

# MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCES COUNCIL

## Policy Committee Meeting

### NOTES

May 2, 2022, 2:00pm – 4:00pm

**Committee Members Present:** Craig Engwall - Chair, Katie Fernholz, Mike Kilgore, Jim Manolis, Pete Aube, Keith Karnes, Rick Horton, Amber Ellering, Brendan Jordan

**Absent:** Bob Owens

**Staff Present:** Eric Schenck, Sadie Mathison

**Guests:** Kim Berns-Melhus, Molly Jansen, Brad Kingery, Matt Russell

After a round of introductions, Craig invited Eric to proceed with the agenda.

Eric began by reviewing his meeting objectives that included gaining feedback on the UMN draft carbon report, providing an overview of MFRC's Strategic Plan and how it guides the work of this committee, and reviewing how policy issues are linked to MFRC's Climate Change Report. He also mentioned the tree nursery and biomass resolutions and the action and communication frameworks for each.

Regarding the Governor's Climate Change Adaption Framework, Eric reported that the stakeholder groups are finishing up their review. Edits by working groups are expected to wrap up by June. The MFRC will likely have one more opportunity to provide input.

Matt Russell presented on the recently released "Carbon in Minnesota's Forests: Current Status and Future Opportunities". He provided an overview with emphasis on the nine informational needs recommendations that came out of the report.

There was a request from the committee for information around a lifecycle analysis, specifically as a need going forward.

After one member requested an opportunity to discuss the report further, Eric drew attention to a form he created for collecting reactions to the report. There is opportunity to contribute comments via this form. He also mentioned that some of the carbon market info contained within the report might serve as a framework for a MFRC study proposed by Representative Igo at the March Council meeting.

One member expressed a need for a common way to measure carbon change, a baseline, goals for change, strategies to get there, and an exploration of the tradeoffs.

Craig presented the agenda topic “Discussion of PC Policy Process, Resolution Process, Other Policy Input”. Members of the committee commented that upon review of the charters and strategic plan, they saw some things they had forgotten as well as some things that should have been included but were not.

Eric drew attention to the Policy Committee portion of the strategic plan. There were some items that the committee has not worked on and Eric asked if the committee should address these items.

Attention turned towards the Council's ability to react to Legislation. Concern was expressed that the full Council should be involved when a position is taken in the name of the Council, leading to the discussion of the next agenda item: “MFRC Response to HF4428/SF4161—Bills to increase per diem from \$55 to \$125.”

Some members of the Committee expressed concern that a response was given on the per diem bill without consultation with the full Council. Using this as an example, the group voiced a need for members to be open and candid when they cannot go along with a concept. To work through differences, the differences have to be understood. There needs to be trust within the committee to encourage candid discussions.

The consensus of the committee was that at a minimum, staff, prior to submission of input on policy items, should consult with the Policy Committee Chair. If time allows or the need dictates, the full Policy Committee should be consulted. There was also consensus among committee members that committee members should receive a brief summary of the testimony submitted afterwards if circumstances didn't allow for notification or discussion prior to the testimony occurring.

A final point on the topic was that staffing is a huge part of the issue of coming to consensus over issues. The Council needs someone that can track and lead through the negotiation process with this committee as well as with the full Council.

Regarding the Resolution 2022-1 Action & Communications Strategy, Eric provided an overview of topics and potential speakers for the panel discussion slated for the May 24 Council meeting. Eric has invited presenters to share information at different levels of complexity to facilitate comprehensive understanding by all Council members. The afternoon will involve additional information and Council discussion specific to Resolution 2022-1's “Action and Communication Strategy” and its goal of aligning markets with sustainable sources of woody biomass.

There was some discussion as to what additional topics or aspects of topics that should be covered to provide a broad overview. The group weighed in on who should speak to the group about lifecycle analysis. Eric will share with the group the names of the four potential lifecycle analysis presenters he has. Anyone interested in weighing in on those presenters should communicate with Eric by EOB Wednesday.

Meeting adjourned.