MARYLAND BOARD OF FORESTERS

 BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

 **Monday, January 27, 2025**

**TIME:**  10:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:**  100 S. Charles St.

3rd Floor

 Baltimore, MD 21201

 *(Teleconference via Google Meet and in person)*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michael Huneke – Chairman

 John Markovich – Vice Chair

 Jill Rhyne-Grey, consumer member

Anthony DiPaolo, industry member

Brian Knox, industry member

Daniel Rider, industry member

Kala Fleming, consumer member

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Christopher Dorsey, Executive Director

Sharron McNeill, Office Supervisor

 Sloane Fried Kinstler, Assistant Attorney General

**STAFF ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

**Call to Order**

Chairman, Michael Huneke, called the January 27, 2025 meeting of the Maryland Board of Foresters to order at 10:03 a.m. after confirming that a quorum of members was present.

Chairman Huneke welcomed new member, Kala Fleming, who offered her professional background. Board members and staff introduced themselves to Ms. Fleming.

Upon a motion by Mr. Knox and a second by Mr. Markovich, the minutes of the October 21, 2024 Business Meeting of the Board of Foresters were approved by a majority, with all members voting in favor except Ms. Fleming, who abstained.

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman, Michael Huneke reminded the Board that they should have received an email from the state regarding their Ethics Filing that they should comply with this annual requirement. Chairman Huneke, informed the Board that the Allegheny Society of American Foresters at the State College of Pennsylvania, February 12-14, 2025. He suggested that this was an opportunity being given to those who may need to complete continuing education credits and how one could receive between 8-10 credits. Finally, Chairman Michael Huneke, informed the Board that Executive Director Christopher Dorsey had sent out an email stating that the Foresters Board had a vacancy and needed an additional industry member of the Board and asked that if anyone knew of someone, they should contact Mr. Dorsey.

**Executive Director’s Report**

Director Dorsey, informed the board that the State Board of Foresters had officially moved to their new building which is located at 100 S. Charles Street, Tower 1 Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Director Dorsey asked the Board to notify him of any names of qualified and interested industry individuals to fill a vacant seat and, that in compliance with Md. Ann. Code., Bus, Occ. & Prof. §7-2-2 (a)(4), the Board is required to provide the Governor’s Appointments Office with three (3) names for a potential new board member to fill the industry seat that is currently vacant on the Forester Board.

**Old Business**

Correspondence Seeking Change in Education Requirements

The Board continued its discussion regarding amending forester pre-license education requirements. Upon further discussion with the full Board being present, the Board decided that, under Business Occupations and Professions Article, § 7-304, Annotated Code of Maryland, the Board would recommend legislation to amend the applicable law to require that an applicant shall have been graduated on completion of an accredited 4-year curriculum in forestry from a college or university that is approved by the Board *or* accredited by the Society of American Foresters (SAF). The Board wishes to move forward with a legislative proposal and conferred with Counsel regarding such legislation. The Board acknowledged that if the proposed legislation could not be pursued as a departmental or legislative bill, the proposal could be pursued by a private citizen or industry organization for the 2025 session.

Upon a motion by Vice Chair, John Markovich, seconded by Ms. Rhyne-Grey, the Board unanimously voted to instruct Director Dorsey to prepare and submit a legislative concept proposal to seek proposed legislation to amend the law that provides “An applicant shall have been graduated on completion of a 4-year curriculum on forestry from a college or university that is approved by the board and accredited by the Society of American Foresters or meet an equivalent standard,” to read “and” rather than “or” the SAF.

**New Business**

No New Business to consider.

**Closed Session**

Chairman, Michael Huneke advised that it was necessary for the Board to convene in a closed session to discuss one license application, in accordance with § 3-305(b)(2) and (7) of the Gen. Prov. Art., Md. Ann. Code, to protect the privacy and reputation of license applicants and to obtain advice provided by Counsel regarding license applications. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

Upon a motion by Ms. Rhyne-Grey, seconded by Mr. DiPaolo, and unanimously carried, the State Board of Foresters entered a closed session at 11:06 a.m., via Google Meets, pursuant to § 3-305(c) of the Gen. Prov. Art., Md. Ann. Code.

The Board reviewed four (4) license applications during the closed session:

OR-1

The Board has considered the license application for an individual who obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in May 2020. This individual documented working as a Forestry Technician from 2/2023 to the present when referencing his work experience. The Board discussed the applicant’s education, college transcript, references and degree in forestry, has satisfied the educational requirements. The Board decided that the applicant has met all requirements for licensure pursuant to Md. Ann. Code, Bus. Occ. & Prof. §§ 7-304(b) and (c), 7-305(1) (iii) and COMAR 09.29.01.02B.

OR-01: Upon a motion by Mr. DiPaolo and seconded by Mr. Markovich, the Board unanimously voted to approve the license application.

OR-2

The Board has considered the license application for an individual who obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from SUNY (State University of New York) in May 2022. This individual documented working as a Consulting Forester, from June 2022 to the present, so over two years of experience. The Board discussed the applicant’s education, college transcript, references and degree in forestry, has satisfied the educational requirements. The Board decided that the applicant has met all requirements for licensure pursuant to Md. Ann. Code, Bus. Occ. & Prof. §§ 7-304(b) and (c), 7-305(1) (iii) and COMAR 09.29.01.02B.

OR-2: Upon a motion by Mr. Markovich and seconded by Ms. Rhyne-Grey, the Board unanimously voted to approve this license application.

OR-3

The Board has considered the license application for an individual who attended University of Virginia obtaining a Bachelor of Science, this individual also attended SUNY (State University of New York) obtaining a Master of Science in Forestry. This applicant has worked as a Watershed Forester in Howard/Montgomery with the DNR for two years. The Board discussed the applicant’s education, college transcript, references and degree in forestry, has satisfied the educational requirements. The Board decided that the applicant has met all requirements for licensure pursuant to Md. Ann. Code, Bus. Occ. & Prof. §§ 7-304(b) and (c), 7-305(1) (iii) and COMAR 09.29.01.02B.

OR-3: Upon a motion by Mr. Markovich and seconded by Ms. Rhyne-Grey, the Board unanimously voted to approve this license application.

OR-4

The Board has considered the license application for an individual who attended West Virginia University who obtained a Master of Science in Forestry. This applicant has satisfied the work experience and has worked as a DNR technician for six months, Research Technician with West Virginia University for seven months, Forest Technician with Skylight Forestry for 3 months and a Work Planner/Forestry Specialist with Environmental Consulting, LLC for five months. The Board discussed the applicant’s education, college transcript, references and degree in forestry, has satisfied the educational requirements. The Board decided that the applicant has met all requirements for licensure pursuant to Md. Ann. Code, Bus. Occ. & Prof. §§ 7-304(b) and (c), 7-305(1) (iii) and COMAR 09.29.01.02B.

OR-4: Upon a motion by Ms. Rhyne-Grey and seconded by Mr. Knox, the Board unanimously voted to approve this license application.

**Return to Business Meeting**

The Board unanimously voted to reconvene the Business Meeting at 11:39 a.m. upon a motion made by Mr. Markovich, seconded by Ms. Rhyne-Grey, which was passed unanimously.

Upon returning to the Business Meeting, Mr. DiPaolo moved that the Board approves its actions taken during the closed session. Ms. Fleming seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Counsel reminded members to avoid a quorum, if possible, at the SAF meeting and, if not, to advise Director Dorsey to provide advanced public notice of the possibility that Board business could be discussed there.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mr. Markovich and seconded by Mr. DiPaolo, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

April 28, 2025—Board members are encouraged to attend the meeting in person and to notify staff of their intention to do so remotely or in person and whether they will require parking.

\_\_\_x\_ with corrections \_\_\_\_ without corrections

Signature on file March 26, 2025

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Signature of Board Chair Date

 Signature on file

Signed by Executive Director, Chris Dorsey on behalf of the Board \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_