

DRAFT Oregon State Board of Forestry Meeting Minutes

June 28, 2016

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Attachments below and additional audio files are available on the web at <http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/Board/Pages/AboutBOF.aspx>

Listen to audio

- (1) Handout, Oregon State Forester Desired Attributes BOF Discussion Draft, June 23, 2016
- (2) Handout, State Forester Recruitment Plan, June 2016

In accordance with the provisions of ORS 526.016, a meeting of the Oregon Board of Forestry was held on June 28, 2016 at the Department of Forestry headquarters, 2600 State Street, Salem, Oregon.

Chair Imeson called the public meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Board Members present in person or via conference call:

Tom Imeson, Chair	Mike Rose
Tom Insko*	Cindy Deacon Williams
Nils Christoffersen*	
Sybil Ackerman*	

*Not present during vote

1. STATE FORESTER AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

For background, Oregon State Forester Decker announced plans to retire in October, 2016. The purpose of this meeting is to outline the recruitment process and approve desired attributes for recruitment of the next Oregon State Forester.

State Forester Decker outlined the recruitment plan. Mr. Decker stated that he met with Madalyn Zike, Chief Human Resources Officer, who is comfortable with the outlined hiring process. The tentative hiring timeline, in summary, is as follows: 1) the recruitment will be announced in July 2016; 2) interviews will be held in August; 3) a hiring decision will be made at the September 7, 2016 board meeting.

Chair Imeson asked whether State Forester Decker had reasonable confidence that the 2016 Fire Season wouldn't complicate the timeline; Mr. Decker responded that fire could complicate the timeline but getting the recruitment started will help keep the process on track.

Jim James, Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA), reminded the board that the Private Forests' riparian rules topic is scheduled for the September board meeting and will likely be a time-consuming discussion. Mr. Decker responded that if there wasn't enough time at the meeting the board would schedule a special session to finalize the State Forester recruitment.

Jonathan Herman, Department of Forestry Human Resources Director, further outlined the hiring process and how the desired attributes tool provided a basis to assess each candidate's qualifications.

Chair Imeson asked board members if they had any questions and whether the desired attributes were captured.

Board member Insko offered adding the attribute "demonstrated or proven leadership of a complex organization." Board member Williams agreed saying adding the clause to attribute #8 would reflect that the State Forester is looking out for department staff professional development and effectiveness.

Board member Williams remarked that she didn't think "rural and urban communities that depend upon forests" in attribute # 1 was balanced because there are other communities depending upon forests, and because the dichotomy further divides urban and rural.

Board discussion regarding the above suggested changes ensued.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tom Wolf, Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited, testified as a representative of Trout Unlimited and as a sixth generation Oregonian. He said he recognizes the importance of forests to healthy fish and wildlife populations, and also recognizes the money that forests bring to communities. He testified that he supported the discussion about desired attributes and emphasized the value of attribute #8 "the ability to engage stakeholders". He remarked that State Forester Decker has done an outstanding job of communicating and listening to the concerns of stakeholders. He stated that whoever is recruited needs to be able to work toward common solutions to satisfy the needs of those who depend upon harvest and those who depend upon conservation.

Adam Meyer, Oregon Conservation Network, thanked State Forester Decker for his engagement and patience working with stakeholders. He said an understanding of the stakeholder issues is important, building on existing strong relationships with partners as well as with other state agencies. He asked that "a commitment to data and science driven processes" be added to the list of desired attributes.

Kristina McNitt, Oregon Forest Resources Industry Council, said her comments reflect vision from Jim James, OSWA, and Jim Giesinger, Association of Oregon Loggers. She stated that the drafted attributes serve well to start the conversation, however, ORS 526.031 includes specifications not in the draft document, particularly criteria: a) be "a practical forester familiar with western conditions;" and b) be "experienced in organization for the prevention of fires." Ms. McNitt testified that the State Forester Desired Attributes draft document poorly met these requirements. She added that "experience versus understanding" is a point in the statute and that of the fourteen duties in the statute, five relate to fire and six relate to forest management activities. She commented that in contrast the draft document lists only three qualities related to fire. She said she reviewed year 2015 board agendas to determine the amount of time spent relative to issues: 4.5 hours were spent on administration; 3 hours were spent on fire protection; 14.75 hours were spent on private forest; 1.75 hours were spent on the Elliott State Forest; 4.25 hours were spent on state forests; .75 hours were spent on federal forests and 3.75 hours were spent on "other". She asked that the draft document of desired attributes be revised to reflect the statutory characterization and duties of the State Forester.

Jim James, OSWA, testified that he supported Christina McNitt's comments. He further said that a key component critical to being a successful State Forester is an understanding of partnerships with forest landowners.

State Forester Decker responded to Ms. McNitt's comment about the statutory requirements. Mr. Decker noted that a "practical forester" was defined in the 2010 recruitment announcement as "familiar with western conditions and experienced in the organization for the prevention of forest fires as required by ORS 526.031", and "for this purpose a practical forester has been defined as a professional engaged in the science of forestry". Mr. Decker remarked that during the 2010 recruitment the intent was to recognize the critical nature of understanding those items. He also mentioned that the statute was written in 1911 when a State Forester was a crew boss because the agency was very small. Mr. Decker said that the position description is essentially a contract between the incumbent and the agency and restates the statutory requirements clearly.

Ms. McNitt responded that she wasn't familiar with the job description for the current recruitment. She asked for information on the approach for interviews during an executive session and said she thought that the 2010 attributes were clearer than the current recruitment attributes. Ms. McNitt commented that the current recruitment was not specific enough and didn't emphasize experience.

Richard Whitman, Governor's Natural Resources Policy Director, remarked that, like Mr. Decker, his role is to work with the board to help with the process, but that he will leave it to the board to sort through the criteria for hiring. He said he recognized that points brought up may result in some adjustments by the board.

3. OREGON STATE FORESTER RECRUITMENT DESIRED ATTRIBUTES

Board member Williams recommended adding a notation about "demonstrated commitment to science based decision-making". State Forester Decker suggested incorporating "science based decision-making" into attribute #7.

Board member Rose commented that he agreed with the importance of science based decision-making, but that science can be relative; it can depend upon whose science is being considered. Mr. Rose suggested not including that attribute in the recruitment attributes.

After further discussion, board members finalized and agreed upon the State Forester Desired Attributes:

- 1) Proven leadership, vision and commitment to forests and forest ecosystems, the development and implementation of forest policy, ~~and the rural and urban communities that depend upon forests~~, in the communities that depend upon the social, economic and ecological resources before us.
- 2) Proven success in providing leadership and vision to and forming collaborative, productive partnerships with a diverse set of stakeholders and staff;
- 3) Experience with or understanding of Oregon fire protection, forest management and conservation, and natural resource protection regulation;
- 4) Outstanding communicator who is considered forthright, honest, fair and timely among employees, partners and stakeholders;

- 5) Experience in the development, management and evaluation of budgets with diverse revenue sources and funding mechanisms;
- 6) Awareness and understanding of Oregon Department of Forestry policy and operations, and the current opportunities and challenges facing the agency;
- 7) Demonstrated skill at managing conflict and decision-making; willing to make difficult or unpopular decisions; demonstrated commitment to and experience with science based decision-making;
- 8) Proven experience leading a complex agency or organization to maximize the effectiveness and potential of its personnel and processes; experience leading an agency or organization as it engages with legislators, stakeholders, boards and staff to develop and implement policy, statute and administrative rule;
- 9) Experience in the development, implementation and periodic evaluation of strategic initiatives, policies, and long- and short-range plans to position the agency 5-10 years in the future;
- 10) Demonstrated ability to foster an agency culture of service, workforce diversity and strong internal communication and alignment.

Motion to adopt the hiring standards, criteria and policy directives regarding the hiring of Oregon's next State Forester (above State Forester Desired Attributes, additions in red; remove strikethrough).

Moved: Cindy Deacon Williams. Second: Mike Rose. Ayes: Mike Rose, Cindy Deacon Williams, Tom Imeson. Nays: None. All in favor: Mike Rose, Cindy Deacon Williams, Tom Imeson.

The Board adopted the hiring standards, criteria and policy directives regarding the hiring of Oregon's next State Forester.

With no further business before the board, Chair Imeson adjourned the public meeting at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Doug Decker



Doug Decker, State Forester and
Secretary to the Board

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