



HIGH LEVEL FORESTS PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Tuesday, April 26, 2016
5pm, High Level Seniors Center

PRESENT:

Dave West (Tolko)	Kevin Hunt (Agriculture & Forestry)
Victoria Ostendorf (Agriculture & Forestry)	Boyd Langford (Town of Rainbow Lake)
Ellis Forest (Town of High Level)	Barry Toker (Watt Mountain Wanderers)
Taylor Andersen (Norbord)	Walter Sarapuk (MacKenzie County)
Tiffany Olsen (Norbord)	John Thurston (Member of Public)
Allen Plantinga (Tolko)	Melanie Plantinga (Tolko)

INFORMATION SENT:

Fort Vermilion Heritage Center	Paul Ebert (Agriculture & Forestry)
Carol Gabriel (Mackenzie County)	Harvey Sewpagaham (LRRCN)
Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement	Lindee Dumas (LRRCN)
Conroy Sewpagaham (LRRCN)	Bernie Doerksen (LaCrete Polar Cats)
Keith Badger (Netaskinan Development)	Beverly Noskiye (Peerless Trout First Nation)
Crystal McAteer (Town of High Level)	Kieran Broderick (Beaver First Nation)
Baptiste Metchooyeah (Dene Tha')	Mike Cardinal (Tallcree First Nation)
Connie Martel (Dene Tha')	Fred Radersma (Norbord)
Wayne Auger (Lubicon Lake Nation)	Timberbound Construction
Exact Harvesting	Treetech
Margaret Carroll (High Level & District Chamber of Commerce)	Marilee Cranna Toews (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)
Dave Beck (Norbord)	Jon McQuinn (LRRF)
Claude Duval (Watt Mnt Wanderers)	Sugu Thuraisamy (LRRF)
Christine Malhmann Agriculture & Forestry	Tristina Macek (N'Deh Ltd. Partnership)
Matt Marcone (The MacKenzie Report)	Terry Jessiman (Agriculture & Forestry)
Aaron Doepel (LaCrete Sawmills)	Dan Coombs (Agriculture & Forestry)

CALL TO ORDER 5:35 pm

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

2. ACTION ITEMS FROM FEBRUARY MEETING

Operations School Field Trip –

The school trip we had discussed did not happen. By the time that the school division requirements were established it was too late in the harvesting season to plan. We will see if we can start earlier in the future now that we have a better idea about what is required.

3. ROUND TABLE

Walter Sarapuk – people have expressed concerns and questions about the hog from Tolko being stored/disposed of on agricultural, residential or reserve land in the region. There is concern that it could be a fire hazard and that the trucks hauling the material are damaging the roads. The hog does not belong to Tolko and is now the property of the individuals. They have been provided with information about handling hog. People have heard that Tolko is paying people to take the material. Allen is not in a position to comment on this. We will ask Tolko to send a representative to the PAC meeting to respond to the public's questions and concerns about hog.

John Thurston – People have come to him with questions about the logging operations at 13 mile road. When in the area getting fire wood they noticed that there were aspen stands which had be knocked down and left behind. Since Norbord was taking aspen out of the area why were they left? Allen stated that Tolko had hauled the volume that Norbord required and they did not need any more. John asks if there was a delay in communication that more was felled then was required. Kevin asks what will happen to the aspen. It will be piled and burned in the fall.

John Thurston – People have approached him who have concerns about Norbord's staffing in High Level. They believe that Norbord is hiring skilled trade people under short term contract from out of town rather than hiring local people. Is Norbord hiring local trade people? Taylor believes so as local people would be more economical. He also believes that more Norbord staff are local then had been the case earlier in the start up process. John requests that Taylor get some firm information about Norbord staffing and get back to the PAC so that he can pass the information on to the concerned parties.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Landscape Strategic Planning Update from Dave West

Fire Smart Program presentation Victoria & Kevin

Much of the Fire Smart program is concerned with the “Wildland Urban Interface” where the urban environment meets the wild landscape. There have been multiple projects in Rainbow Lake, Zama, High Level, and Fox Lake. The projects are carried out in partnership with Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Funding for projects can be applied for by communities to these organizations. The projects are carried out during the winter time. Applications are available online and can be applied for at any time.

Vegetation Management is one of the seven “Fire Smart” principles. It may involve pruning of branches to 6ft off the ground preventing fire spreading on the ground from climbing into the crown of conifer trees. Branches & ground debris are mulched or gathered and burned in a controlled fire to reduce fuels and keep nutrients in the soils. This type of vegetation management improves site lines enabling fire to be seen and actioned more quickly and safely. Another method of vegetation management involves species conversion from conifer stands to deciduous or grasslands. This method can be controversial as people perceive that it means a reduction in harvestable conifer landbase.

Have there been discussions with the companies about the proposed “Fire Smart” initiatives. Yes, they have been put into the DFMP.

Are the First Nations aware of the programs available? Yes this presentation was given in several communities. Eight plans have been submitted by First Nations communities and several have been approved and will be proceeding.

Would work be done during the summer if it was a slow fire season?

Not likely. The Northern Lights Forest Education Society has applied for & received a FRIAA grant to sign some “Fire Smart” work done on the Footner Lake trails.

There is a Community Grant Program grant for small neighborhood/community groups who want or need a little financial help with small projects. You don't have to be a registered group. Projects like this may impact insurance rates with some providers.

If people are interested in the wildfire situation where do they go for information? For High Level they can visit:

<http://srd.web.alberta.ca/high-level-area-update> and subscribe to e-mail updates. They can also download the wildfire app for apple and android smart phones.

North West Regional Woodlands – Audit –Melanie Plantinga shares audit information

Dave West – Is Tolko High Level Woodlands switching from CSA to SFI. Not as far as Melanie knows. That would be decided at a high level in the Tolko Company.

5. **NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, May 17th, 2016 5pm, High Level Senior Center. 2016 Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP) / 2016 – 2021 General Development Plan (GDP)**

All members are welcome to stop by the Open House to be held at the Town of High Level Office on May 4th. This Open House will be to gather public input about the DFMP, the GDP and the 2016 Stand Tending Plan

6. **MEETING ADJOURNED – 6:50pm**