

**Minutes to Members Meeting
January 4/2018**

Members Present:

Ron Johnson
Myles Thorp
Brad Roberts

Chris Schmidt
Dave Loeks
Roy Whiten

Ivan Thompson
Bill Klassen

Guests:

Peter Turner Yukon Chamber of Commerce

Forest Management Branch:

Kirk Price, Marc Myers, Marc Petersen, Neal Allison and Lisa Walker

Ron called the meeting to order at 10 am

Myles provided an update regarding his attendance at the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers meeting in September.

- Highlights were the presentations regarding renewable energy use in Europe. Europe has been presented as world leaders in renewable energy consumption however; there is still a significant reliance on fossil fuel for energy.
- Finland still relies on about 56% fossil fuel for energy
- Austria is about 65% fossil fuel
- Sweden is about 37% fossil fuel and 32% nuclear
- The Canadian forest ministers and Natural Resources Canada announced the Bioeconomy Framework and will be working towards biomass as an economic development opportunity for isolated northern communities. Earmarked 55,000,000.00 dollars for innovative wood based technologies.
- It is worth noting that a number of provinces and American states have adjusted building codes to include tall wood building construction. Portland Ore has approved an 18 story all wood building. The idea is climate change and carbon capture and storage in wood structures

Forest policy inputs:

- 5yr Forest Resources Act review should be the process we will have for addressing some of the unintended consequences of section in the act. E.g. product orientation of the various tenures.

- The Whitehorse Southern Lakes FRMP has been delayed and is out of sync with the level of risk developing around Whitehorse regarding catastrophic fire events in the city and surrounding communities. Note: Lisa Walker was asked about this in the afternoon and suggested that a draft plan should be available for input and comment in March 2018.
- Timber Harvest Planning and YWPA participation in the development of them. FMB has approached YWPA about participating in the development of the plan and jointly submitting it to YESAA in an effort to increase the awareness of the industries dependence on these plans. There will be further work on this process this winter.

Fuel Abatement planning and commercial orientation:

- The members present had a good discussion regarding this important topic. Concerns were highlighted that the planning process is not keeping pace with the risk of a catastrophic fire event in Whitehorse that would be on the scale of Ft MacMurray or Williams Lake and many other examples.
- The group discussed engagement with other organizations regarding the mutual concern. Myles will be following up with Bill Klassen, Dave Loeks and Ron Johnson to scope out who should be drawn into the process and develop a strategy for raising the concern with senior levels of government.
 - Key areas of concern are that the current fire smart program is not accomplishing its intended goal of reducing risk around subdivisions and homes. The prescriptions do not open the canopy up and simply remove understory which is only helpful if the fire occurs during low hazard ratings. In extreme hazard rating the closed canopy will still carry an aggressive crown fire right into the subdivisions.
 - If proper levels of planning are implemented there will be a need to commercialize the timber removed from the fire breaks and stand conversion areas. This wood is biomass that should be included in the price of the clearing contract.
 - The economics are present to make this possible; Ivan Thompson mentioned that in some situations he would be glad to undertake the project just for the timber. This would be on the same basis that he currently logs on Crown Land under licenses and cutting permits.

Peter Turner President for the Yukon Chamber of Commerce talked to the members about areas of mutual concern that we are going to work together on as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between Ywpa and YCC.

Key points:

- YCC represents 750 business across the Yukon not just Whitehorse
- We have mutual concerns especially with regard to energy and Myles has represented the biomass industry at YCC's subcommittee for energy.
- Currently 43% of Yukon GDP is government driven this needs to be rebalanced and we need as a territory to shift more towards the GDP being driven by private sector investment and development.
- Interesting to note that in the past ten years the population of the Yukon has grown 10% while the size of the Yukon government has grown 43%. With little expansion of the private sector.
- YCC is planning to host a conference in Whitehorse with regard to how small business can prepare for and respond to a significant shut down of their business as a result of a natural disaster.
- Planning to focus on business resiliency and survival after a disaster.
- There will not be a specific focus on risk mitigation specific to fuel abatement projects but the idea is to have a trade show where these issues could be highlighted. YWPA suggested that some time should be devoted to the risk and likelihood of a fire event in Whitehorse.
- The YCC is working on the Carbon Tax issue and has made representation to government. This has highlighted that a simple rebate will accomplish very little to change human behavior to lower carbon foot prints. YCC has recommended that tax revenues should be directed toward retrofitting buildings and helping private sector to shift to renewables away from fossil fuels. This would of course include biomass solutions for heating buildings.

Adjourned for lunch at 12 pm

Meeting reconvened at 13:00 hrs

Forest management branch representatives joined the meeting and provided a summary of the Timber Supply Analysis process for Haines Junction. This was the first opportunity for YWPA members to see the work completed to date. The summary presentation is attached to these minutes. The summary did not provide an indication of the level of harvest that could be available in the planning area but did outline some of the criteria that went into netting the land base down to the timber harvesting land base.

The copy of the presentation provided here includes some margin notes I made during the presentation. There will be opportunity to for our association to provide feedback to the oversight committee hopefully in March 2018. At that time it is anticipated that the analysis document will provide the various scenarios and resulting possible sustainable harvest levels that could be determined for the area. At that time a more detailed analysis will be conducted by the YWPA and we will provide a letter outlining any issues and concerns we may have.

The highlights from the summary are that the land base that contributes to the Annual Allowable Cut is small compared to the total forested land base in the planning area. The amount of land included in the timber supply analysis appears to be about 5% of the total forested land base in the area. This means that not very much land was included for timber harvesting which will result in a pretty small AAC.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me and I will do my best to clarify things.

Meeting adjourned at 16:00 hrs.