

MINUTES
South Carolina Board of Registration for Foresters
Special Called Meeting
November 25, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. via Video Conference and Teleconference

Meeting Called to Order

J. Christian Hendricks, Chairman, of Columbia, SC, called the special called meeting of the South Carolina Board of Registration for Foresters to order at 2:06 p.m. Other members participating in the meeting included Blair Frazier Baldwin, Vice-Chairman, of Lancaster; Charles J. Maley, Secretary, of Moore; Robert A. Drummond, of Columbia; and Michael Mills, of Newberry.

Staff members participating in the meeting included Holly Beeson, Esq., Office of Communications and Government Affairs; Hardwick Stuart, Esq., Office of Advice Counsel; Pam Dunkin, Administrator; Johnnie Rose, Program Coordinator; and Sherri Moorer, Program Assistant.

Others participating in the meeting included: Russell Hubright, SC Forestry Commission; Eric Smith, WestRock Fiber; and Sean Cary, Creel Court Reporting.

Statement of Public Notice

Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Board of Registration for Foresters office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. In accordance with the Governor's directives regarding social distancing, the meeting was held via video and teleconference. Members of the public who wished to attend could do so by telephone or the Internet.

MOTION: To excuse Brannon Babb, of Honea Path; and William D. Sligh, of Hartsville, due to schedule conflicts. Baldwin/Drummond/approve

Chairman's Remarks

Mr. Hendricks thanked everybody for participating in this meeting, given the short notice. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the comments received on the proposed regulation changes

Proposed Regulatory Changes – Public Comment Review

Mrs. Beeson said there were public comments submitted from The SC Forestry Association, the SC Forestry Commission, and Mr. Eric Smith with WestRock. The Board has three options to address these suggestions:

1. The Board can agree to the proposed changes. If they make motions to do so, the regulations will be presented sent to the General Assembly, and the Board can request to withdraw and resubmit the proposed changes in Subcommittee.
2. If the Board does not agree to the changes and the individuals/entities making comments wish to pursue a Hearing, it will go to a hearing at the Administrative Law Court. The Hearing date is December 10, 2020, at 10:30 a.m.

3. If the Board does not agree to the changes and the individuals/entities making comments do not wish to pursue a hearing, the changes will be sent to the General Assembly for legislative review.

Mr. Hendricks said the major change was a request from The SC Forestry Association to change the Continuing Forester Education (CFE) requirement to three categories that align with the structure of the Society of American Foresters (SAF). Mr. Drummond said SAF is the only entity approving continuing education courses in the United States, and adopting this change would reduce confusion amongst licensees. Mr. Maley said not complying with the change would mean that the state is allowing three categories of continuing education that no longer exist. Mr. Hendricks said he was concerned about mentioning SAF requirements in regulation, because that might require regulatory changes in the future if SAF changes their requirements. Mr. Stuart said the Board could define the categories of continuing education in regulation so that will not be a problem.

MOTION: To align the Continuing Forester Education (CFE) in Chapter 53-20(3) with three categories established by the Society of American Foresters (SAF): Category 1 – Core Education, Category 2 – Related Education, Category 3 – Professional Development and Volunteer Activities; with twenty hours every biennium with ten of those hours in Category One. Drummond/Mills/approve

Mrs. Beeson said the second suggestion from the SC Forestry Association was to encourage the Board to allow licensure with no degree and six years' experience in Chapter 53-8. Mr. Stuart said that licensure requirements are established in Section 40-27-130. That requirement cannot be changed in regulation. Mrs. Beeson will contact Guy Saban to see if the Association intends to pursue this with the Administrative Law Court.

Public Comments

Mr. Hendricks said the next issue to address are the questions presented by Mr. Hubright and Mr. Smith. The Board members responded to the following questions:

1. Chapter 53-8: The Board does review every application for licensure. If there are questions or issues with the application, the applicant is required to appear before the Board for an application hearing.
2. Chapter 53-2(C): This Chapter is stricken to eliminate the office of "Secretary," because Board staff handle those duties.
3. Chapter 53-3: This Chapter mentions Columbia, SC, as the meeting location because Chapter 53-1 establishes the Board Headquarters as Columbia. This section of the regulations would not prevent the Board from meeting at a different location, if necessary.
4. Chapter 53-2: This office establishes that Officers are elected annually. This is done at the first meeting of the year in April. The Board strives to rotate officers on a regular basis.

Mr. Hubright and Mr. Smith thanked the Board members for inviting them to the meeting, and for addressing their questions. They were satisfied with the answers and agreed to the regulations as drafted and amended in today's meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business,

MOTION: To adjourn.

Mills/Maley/approved.

The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.