



# ***HIGH LEVEL FORESTS PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

## **MINUTES**

*Tuesday, October 25, 2016*  
5pm, High Level Seniors Center

### **PRESENT:**

Aaron Doepel (LaCrete Sawmills)	Matt Marcone (Echo Pioneer)
Boyd Langford (Member of Public)	Melanie Plantinga (Tolko)
Chris Mitchell (Town of Rainbow Lake)	Paul Ebert (Agriculture & Forestry)
David Gillespie (Tolko)	Taylor Andersen (Norbord)
Gerry Wieler (La Crete Sawmills)	Terry Batt (Trapper's Association)
Jill Kubica (Seeds Forestry)	Terry Jessiman (Agriculture & Forestry)
John Thurston (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)	Trevor Lafreniere (Tolko)
Marissa Green (Norbord)	Walter Sarapuk (MacKenzie County)

### **INFORMATION SENT:**

Adam Marshall (Silvacom)	Exact Harvesting
Baptiste Metchooyeah (Dene Tha')	Fort Vermilion Heritage Center
Barry Toker (Watt Mountain Wanderers)	Fred Radersma (Norbord)
Bernie Doerksen (LaCrete Polar Cats)	Harvey Sewpagaham (LRRCN)
Beverly Noskiye (Peerless Trout First Nation)	Jon McQuinn (LRRF)
Carol Gabriel (Mackenzie County)	Keith Badger (Netaskinan Development)
Christine Malhmann Agriculture & Forestry	Kieran Broderick (Beaver First Nation)
Claude Duval (Watt Mnt Wanderers)	Lindee Dumas (LRRCN)
Connie Martel (Dene Tha')	Margaret Carroll (High Level & District Chamber of Commerce)
Conroy Sewepagaham (Lubicon Lake Nation)	Marilee Cranna Toews (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)
Cory Ferguson (Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement)	Mike Cardinal (Tallcree First Nation)
Crystal McAteer (Town of High Level)	Mike Morgan (Town of High Level)
Dan Coombs (Agriculture & Forestry)	Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement
Dan Fletcher (Town of Rainbow Lake)	Sugu Thuraisamy (LRRF)
Dave Beck (Norbord)	Treetech
Tristina Macek (N'Deh Ltd. Partnership)	

## CALL TO ORDER 5:40pm

### 1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

### 2. ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- Debris control near Zama processing yard and wrapper check
  - Melanie checked with Allen Plantinga and Nicholas Genier regarding these concerns. Following response was shared with the PAC: “No box was placed at the wrapper check as it was feared it would become a trash heap. But we monitored and cleaned as needed. Truckers were instructed to remove loose debris at initial wrapper check before they left the yard. I didn't hear anything further after that.”
  - What should members of the public do if they notice trash or have a concern? Contact Allen Plantinga? Melanie requests that they call the log haul issue and concern line. (780)926-2989. Concerns will be passed on to the company or supervisor best able to help with the issue.
- Concerns arising following harvest of cutblock near the crossing of the Chinchaga River by Highway 35 west of High Level.
  - Trevor shared the strategy that the companies are proposing in the submitted Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP) and have begun to implement. The companies will not apply for variances on buffers along the Chinchaga River. A 100m harvesting buffer will be maintained along the Chinchaga River. The companies will maintain a 300m no site preparation, no herbicide buffer along the Chinchaga River. We feel that these measures will prevent similar concerns arising from operations near the Chinchaga River.
  - Many of the concerns were brought to John Thurston by first nation community members from Chateh and Assumption. Has the above plan been communicated to that first nation? Trevor believes that Tim Gauthier has been in contact with the Dene Tha' First Nation about the strategy for harvesting near the Chinchaga River. John asks if this buffer might be applied conditionally. He had foresters who had explained that they might apply more buffer to one side of a river but then less to the other. For example, a 150m on one side but then only 50m on the other. Trevor says that this would not be the practice. The 100m would be a minimum buffered distance.

### 3. ROUND TABLE

- a. **Marissa Green – Norbord** – There were two employment open houses held by Norbord in the region recently. One in La Crete and one in High Level. They were well attended, especially in High Level where approximately 70 people stopped in.
- b. **Paul Ebert – Agriculture and Forestry** – It is business as usual for their department. The department is reviewing forestry plans as the

companies are submitting them and waiting for winter to come to allow for harvest operations to start.

- c. **John Thurston – Hungry Bend Sandhills Society –**
- i. During the summer he encountered some people who were in the area picking mushrooms. The places they camped were left in poor condition. Who would regulate these camps for the government? Terry Jessiman & Paul Ebert inform the group that this activity is not regulated by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry but the Department of Parks and Environment. In the Upper Hay Region, the office of Parks and Environment has been consolidated in Fort Vermillion following the closure of their Rainbow Lake office. If Parks and Environment is informed of camp locations or receive complaints about such activity they may be able to patrol these camps. In future inform Mike Kozij of Parks and Environment in Fort Vermillion and he will help from there.
  - ii. John has questions about burner recommissioning but will wait for presentation.
  - iii. John brought a list of Forestry Acronyms which was supplied to him by Darryl Kentner in 2009. He has found it to be very helpful over the years. He is giving it to Melanie for scanning and redistribution.
- d. **Walter Sarapuk – Mackenzie County –** The country has received complaints from county residents who had roads damaged by logging truck use. Where were these roads located? One was the “nine mile road” north, one was in the Rocky Lane area. It was apparently caused by trucks hauling private wood purchased by the mills. Norbord did have to shut down one hauler who did not comply with weight restrictions. Walter asks if hauling can be restricted to winter or if a higher rate of summer haul will be normal going forward? This year’s volume of summer harvest is not expected to be repeated. Norbord had to find volume to replace the timber which was consumed in the yard fire this spring.
- e. **Matt Marcone – Echo Pioneer –** Would like some information about the ongoing softwood lumber discussions. Aaron Doepel and David Gillespie provided historical information. David shared information about what will likely be happening in the upcoming months. Paul asks who Tolko High Level Lumber Division’s (HLLD) main customers are? Dave replies that approximately 45% of HLLD’s production is shipped to the US. John recalls that during previous discussions about softwood lumber there was conversation about the quality and efficiency of the US lumber industry. Some lumber produced in Canada is stronger than that produced in the United States. The American producers cannot produce enough lumber to supply the American demand. If it is not supplied by the US or Canadian producers how is it filled? South American, Asian and European lumber is shipped to fill the demand.

#### 4. **NEW BUSINESS**

##### 4.1 **Tolko Burner Recommission – David Gillespie**

David shares the presentation explaining why Tolko High Level Lumber Division is forced to seek a variance permit allowing the recommissioning and firing of the burner. David outlines the plans for a cleaner burn with 2-3 weeks of constant firing followed by a 1 week cool down and clean out. This cycle would last until the excess hog accumulated at HLLD is consumed. The variance is being requested for a 9 month period, which is longer than should be needed.

##### **Questions:**

Is Tolko exploring low cost, long term solutions to this problem? Is an inexpensive co-gen plant being considered? To build a co-gen large enough to handle the amount of hog generated by HLLD would cost approximately \$100million dollars, with the cost of energy being so low the return on this investment makes this not economically viable at this time. Dave lists examples of Alberta mills who have built co-gen facilities which they have chosen not to operate due to the cost of running. The problem of hog disposal is province wide. The industry and government need a unified approach to determine long term solutions.

Will the burner be run again next fall/winter? That is not the plan. Tolko is working with DMI Peace River Pulp and La Crete Sawmills for disposal of future sawdust and hog production. DMI will take the bark and La Crete will take the sawdust.

How long will the burner operate? Dave anticipates seven months. If the burning goes well it may be less.

What has the public response been so far? Positive and supportive. People realize that this is a necessary solution. They have family or friends working here and they understand that this needs to happen for HLLD to continue operating.

If a long hot burn is more efficient and releases less particulate then the previous method of burn, why was it not done this way in the past? There was no stock pile of material to keep the fire stoked. The temperature would naturally change based on the fuel (hog) being fed into the burner and when the mill was not running (evenings/weekends) there was little or no hog to burn. The temperature was frequently changing. With the stock piled hog the temperature should be maintained at a constant level for efficient burn.

Any concerns can be submitted to:

David Gillespie, Plant Manager – High Level Lumber  
E-mail: [david.gillespie@tolko.com](mailto:david.gillespie@tolko.com)

and/or

Alberta Environment and Parks  
Regulatory Approvals Center  
Main Floor, 9920 - 108 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6  
Fax: (780) 422-0154  
E-mail: [esrd.epeapplications@gov.ab.ca](mailto:esrd.epeapplications@gov.ab.ca)

#### **4.2 Harvesting Plans for 2016 – 17 – Trevor Lafreniere**

Trevor displays the 2016 General Development Plan maps for the companies. The plan is following the commitments made in the submitted Detailed Forest Management Plan for major water courses. Trevor discusses some of the different species management zones which are shown on the map and the best practices associated with those zones.

#### **4.3 Audit Findings October 2016 Audit – Melanie Plantinga**

Melanie reviews the audit findings. Notes are in folder.

Questions: Will Tolko continue with the CSA certification? Yes, it is expected that Tolko will begin the process of upgrading to the CSA 2016. Tolko has 2 years to meet this standard.

This was the final HLFAC meeting that Taylor Anderson will attend. He will be continuing to work with Norbord but at their Grande Prairie site. Thank you, Taylor for your contributions to this group and the community of High Level. All the best to you in your future endeavors.

5. **NEXT MEETING – Tuesday November 29th, 2016 – Integrated Watershed Management Plan - Adam Norris, Watershed Coordinator, Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance**
6. **MEETING ADJOURNED – 7:10pm**