



Policy Committee Meeting

NOTES

Wednesday September 6, 2023 | 11:00am – 1:00pm

Present: Rick Horton, Chair, Mike Kilgore, Tom Hall, Pete Aube, Keith Karnes, Amber Ellering

Absent: Brendan Jordan, Bob Owens, Jim Manolis

Staff Present: Eric Schenck, Sadie Mathison, Jaimé Thibodeaux

Guests: Kathleen Preece

MFRC Update

Eric shared that the P&F has chosen to postpone hiring a Policy Analyst and the salary savings will be budgeted into communications, informational needs contingency item, and landscape program funding. Eric revisited the recommendations that came out of the MFRC Climate Report and specifically called out the carbon market recommendation as well as a competitiveness report update as areas where some of the informational needs funds might be used. He also mentioned the Family Forest Landowner Committee has drafted a resolution about Farm Bill funding that was added as a potential agenda item for this meeting.

Rick pointed out that considering the Policy Analysis and Response Procedure, the creation of the draft Farm Bill resolution was in violation of procedure. The idea of the resolution should have come to the Policy Committee for analysis before drafting a resolution. This was an apt segue to the next topic of conversation.

Policy Analysis and Response Procedure

Rick revisited the Criteria and Procedures document and the edits that the committee had submitted. The group went through the document and suggestions that had been submitted, discussed recommended changes, and made changes as the committee saw appropriate. There was robust discussion and the group agreed to continue to work on it until all are satisfied.

Climate Change and Minnesota's Forests

Due to time constraints, this topic has been tabled for the next meeting.

Discussion of a draft Farm Bill Resolution from the Family Forest Landowner Committee

Jaimé presented background on this resolution and stated that it was born out of a desire to assist private landowners in obtaining USDA funding for sustainable forest management. The FFL committee brought this to the Policy Committee as a next step on the way to taking it to the Council.

There was robust discussion. Rick steered the committee back to the Policy Analysis and Response Procedure to vet whether this is something the Council wants to take up.

One committee member suggested that MFA should lead this initiative and that it would be more impactful from them. Others felt that MFRC should still support this important topic.

Suggested next steps included direction that MFRC staff take this issue through the Policy Analysis and Response Process to see how it performs against the 9 analysis points to qualify for MFRC to address it. If so, this committee will move forward to refine the resolution. If not, go back to MFA to strategize on the issue. Chair Horton suggested that a well written, to-the-point letter would accomplish as much as a resolution.

Meeting adjourned at 1:05