



FOREST ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE

MANDATE

The Forest Advisory Committee exists to:

Provide Council with advice and recommendations on matters pertaining to the North Cowichan Municipal Forest Reserve.

STATEMENT

To maintain and enhance North Cowichan's valuable municipal forest resources for all users through sustainable forestry, ecological stewardship & sound fiscal management.

SCOPE

- Conduct a full review of current practices and provide short-term to long-term recommendations for improvements that will enhance North Cowichan's valuable municipal forest resources.
- Consider all the diverse values of the forest.
- Consider sustainable forest practises that give priority to ecological stewardship and promoting biodiversity.
- As part of the approach, the FAC explore further learning opportunities which include welcoming diverse cultural perspectives, alternative practices, external specific expert resources and public or private agencies.
- That the committee embrace openness, collaboration, accountability, transparency, public consultation and input.
- The review will be expansive enough to consider overall vision and overall management framework for the forest.

ESTABLISHMENT AND AUTHORITY

The *Community Charter* provides that a Council may establish and appoint a select committee to consider or inquire into any matter and to report its findings and opinion to the Council. Persons who are not Council members may be appointed to a select committee but at least one member of a select committee must be a Council member.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

The Forest Advisory Committee exists to provide support to Council by:

- Advising Council on forest reserve management and forestry issues;
- Audit Forestry Department operations; and
- Reviewing and making recommendations to Council regarding the Forestry Department Financial Plan.

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee shall consist of seven (11) voting members appointed by Council as follows:

- One (1) Council representative;
- One (1) Cowichan Tribes Representative;
- One (1) Representative from the Halalt First Nations;
- One (1) Representative from the Lyakson First Nations;
- Three (3) Professional Foresters
- One (1) member at large representing the Cowichan Trails Stewards Society
- Two (2) members at large who are residents of the Municipality based on their specific knowledge or interest in forestry matters.
- One (1) One Registered Professional Biologist

All appointments, except those of Council members, will coincide with the Council term and must be appointed by Council.

Committee members serve as volunteers and receive no remuneration.

Note: The Municipal Forester serves as the staff liaison to the Committee.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

- The Chair of the Committee must be a Council member appointed to the Select Committee.
- In the absence of the Committee Chair, the members must select a member present at the meeting to chair the meeting.
- The Chair shall preserve order and decide all points of order which may arise.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Committee members are expected to adhere to the Standards of Conduct Policy.

Committee members are expected to attend meetings regularly. If a member is continuously absent from committee meetings for a period of three (3) consecutive meetings, unless the absence is because of illness, the member is deemed to have resigned from the committee and the Committee may proceed to replace that member. If a Committee member finds it necessary to resign from the Committee, a letter to that effect should be sent to the Chair of the Committee.

North Cowichan Council shall have the power to remove any member of the Committee from office at any time.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

Committee members shall absent themselves from discussions or decision-making at Committee meetings if there is a potential conflict of interest, and this shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Committee meetings.

Committee members shall not knowingly take advantage of, or benefit from, information that is obtained through their Committee duties and responsibilities and which is not generally available to the public.

As soon as potential conflict of interest arises, the member will declare it for discussion and recording, after which the member will vacate the meeting for the discussion and vote.

SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-committees may only be formed with Council approval.

MEETINGS

The Forest Advisory Committee shall meet bi-monthly according to the schedule of the committee meetings proposed by the Corporate Officer, or at the call of the Chair.

A quorum of the Committee consists of 50% of the voting members.

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure set out in the Council Procedure Bylaw.

The location of the meetings will be at the District of North Cowichan Municipal Hall.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Committee members may be privy to confidential material and as such are expected to sign a "Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Form."

Should a closed meeting be held by the Committee, members must keep in confidence, any information considered in any part of said meeting until such time as the information is released to the public as lawfully authorized or required. Should the municipality suffer loss or damage due to contravention of confidentiality, the municipality may recover damages from the person(s) for the loss or damage.

AGENDAS AND MINUTES

The Legislative Services Department, in consultation with the staff Liaison and Chair will form the agenda. Minutes are taken by the Legislative Services.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor is the official spokesperson for the District of North Cowichan. However, the Mayor may, at times, request the Committee Chair to speak on matters of public interest within the Committee's purview.

On technical matters, or where the status is still at the staff proposal level, the Chief Administrative Officer, or senior staff, may be the appropriate spokesperson. Where necessary and practical, the Mayor, the Committee Chair and the Chief Administrative Officer will confer to determine the most appropriate course of action.