, regardless of the outcome of the feasibility study.
4. *Lawsuit Against the Province Dropped* - In December 2021, the company filed a lawsuit against Nova Scotia for \$450 million. As part of this settlement, Paper Excellence is dropping the lawsuit.

BDO Zone Rating discussion – It was shared that the County has been approached to partner in a project which would do a resource study of biomass in Cumberland County and its readiness and volumes for being a supply chain for industries looking to build infrastructure for using or processing biomass. The organization proposing to conduct the study, BDO Biozone Initiative, works throughout North America determining a rating for areas it studies and marketing those areas and assigned ratings to the Biomass industry. As the project is in the \$70,000 range, several potential partners are being approached. CFAC will continue to monitor how this project moves forward.

Item 5 – Closing Comments Jonathan thanked everyone for participating and the next meeting was set for September 12th, 2024 and will be our AGM.