

Board Meeting Minutes
December 1/2016

Attendees: Ron Johnson, Ivan Thompson, Dan Reams, Byron Gagne, Vlad Petrak and Myles Thorp

Meeting called to order at 09:10 by President Ron Johnson

Business:

1. Funding agreement with Forest Management Branch is to be renegotiated after the New Year. A couple of years ago the allocation was reduced. This year it looks like we may be short of funds at the end of the year. It may be necessary for the board to request a return to the original funding level of \$50,000.00. If we are short this fiscal Myles will delay getting paid until the next fiscal for his services as Executive Director.
 - a. Action: Myles will monitor the budget and commitments and if necessary will engage the board to enter into a discussion with FMB to return the funding level back to the original level of \$50,000.00 per year.
2. Memberships are down this year and it seems as if it coincided with the change in membership fees. Myles talked to a few other groups and found that if the price of membership is too low there is a tendency to think the association is not a serious group. Myles recommended a return to the old schedule of \$40 for individuals and \$100 for corporate.
 - a. Action: Board agreed to a return to the old schedule.
3. New Government
 - a. The association should meet with the new Premier and Minister in the New Year. some of the topics we should discuss are:
 - i. Carbon Pricing: the board discussed the adoption of a position on the matter of carbon pricing.
 1. If changes in behaviour is the ultimate goal in terms to carbon emissions. It was felt that not much will change if the price current price/tax rates are applied. E.g. start at \$10/t eventually get to \$50/t.
 2. The application of a price on carbon would ultimately help our industry because renewable biomass fuel for heat is not going to be subject to the price increase.
 3. However; there is a concern that the carbon tax would apply to the fire wood cutting industry and this will be a net increase in the cost of fuel for logging and delivery of

wood. Wood cutters do not have a choice if they are in business they will experience increased costs. This would result in a higher price for consumers through a higher price for a cord of fire wood or a tonne of wood chips. This is then a flow through cost increase.

4. The fire wood industry is a biomass industry benefits the Yukon through substituting imported fossil fuels for locally produced sustainable renewable heating fuel. Every unit of heat produced from wood is retaining the dollars spent on heat in the Yukon and not flowing out of the economy to the USA based oil companies. (see Yukon Chamber of Commerce energy analysis)
5. Concern that if people decide to convert to electric heat instead of oil there would not be enough capacity in the Yukon electrical system to meet the demand. This would result in increased consumption of fossil fuels for electrical generation because more hydro is unlikely to be socially acceptable.
6. It should be noted that our industry is contributing to the capture of carbon in a significant way because we are harvesting trees that are already dead and will be net emitters of carbon. So if we remove them from the site and emit the carbon in the form of heat we will open the forest up for new growth. Especially because the site must be reforested with new trees as directed under the Forest Resources Act.

ii. YWPA feels the following should be done with regard to Carbon Pricing.

1. If there is to be a carbon price it should be collected in the Yukon.
2. The funds collected should not be put into general revenue and should be managed in a Trust Fund that is designed to distribute the funds to carbon reduction infrastructure and businesses.
3. Business involved in cutting renewable fuelwood should be exempt from the carbon price/tax.
4. There should be a way that the wood cutting industry can benefit through assistance to purchase new fuel efficient machines.

5. Funds should be made available to incentivize the conversion of fossil fuel heating systems to biomass based heating systems.

b. Fire Smart and Fuel Abatement

- i. There is a need to rationalize this program the fuelwood industry should be part of the program. The wood harvested from fuel reduction programs should not be given away for free. There is value in the wood as part of the market for fuel wood in all communities.
- ii. The effectiveness of the current fire smart program was discussed. While we recognize that it may be reducing some fuel loads adjacent to communities it is clear that it is not enough. There is a real need for creating larger cleared fire guards around subdivisions with mature and old coniferous forest. The current program does not do this. It is a thinning program that will only make a difference in normal years if there is extended drought and a dry windy summer these treatments will not be effective. Think Fort MacMurray.
- iii. As part of an effective fuel abatement program there should be stand conversions to deciduous vegetation.
- iv. The timber removed should be part of the commercial timber market for firewood and manufactured biomass chips for heat. The wood should be part of the value of a contract.
- v. Further, it must be understood by the public that the fuelwood industry does not need the wood. The current program of harvesting beetle and fire killed areas is supplying the current demand for wood. Also, the fuel abatement program will be cutting green timber which would go into inventory to be dried for a minimum of two summers before it can be burned in heating systems. (There is virtually no demand for sawlogs in the Yukon)
- vi. The planning required for developing a meaningful fuel abatement program is likely out of sync with the risks associated with a catastrophic fire occurrence. The Whitehorse Southern Lakes and Watson Lake have been recognized as the highest risk communities in the Yukon. Because they are surrounded by mature and old coniferous forest and subdivisions have been imbedded into the forest in a way that there are no defined fire breaks available.
- vii. This is an urgent issue and the YWPA will be engaging governments to encourage affirmative action with regard to establishing an upgraded approach to fuel reductions.

- c. Whitehorse Southern Lakes FRMP
 - i. This will be discussed with FMB this afternoon and the YWPA will be encouraging the new Government to ensure this process is a priority for completion.
- 4. YESAB submissions for THP's
 - a. Myles will be paying closer attention to this issue and will be submitting comments from YWPA perspective on THP submissions. Members should make effort to make comments in support of wood being made available for local consumption.
- 5. Whitehorse City building project
 - a. The YWPA received a letter (attached) from the Mayor in response to our letter of September 7, 2016 asking that biomass heating systems be considered part the new service and administration buildings. Their reply made it clear that they are not interested in installing a biomass system at this time but would be interested in biomass heat purchases as an option. We will arrange a meeting with the City's Director of Operations Peter O'Blenes.
- 6. FPIInnovations Workshop Feb 1/2017
 - i. The workshop will be held on the 1st of February encouraged attendance.
- 7. Forest Management Branch
 - a. Kirk Price, Lisa Walker and Marc Meyer joined the meeting in the afternoon.
 - i. Forest sector trust fund committee
 1. Kirk advised that the fund is now at roughly 5 million dollars
 2. The committee will be tasked with establishing the management of the fund through an investment firm. Once this is done then the criteria for applications for funding projects will be established.
 3. There is a six person committee; Terry Wilkinson is the chair; Blanche Warrington is the Vice chair; members al large are Kate Ballegooyen, James MacDonald, Damien Burns and Myles Thorp.

ii. Silviculture Strategy

1. The strategy is really about setting up the program internal to FMB. Mainly focused on administrative structures and priorities.
2. There is a green house in Dawson growing seedlings (John Lenard)
3. There may be some local planting contracts let out this summer to see if there are local planters who would take a small job on. There will be benefits to the Yukon if there is local uptake. This is part of a continued effort to build local capacity in the forest sector in Yukon.

iii. Whitehorse Southern Lakes FRMP

1. The draft has been written but there was a concern with regard to the detail of the maps included in the plan. Currently the maps outline the low, medium and high priority areas available for harvesting. It was done at a coarse level and some feel that it should be done in more detail.
2. There are two options available:
 - a. Take the plan forward as it is or;
 - b. Undertake more detailed mapping now and not defer this step to later.
3. If the option to wait as the preferred option it may be two years before the plan is out for review and eventual approval.
 - a. YWPA board expressed concern with regard to this time line especially in light of the concerns around fuel abatement and the recommendation in the plan to accelerate developing a landscape level fuel abatement and hazard reduction plan.
 - b. The coarse maps are likely good enough to get this part of the process moving.

iv. Timber Supply Analysis in Haines Junction and Dawson

1. Contractor from Salmon Arm, ForSite is doing the analysis work.
2. The FMB and First Nations oversight committees have been working on the land base criteria based on approved FRMP's. This work is completed and the first "big" modeling run will be completed in December.

3. Once this is complete a TSA report will be produced and public consultations will start in February if there are no unforeseen delays.
- v. 5-year review of the Forest Resources Act
 1. The streamlining process will be rolled into this review
 2. There is a requirement to brief the new Government prior to commencing the public review process.
 3. YWPA will be invited to comment at that time.
 - vi. Watson Lake FRMP
 1. There is a technical committee in place that is working on this plan which is being updated. Nothing new to report at this time.
 - vii. Operational issues were discussed
 1. Primarily associated with changing staff and different interpretations with regard to logging systems and soil disturbance. This often results in inefficiencies for logging.
 2. FMB appreciated the feedback and will be ensuring that staff has consistent understandings with regard to road side logging and other accepted industry practises in other jurisdictions.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 16:00 hours