

Board of Forestry Special Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2021

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Complete recordings from the meeting are available on the web at www.oregonforestry.gov.

In accordance with the provisions of ORS 526.016, a meeting of the Oregon Board of Forestry was held virtually on May 20, 2021 and hosted by the Oregon Department of Forestry Headquarters on 2600 State Street, Salem, OR 97310.

All Board members joined online by 8:30 a.m. into Zoom webinar. Chair Kelly called the public meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Board Members Present by Video:

- Karla Chambers
- Ben Deumling
- Chandra Ferrari
- Joe Justice
- Brenda McComb
- Jim Kelly

Board Members Absent:

None

ACTION AND INFORMATION:

Chair Kelly commented on:

- Outlined Board proceedings for Board members and the public.
- Noted the public meeting will be live streamed, recorded, and posted online.
- Noted no public comment will be accepted for the special meeting.
- Performed Board roll call to confirm quorum.

Chair Kelly announced Executive Session provisions pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(f) for public and media. The Board departed the public meeting at 9:04 a.m.

1. *EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Kelly proceeded with the formal Executive Session announcement.

The Board of Forestry entered into Executive Session for the purpose considering information or records that are exempt from disclosure by law [ORS 192.660(2)(f)].

No decisions were made during Executive Session. The Board exited the Executive Session at 10:19 a.m.

INFORMATION ONLY.

Chair Kelly and the Board members returned to the public meeting at 10:30 a.m.

2. BOARD DISCUSSION ON STATE FORESTER APPOINTMENT

[Listen to audio](#) MP3 – (40 minutes and 40 seconds – 18.6 MB)

[View video](#) on YouTube (2:12:07)

Chair Kelly introduced the item, and opened up the discussion on the State Forester appointment. The Board members offered the following comments:

- Board Member Justice offered thoughts on the Acting State Forester the Board is looking to appoint. He noted the Department work that needs to continue moving forward, shared awareness of the approaching fire season, and how the complex organization associated with fire is well managed.
- Chair Kelly explained his hope to fill the appointment soon, outlined the process and timeline for the consideration of the candidate. Mentioned the last day for State Forester Peter Daugherty is approaching and that Lena Tucker, Deputy State Forester, is acting State Forester by statute if a candidate is not determined by the Board prior to State Forester Daugherty's departure. Board members noted how strong the Executive Team has been through this process and aired confidence in the team's work as the transition continues.
- Board Member Chambers remarked on the recent Macias Gini O'Connell LLP (MGO) recommendations and deadlines reviewed with the Oregon State Legislature Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources. She noted how the Board should not lose sight of this added work for the Department on top of the active fire season and the potential for large fires with financial complexities.
- Board Member McComb believed there are key things that will need to be carried forward which include finances, fire, Habitat Conservation Plan, and companion Forest Management Plan. She expressed the importance of appointing an interim State Forester but hoped when the Board considers the recruitment for the permanent State Forester that the announcement, position description, and job postings have language that attracts candidates normally underrepresented. Chair Kelly concurred with his fellow board member's comments, remarked on how important the Acting State Forester role will be in assuring this work is effective and return credibility to the Department.
- Board Member Deumling shared observations of two competing thoughts among the Board, relative to the Acting State Forester and business continuity, as well as beginning work on the emerging priorities for the Department on day one. He outlined the importance of the candidate's availability, bandwidth, and expertise to balance all of the crucial work of the Department during a transition.
- Chair Kelly sought feedback from the Board about the upcoming efforts in preparing, planning, and implementing the recruitment process for the new State Forester. He listed the various process elements, statutory requirements, and policy directives that is anticipated for the Board to take on in the coming months. He expressed how this process will be a significant body of work and wanted to hear from Board members about their willingness and level of prioritization to complete this work as it may require additional meetings and time for the Board.
 - Board Member McComb offered her perspective on priorities for the Board, listing appointment of the Acting State Forester followed by a deliberate recruitment and selection process for a permanent State Forester. She explained if the position

- description is revised by the Board to include input from stakeholders and the public, and suggested the job posting to attract a diverse but qualified candidate pool.
- Chair Kelly asked the Board members if they were okay with moving forward with supporting a national search to seek a wide range of candidates, and the Board members non-verbally agreed through nods.
 - Board Member Ferrari concurred with fellow Board members' input on the prioritization, timing, and thoughtfulness of this recruitment process. She described how the process will allow time for Board discussion, how more process elements can be added as needed, and how the Board's work can be informed with the public and stakeholders feedback to confirm whether the Board is going in the right direction.
 - Board Member Deumling affirmed what other members expressed as priorities. He deferred to the Chair for scheduling special meetings and expressed his dedication to this important work. He highlighted how an appointment of an Acting State Forester will allow the Board capacity to achieve their visioned work with deliberate and timely action. Chair Kelly agreed that Forestry in Oregon is vital, and it is up to the Board to ensure the agency is running as competently and quickly as possible.
 - Board Member Chambers affirmed the urgency of a full-time forester is warranted. She remarked on the value in asking whether structure or changes are recommended for the State Forester position before the job announcement is released. She shared her observation that many individuals filled the role of State Forester with short tenures. Chair Kelly agreed this was a good question relative to State Forester retention and one that stakeholders may consider as the Board works through the recruitment process.
- Chair Kelly circled back to the appointment of the Acting State Forester, and inquired from the Board what criterion or attributes they are looking for from an interim State Forester.
 - Board Member Chambers noted the current position description is missing a financial management element and how it would be critical for the incoming candidate to have some understanding or expertise to address the agency improvements recommended by MGO.
 - Board Member Deumling expressed the position description could better emphasize the executive capacity and scope of the leadership role required for a large state agency.
 - Board Member McComb agreed it is helpful to better understand the shortfalls or challenges of past State Foresters but crucial for the Board to look forward towards what an incoming State Forester will be presented with as an agency, such as addressing climate change, implementing climate-smart forestry, and becoming financially sound. Board must consider who will provide the agency strategic directions that will allow the agency to be successful in the future.
 - Chair Kelly appreciated the input. He added how vital communication skills are in the executive role and the high demands for communicating at all levels. He also mentioned the value of understanding politics and how this role works with the Oregon Legislature, the Board, and the Governor's Office.
 - Board Member Ferrari commented on the value of having a candidate that can offer visionary, forward-thinking, and proactive leadership. She expressed the need for someone who can articulate and sell the agency's vision of the future to the various

stakeholders, board members, and legislators. Noted that the agency leader may be working through big initiatives and even though they may not find a candidate that checks all of the boxes for the Board, expertise such as chief financial oversight may be found in those who directly support the new State Forester.

- Chair Kelly called on Jason Miner, the Governor's Office Natural Resources Policy Director, to provide input to the Board on the appointment of an interim State Forester. Miner shared how many of the Board's thoughts echoed the Governor's desires for the interim position. He offered some clarifications on what priorities Governor Brown would like the interim position to pursue, such as the implementation of recommended changes by the MGO report and legislature, protecting the State in the upcoming fire season, and attention to the financial structure, accountability, and transparency. He acknowledged the interim role is sometimes too big of a role to accomplish these priorities and asked the Board to consider what additional support will the incoming State Forester need to be successful.
- Chair Kelly commented on the introduced Senate Bill 868 and provided a high-level summary of what this could mean for the Board's work in recruiting and selecting a new State Forester. Board Member McComb appreciated the information but did not feel the bill will change the process or work in front of the Board.
- Board Member McComb inquired about the point of the process the Board is in for appointing the Acting State Forester. Chair Kelly explained the next steps of the process. He stated the Board Administrator will distribute one resume to all Board members for consideration and outlined how the Board can reach out to the candidate as well as stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the efficacy of the candidate in this role. He noted another special meeting will be scheduled the following week for the Board to consider the candidate's qualifications and vote on the direct appointment of the Acting State Forester. He stated if the candidate is not appointed then the Board would repeat the process the following week.
- Chair Kelly asked if there were any other comments by the Board. Board Members looked forward to the next special meeting, they appreciated the work completed by the Board Administrator as they navigate through these unprecedented times, and shared their eagerness to return to a hybrid meeting environment as the COVID-19 restrictions improve to allow for in-person interactions.

INFORMATION ONLY.

Board Chair Kelly adjourned the public meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Peter Daugherty



Peter Daugherty, State Forester and
Secretary to the Board

HR

Meeting minutes approved at the July 21, 2021, Board Meeting