

Northeastern California Forest Biomass Authority
February 2, 2026 Board Meeting
Minutes

Board of Directors Present: Bob Bailey, Mike Luiz, Chris Camarata (alternate for Don Martin)

Board of Directors Absent: Tim Babcock, Don Martin

Others Present: Bill Buckman (Fall River RCD Board), Chuck Dethero (Western Shasta RCD staff), Dan Blessing (Shasta Valley RCD staff), Sharmie Stevenson (Fall River/Pit RCD staff), Camille Swezy (Mule Ears Consulting/Fall River RCD contractor), Christiana Darlington (CLERE Inc/Fall River RCD contractor), Michael Luken (MNJ Advisors/Fall River RCD contractor)*, Maureen Teubert (Western Shasta RCD staff)*

*=participation on Zoom

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Call to Order Regular Meeting

Meeting started at 2pm. Board members were sworn in for 2026; members not present will be sworn in at the next meeting.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda:

Move Item V (review draft Bylaws) to later in the meeting for when Christiana Darlington arrives to discuss.

Public Comment Period

None

Election of Board Officers:

Board members introduced themselves to the group, then decided on the following board officer roles:

Chairperson: Tim Babcock (Pit RCD)

Vice Chairperson: Mike Luiz (Shasta Valley RCD)

Treasurer: Don Martin (Fall River RCD)

Secretary: Camille Swezy -contingent on ongoing funding

Scheduling Future Meetings

Board members agreed that the next meeting will be held on March 19th, at 2pm, at the Fall River RCD office in McArthur. This will allow for one more board meeting while the Authority still has funding through the LCI Agreement to Fall River RCD (this agreement expires March 31, 2026). Another meeting is tentatively planned for October, but the date will not be finalized until later this year.

Approve Draft Bylaws

Christiana Darlington of CLERE Inc provided a thorough overview of all sections included in the draft bylaws for the NCFBA. It was suggested to change language in Section 4.3 from “supervise employees” to “administer contractors”, which board members agreed upon.

Directors also discussed the dollar amount required for execution of contracts. Many expressed the importance of ensuring that the policy does not limit the Authority’s ability to execute contracts, especially given that the board may only meet semi-annually. It was agreed to keep language in the bylaws that checks over \$25k will require two signatures, but checks less than \$25k should only require one signature.

Director Camarata made a motion to approve the bylaws with the one change to Section 4.3 discussed. Director Luiz seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Membership Dues

Directors agreed that in order to cover the annual minimum operating costs of the NCFBA, including the annual audit, insurance, minor staffing costs to prepare agendas and budget, and accounting systems, the annual member contribution should be \$2500.

Director Bailey made a motion to approve annual member contribution to be set at \$2500. Director Camarata seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Staff Reports

Mike Luken from MNJ Advisors provided an overview of his scope of work for the Authority over the next 6 weeks. Mike will set up an accounting system with financial controls, set up a banking relationship with Tri Counties Bank, develop an operating budget and budget framework, secure insurance policies (likely to include general liability, public officials liability, errors and omissions, cyber liability, and others as needed), develop audit friendly systems, and establish financial reporting framework so that the entity is able to receive funding from state and federal grant programs. He will present on these policies and procedures in more detail at the March 19th board meeting, and it will be included on the agenda as action items.

Christiana Darlington provided an update on possible funding opportunities for the Authority, including that the California Department of Conservation may be able to allocate funds specifically to the LCI Pilot Projects. This effort is in progress, and funding opportunities will hopefully be released this spring. State conservancies (Sierra Nevada Conservancy and California Coastal Conservancy) are also potential funders, especially with Prop 4 funding availability.

Camille Swezy shared that she is working with the Watershed Research and Training Center on an application to the California Jobs First Implementation Phase funding opportunity, which would support a network of local entities across northern California working to advance wood processing capacity locally. For the Northeastern California Forest Biomass

Authority, the funding would support technical assistance programming to support biomass processing businesses. Awards will be announced in May.

It was also discussed that Pit and Shasta Valley RCDs are interested in contributing some funding to help jump-start Authority operations and programming (\$10,000 from each).

Finally, Christiana Darlington refreshed board members on examples of what legal tools a Joint Powers Authority focused on biomass has access to, such as owning equipment, facilitating a long-term biomass supply contract guarantee fund, owning and brokering biomass on behalf of RCD members, setting up Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts, and supporting site development.

Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting is scheduled for March 19th at 2pm at the Fall River RCD office.