

**BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS REGISTRATION**

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**Professional Foresters Examining Committee Meeting Minutes**

Held: August 26, 2021

OPEN SESSION MINUTES**Members Present:**

- Frank Mulhair, Chair
- Larry Forero
- Bill Snyder
- Yana Valachovic
- Danielle Lindler
- Christian Eggleton

Staff Participating:

- Dan Stapleton, Executive Officer, Licensing
- Robert "Bob" Roth, Attorney
- Deniele Cade, Assistant to the Executive Officer, Licensing
- Len Lindstrand, Contracted Expert Examiner
- Doug Piirto, Contracted Expert Examiner
- "Y.G." George Gentry, Contracted Expert Examiner

Approval of Closed Session Minutes for May 20, 2021

Member Forero moved to approve the minutes. Member Lindler seconded. Roll Call: Forero (Aye), Snyder (Aye), Lindler (Aye), Valachovic (Abstain), Eggleton (Aye), Mulhair (Aye). The motion passes with one abstention.

Report of Executive Officer

E.O. Stapleton reported on budgets. He stated that the RPF fund is in the black thanks to the fee increase along with fund infusions during FY 2019-2020. The ending balance is \$211,000 for FY 2020-2021 and is projected to be \$155,000 by the end of next year, FY 2021-2022. However, State general administrative expenditures called Pro Rata charges will be increased by \$16,000 annually, which will push the fund back into the red by FY 2024-2025. E.O. Stapleton explained that in order to remain in the black by FY 2024-2025, it would require 160 new RPF's paying the \$350 renewal fee, replacing an equivalent number of 30-year RPF's paying the \$250 renewal fee, or at least 46 new RPF's with no net loss in

current RPF numbers. He states that RPF retention is still very important along with getting more applicants to take the exam.

E.O. Stapleton reported on a new contract for Outreach Specialist. In June, the Board awarded the Contract Outreach Specialist contract to Forestry Educators Inc., and its Executive Director, Diane Dealey Neill. Diane is a former Francis H. Raymond Award winner and founder of the Forestry Challenge. She will be assisted by Robert Little, RPF 2651. E.O. Stapleton explained that he has sent out an announcement to western U.S. and Canada SAF accredited community college and universities, including those in California. He has received correspondence back to coordinate in-person and sometimes online presentations to prospective RPF applicants. E.O. Stapleton explained that the contract lasts for three years to the end of FY 2023-2024 (June 30, 2024). The contract also includes a presence at the SAF convention.

E.O. Stapleton reported on the departure of Matt Dias, and the search for a new Executive Officer for the Board. He states that the Board has formed a search committee for a replacement and no interim Executive Officer has been named. Instead, the Board Staff is sharing duties in the areas of the Board' business for which they are accustomed to working. The August Board meeting was canceled as a result. There will only be three more Board meetings in 2021; in September, November, and December.

E.O. Stapleton revealed that the Board of Forestry spent most of August moving into their new offices on the 9th and 10th floor of the new Natural Resources Building.

E.O. Stapleton reported on the next RPF examination taking place on October 8th. The exams will take place at the Humboldt County Agriculture Building in Eureka, the City of Redding Community Room, the Shingle Springs Community Center, and at the new Natural Resources Building in Sacramento for applicants requiring accommodations. He stated that there will be approximately 50 applicants taking the exam.

E.O. Stapleton also revealed that he has received one RPF complaint that is in the initial stages of review and investigation.

Update from ad hoc Committee on Apprentice Professional Forester Program (APF)

Y.G. reported on the ad hoc committee for the APF program. He stated that while they have not met, he has been working on developing a course program. He is going to change the title from FIT to Apprentice Professional Forester (APF). He has also been working on creating study groups to help applicants prepare for the exam and has been using the opportunity to help develop the course syllabus for future use. Y.G. currently has 30 individuals that meet 3 nights a week. One thing

he has learned from the classes is that they cannot be tied to the exam schedule. Y.G. proposes a pilot program where he asks those that want to participate, to enroll for an entire year. He clarified that this will not preclude them from taking the exam. However, the course schedule will not be modified to accommodate the schedule of the exam. The class will be a 12-month program with a subject matter for each month. The materials to cover and questions to answer will be conducted over Zoom, with possible monthly or biweekly check-ins.

Discussion and Ranking of PFEC Priorities Going Forward

E.O. Stapleton revealed that the Board has passed the independent program from certification for the CRM program as well as the policy statements. He said they are now posted online and available to the public.

E.O. Stapleton created a list of PFEC priorities which included the Apprentice Professional Forester program, computer examinations, USFS – SAF Certification, limited qualifying experience credit for arboriculture under 1621.1 (b)(3) forest protection, and continuing education.

Member Piirto states that he likes the idea of continuing education and recommends the possibility of using SAF or ACF as a means to provide evidence of CE credits.

Member Lindstrand warns about the costs involved in tracking CE. Since there are foresters involved in other practices that require CE requirements such as appraisals and pest control, Member Lindstrand questioned if those CE units could count towards RPF CE units.

Member Snyder recommends expanding specialty certificates with the intent to increase the number of individuals who can provide assistance with fuel reduction projects. Member Valachovic recommends expanding the conversation to look at post fire recovery as well.

The Apprentice Professional Forester program was ranked as 1.
Computer examinations was ranked as 2.
Creating specialty certificates to assist in fuel management was ranked as 3.
USFS – SAF Certification was ranked as 4.
Arboriculture as conditionally qualifying experience was ranked as 5.
Continuing education was ranked as 6.

Public Forum

Cedric Twight inquired about a flow chart for the Apprentice Professional Forester plan.

He warned about blurring the line between arboriculture work and forestry work but does find expanding certifications for specialty programs a good idea.

With regard to continuing education, Mr. Twight feels that it would be more useful if the PFEC provided information that they think is important for RPF's to know.

Meeting Adjourned