

**BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS REGISTRATION**

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**Professional Foresters Examining Committee Meeting Minutes**

Held: December 1, 2021

**OPEN SESSION MINUTES****Members Present:**

- Frank Mulhair, Chair
- Dan Sendek
- Larry Forero
- Bill Snyder
- Jason Poburko
- Danielle Lindler
- Christian Eggleton
- James Hawkins

**Staff Participating:**

- Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer, Licensing
- Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer, Board of Forestry
- Robert "Bob" Roth, Attorney
- Deniele Cade, Staff Services Analyst, Licensing
- "Y.G." George Gentry, Contracted Expert Examiner

**Approval of Open Session Minutes for August 26, 2021**

**Member Lindler moved to approve the minutes. Member Snyder seconded.**

**Roll Call: Sendek (Abstain), Forero (Aye), Snyder (Aye), Poburko (Abstain), Lindler (Aye), Eggleton (Aye), Hawkins (Abstain), Mulhair (Aye). The motion passes with three abstentions.**

**Report of Executive Officer**

E.O. Stapleton introduced the new Executive Officer for the Board of Forestry, Edith Hannigan. He revealed that Edith has been with the Board for at least 10 years, has primarily worked with fire safe regulations and land use planning, and is very well versed. He believes she will make a great Executive Officer.

E.O. Stapleton reported on funding. Currently, numbers are down as expected, but funds are still in the black. RPF numbers will start balancing out if we receive new RPFs from our outreach efforts. The 30-year discount has helped with retention.

With regard to outreach, a contract has been awarded to Forestry Educators Inc. They have started meeting with colleges in-person or online via Zoom to promote RPF licensing. Robert Little and Diane Dealey Neil have been working on developing presentations in hopes to get people excited about becoming RPFs.

E.O. Stapleton has been working with CAL FIRE communications where they are developing a video to upload onto the Board of Forestry website and YouTube to promote RPF licensing.

E.O. Stapleton reported on the RPF examination that took place on October 8<sup>th</sup>. There were 43 examinees, where 39 took the RPF exam and 4 took the CRM exam. E.O. Stapleton revealed that the exam went off without a hitch. Currently, the graders are working to complete their grading sometime in January in time for the January Board meeting. E.O. Stapleton recognized grader Doug Piirto, who recently lost his wife. He encourages anyone who knows Doug to reach out to him to express their condolences.

### **Update from ad hoc committee on Apprentice Professional Forester (APF)**

Y.G. reported on the ad hoc committee for the APF program. He reviewed that he has spent the last year doing a pilot program where he provides preparatory work for the RPF exam. In the last round, he had roughly 40 attendees spread over 3 classes. The classes took place 3 nights a week over a period of 10 weeks. Y.G. explained that he tailored courses to the students' requests. For example, if they wanted to study economics, Y.G. made that the subject matter for any particular meeting.

From the pilot project, Y.G. has learned that gearing any kind of preparation work for a particular exam is not very useful in terms of retention of information. He announced that the next phase of the pilot program will begin in a couple of weeks, and those interested should begin contacting him. Y.G. will set the course up as a year long endeavor. Each month will focus on at least one of the main topics that are outlined in the regulations. Y.G. wants to clarify that it does not mean he is unavailable to assist students who are preparing for the exam, but that is the direction he is taking for the overall pilot program.

Y.G. is still developing a syllabus for each of the subjects. He hopes to complete the syllabus by the end of the year. Currently, his free time is somewhat constrained due to his dedication to grading the exams. Y.G. is hopeful that he will have something more concrete by the next PFEC meeting.

### **Update on Potential Computer Examination Opportunities**

E.O. Stapleton has been investigating computer programs to proctor, maintain statistics, and track exam performance. He has found that in order to do that, they

would have to change the format of the exam to fit the computerized technology. It was decided that this would be too complicated and expensive. E.O. Stapleton spoke with expert examiner Len Lindstrand, and they discussed having the exams on a word processing program, since a lot of students are being raised with keyboarding. After speaking with some people at the University of California, E.O. Stapleton made a call to an organization called Prometric. Prometric is a testing service, and they have about 8,000 testing centers in the world, with some located in California. While they do not have centers in Eureka or Redding, they do have locations in Santa Rosa, Fair Oaks, Fresno, and Chico. E.O. Stapleton spoke with a representative from Prometric and discovered that they have the option for in-person and online proctoring. He explained that theoretically, people in Alaska could utilize remote proctoring to take the RPF exam.

E.O. Stapleton explained that testing could be scheduled at multiple locations on one day, or throughout a period of a week. If the latter took place, the format of the exams would need to change, where it would require a mixture of exam versions. E.O. Stapleton stated that once the exams are complete, they are maintained on a computer, where Prometric could email them directly to the graders. Statistics on the exams could also be maintained. E.O. Stapleton is waiting on quotes for the cost of the service center.

### **Public Forum**

Robert Little explained that he has been working on a document that explores different pathways to get more people interested in becoming an RPF. He suggests allowing those just coming out of college, or those with 4 years of work experience to take the exam. He also suggests having a specialty license that would be obtained upon passing the exam, where new licensees would have to work under an RPF for the remainder of the required experience in order to obtain a full license. He proposes supplementing income by having a provisional license modeled after teaching credentials.

**Meeting Adjourned**