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TENNESSEE FORESTRY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

4/5/2022

Tennessee Forestry Commission meeting was held in the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, Bruer Building Oak Training Room in Nashville, TN, April 05, 2022

Participants:

Forestry Commission Members: Johnny Heard, Chairman; Tom Midyett, Vice Chairman; John Charles Wilson, Secretary; Alex Richman, Sharon Jean-Philippe, Bill Legg.

Forestry Commission Ex-Officio Members:

Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA): Brian Chandler, Forest Management Program Leader

Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA): Charles Hatcher, Commissioner

Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA): Jeff Akin, Deputy Commissioner; Shannon Klonowski, Assistant Commissioner; Samantha Wilson, Budget Coordinator

Tennessee Department of Agriculture - Division of Forestry (TDF): David Arnold, State Forester; Heather Slayton, Assistant State Forester; Tim Phelps, Communications Outreach Unit Leader; Gina Sowders, East TN Nursery Unit Leader; Cody Barrett, Forest Data Program Specialist; Rachel Greene, Forest Data and Analysis Unit Leader; Dyshea Brown, Executive Administrative Assistant; James Heaton, Forestry Technician (remote).

Tennessee Forestry Association: Teri Frye

Chairman Johnny Heard welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. CDT

Approval of the Minutes of the January 9, 2022 meeting

John Charles Wilson motioned to approve minutes as presented. Tom Midyett seconded the motion. The motion passed.



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Appoint sub-committee to nominate new officers

Johnny Heard

- Bill Legg, Mike Witt and John Charles will serve on sub-committee

Tennessee Champion Tree program

Sharon Jean-Philippe/University of TN students

- The program measures and records the largest specimen of each species of trees.
- The team consist of Dr. Jean-Philippe and six students. Four students were present to discuss the program (Jaq Payne, Mara Lind, Kayla Stuart, and Jimi Miller)
- Other partners include the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council and Tennessee Division of Forestry.
- Program key topics include history, process, identification, environment and public engagement.

Seedling quantity and pricing recommendations

Gina Sowders

- Fertilizer pricing has increased from \$300/ton to \$800/ton; projected \$900/ton.
- Seedling price changes will take affect first quarter of 2023.
- FedEx shipping in each category increased \$1 to cover increasing cost.
- Seedling production recommendations were slightly less than those from last year (hardwood and softwood species).
- Pine seedlings price increase recommendations ranged from 2% to 44%. Hardwood seedling price increases ranged from 4% to 30%.

Approval of 2023 pricing and 2024 seedling quantity recommendation.

Tom Midyett motioned to approve seedlings and pricing recommendations as presented. John Charles Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Vacancy Update

Heather Slayton

- The division has a 15% vacancy rate which is up from 12% in January. Currently 59 total positions are vacant up from 48 total vacant positions in January.
- Forestry Aide 1's was included in the vacancy total because the division is in the middle of fire season.

Budget process review and summary

Heather Slayton

- Total budget increase for FY2023 is \$22,135,100.00. The budget total includes increases to the Division's operational budget, building maintenance and capital



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maintenance/improvement.

Update on UAS program

Rachel Greene/ Cody Barrett
Tim Phelps/James Heaton

- The UAS (unmanned aerial systems) program encompasses UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) operation, pilot licensing/training, and data analysis.
- The UAVs have been used in several areas: fire management – wildfire suppression, prescribed burns, forest health, state forest and communication & outreach.
- A handbook has been created with the governances and step by step instructions for UAV operations.
- Demonstration of the UAV was provided.

Future Meeting Dates

- June 8, 2022 – Approval of Commission officers (second Wednesday in June).
- September 7, 2022 - Approve Division Budget (first Wednesday in September).
- January 10, 2023 – Discuss budget, timber sales (second Tuesday in January).
- April 4, 2023 – Approve Nursery seedling pricing/production and appoint sub-committee to nominate Commission officers (first Tuesday in April).

Bill Legg made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Charles Wilson seconded the motion. The Meeting was adjourned at 2:04PM CDT.