



Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corp.
9th Annual General Meeting
November 20, 2015
The "Old Church" 3704 First Ave. Smithers, BC

PRESENT:

- David de Wit; Co-Chair – Office of the Wet'suwet'en,
Colin McLeod; Co-Chair – Village of Telkwa,
Dave Jacobs; Director - Newpro,
Gary Hanson; Director – Town of Smithers,
Allan Cormier; Director – Community at Large,
Cathryn Olmstead; Director - Community at Large.(Term ending Nov 30, 2015)

REGRETS:

- Mark Steynen; Director – Community at Large

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Jay Baker – General Manager, Dave Louwerse – Operations Manager,
Crystal Trembelas – Recording Secretary, Michael Mehr - External Accountant,
Rimas Zitkauskas, John Wright, Geof Hutchinson, Eric Becker, Stan Granda, Donna Smith,
Gale Jones, Irene Ronalds, Ken White, Marie-Lou Lefrancois, M. Aaron Burgess, John
Franken, Sandi Franken, Sybille Haeussler.

CALL TO ORDER

- Co-chair, David de Wit called the meeting to order at 12:10pm. David de Wit welcomed all of the guests and thanked them for attending the WCFC 2015 AGM. David de Wit gave respects and acknowledgement to the Wet'suwet'en as Smithers resides on Wet'suwet'en Territory, specifically Casyex which is Grizzly House Territory.
- David de Wit invited the Board members to introduce themselves as well as their position on the Board.

AGENDA

- David de Wit requested adding to the agenda, the motion that was carried via-email for the Treasurer position.
- Gary Hanson Motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of the above request, none were opposed.

MOTION CARRIED

YEAR-END OPERATIONAL UPDATE

- Jay Baker presented the Operations Update as per the attached annual report.

FINANCIAL PRESENTATION

- Michael Mehr presented the 2014-2015 year-end financial statement for Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corporation as per the attached annual report.
- David de Wit advised those in attendance of the previous review and approval of the financial statements in the monthly Board meeting held on October 30th, 2015.

THANK YOU TO CATHRYN

- Gary Hanson presented Cathryn Olmstead with flowers on behalf of the Board for the 3 years she has volunteered as a Director for the Community at Large as well as the position of Treasurer with WCFC.
- David deWit announced as Cathryn Olmstead's term on the Board would be ending at the end of the month her position as Treasurer needed to be filled. Via e-mail previous to the AGM this request was sent out. Allan Cormier volunteered for the position, David de Wit second the motion, none were opposed. As a result signing authorities will have to be amended at the BVCU to reflect Cathryn's departure and Allen's addition.

MOTION CARRIED

- David de Wit also informed the floor of the available position for a new Director representing the Community at Large. Anyone interested in applying can do so through Silvicon Services Inc. There is an ad in the paper as well as Facebook and the website (wetzinkwa.ca) with details of the requirements and process to follow.
 - Colin McLeod also added that the position is for anyone interested in volunteering not just foresters, who are community, minded, and are invested in contributing to the community.
- David de Wit also took the time to thank Joan Lecourt for the catered lunch for the meeting.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

- David de Wit opened up the floor for anyone with questions regarding today's meeting. The following was discussed.
 - Marie-Lou Lefrancois ; Does WCFC have any interests in the performance of stands beyond the free growing declaration within the Community Forest?
 - Jay Baker; everything growing within the Community Forest is of interest to the Board. The management plan has a detailed analysis of stand conditions, age class distributions etc. There is also an extensive harvest history for the area before it was a community forest. The interest is the same for all ages of stands, and there have been some aerial forest health assessments of the performance of the stands that are beyond a free growing declaration but are not yet mature. In addition with the newly acquired Lidar data we will be able to analysis stand densities and heights to assess stand performance these efforts combined with visual monitoring as operations occur allow us to identify potential problems with the growing stock.
 - Marie-Lou Lefrancois: Do you plan on investing towards further assessment of the free growing stands?

- Jay Baker; There have been many discussions regarding enhanced stewardship and the many opportunities available, which have economic decisions associated with them. As well, there are many funding opportunities that are actively being pursued, specifically Forests for Tomorrow; however the funding interest is still concentrated on the areas that have been decimated by the pine beetle. Once more funding sources become available from the Crown, a closer look can be taken at project options.
- Marie-Lou Lefrancois; Expressed concern regarding National Forestry Week. In previous years many activities and planning had organized with getting the community involved however the past few years there has been nothing. The request was made for the Board to add that topic to a future agenda and to possibly get things started with National Forestry Week again.
- Rimas Zitkauskas; looking to clarify that the difference in the financials verses the annual report relating to the AAC and harvest level in 2014-2015. Was one being based on the fiscal year and one based on a calendar year?
 - David and Jay both agreed that was correct. The fiscal year is July-June while the AAC calculation is based on January to December.
- Rimas Zitkauskas: In the Forest Management Service expenses, there is an increase of 15% from 2014-2015 however the volume harvested is roughly the same. Please explain.
 - David deWit; There are a number of initiatives that the Board has taken on this year ie: expanded road building opportunities, LiDAR program, as well as the new Forest Management Plan that is required by the Ministry now that the uplift is over. A re-evaluation of the tenure was needed to inform the Ministry of what an appropriate AAC would be for the years coming.
 - Jay Baker; stated that the “low lying fruit” had been “picked” in previous years and now the more challenging and costly areas are being harvested. With such, all operations take more time, more money and more effort from layout and development through to harvesting.
- Rimas Zitkauskas; Do you expect the increase in the Forest Management Services to remain the same or is that a onetime cost?
 - David deWit; Because of the uplift that we were given to deal with forest health issues, WCFC is required to submit this report of analysis on the land base to see what it is able to support for an AAC going forward.
 - Jay Baler; Added that 2015-2016 is budgeted for roughly the same as 2014-2015. As there is still Management Plan work happening in this fiscal year. Once the analysis is submitted the cost associated with the Management Plan should drop. However timber development costs in the future may still be affected by the “low lying fruit” concept.
- Rimas Zikauskas; regarding slash burning, have there been any discussions on how to reduce the amount burned in future years?
 - Dave Jacobs; Once Newpro obtains their permit and is up and running (estimated time roughly August of 2016) a lot of the slash will be able to come to the plant instead of burning.

- Rimas Zitkauskas; Will Newpro be purchasing the slash?
 - Dave Jacobs; The plant will most likely not be purchasing the slash but cost to operations for WCFC should be reduced due to reduced expenses associated with piling and burning. There have been other companies that have tried to sell the slash, but the value is small and therefore, isn't worth purchasing.
 - Marie-Lou Lefrancois; The parties who will have Newpro dealing with the slash will be saving money even though they won't be selling it, based on the cost of burning as piles.
 - David de Wit; The Board is trying to come up with more innovative ways to deal with the slash, such as air-curtain burning and firewood, which the Community Forest donated to Moricetown as well as wood waste to the Telkwa central heating system.
 - Colin McLeod; There was a report from FP Innovations 4 years ago which agreed that until there is an economic facility close by that will make it feasible to use, firewood was the only other option for use.
 - Ken White; In regards to opening up piles to the public, there is large liability with that option.
 - David de Wit; The WCFC did look into trucking firewood to a central place in town, however the liability portion was a major factor and is not proceeding with that option. Instead the WCFC tries to keep logs road-side for public use at their own peril.
- Ken White; Regarding the 3 million Legacy Fund, has that been set aside or is that still accumulating?
 - David de Wit; The 3 million was the goal for the Legacy Fund, now that money has been set aside, which was one of the goals in the previous years during the harvest uplift period.
- Rimas Zitkauskas; Newpro had donated \$150,000 to the startup of WCFC in the beginning, which has been paid back and is being held "in trust" by the Town of Smithers - Is there any way to access that money to help develop ideas on how to utilize that fund in a better way that satisfies the mandate of that trust?
 - David de Wit; The WCFC could look into how the trust is to be used, and communicate that to the communities.
 - Cathryn Olmstead; The Board has set aside some monies that will be available to the community for special projects, which will require some community engagement on ideas for how to best utilize that money, which is above and beyond the normal granting funds.
 - Colin McLeod; There is also the Innovation and Stewardship grants that are available for those groups functioning within the WCFC boundaries.
- Sybille Haeussler; Inquired regarding the new road that was built up near Seymour Ridge if that was going to be more logging on that road or if it will remain a long term use road. As well, have there been any complaints from residents as to the traffic on the road?
 - Jay Baker; The road will be used until planting is completed. Once the plantations start going the road will be under some level of access restrictions. As for complaints, there haven't been any real complaints, only concerns similar to this one on the long term plan for the road. There is a potential for more logging on that road closer to its junction with Hudson Bay Mountain Road, however it is difficult logging and no timeline has been set for that development.

- Geoff Hutchinson; Inquired as to why forestry roads are deactivated when local tax payers have paid to have the roads built, but then are unable to use them. What is the reason for deactivating the roads?
 - Dave Jacobs; Most commonly the liability is the reason that the roads are deactivated.
 - Jay Baker; Confirmed yes, liability is the main reason that roads are not left open for public use, however there are other reasons, such as, restoring natural drainage patterns and wildlife habitat considerations. In the case of habitat considerations the goal may be to be in and out of an area relatively quickly without disturbing or disrupting long term habitat as much as possible. Also, many roads are built as winter roads, which are not roads that are built for long term use once the warmer weather comes. To build an all season road the cost is far greater and typically they are built to provide longer term access designed to be maintained to facilitate future operations.

WRAP UP:

- David de Wit thanked everyone for their attendance and for the questions asked. Meeting adjourned at 1:29pm.