

Urban and Community Forestry Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 2nd 2017

Location: U of I extension conference room, Champaign.

Meeting start Time: 10:00am

Attendees: Sandy Mason, Mike Brunk, Reinee Hildebrandt, Sravya Pamulapati, Beth Corrigan, Daniella Pereira, Derek Reiking, and Bob Benjamin

Non-Attendees: Matt Hanauer, Todd Degner, Tim Howe, Jill Johnson, Drew Hart, Lydia Scott, Steve Ludwig, Jesse Felix, Tricia Bethke, Scott Gram, Stephanie Brown and Debbie Fluegel.

Rob, Chair for the committee introduces himself and welcomes everyone to Urban and Community Forestry committee meeting and starts off with committee members introducing themselves who attended the meeting.

Discussion on meeting minutes' approval from the last meeting which was held on January 5th 2017.

Rob asks committee members if they have any questions or concerns about the meeting minutes from 1/05/2017 sent by Sravya. Mike Brunk made a motion to approve and Sandy Mason seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Illinois Forestry Development Council Update and Summit discussion

Rob reported that the Illinois Forestry Development Council meeting was held on 01/12/2017 (three urban members in attendance). Council gave the UCF committee approval to explore the idea of developing a Forestry Summit for 2017 or 2018 including the options, price things out. We will get back to the Council for further input. The summit can be either an urban and community forestry summit or the statewide forestry summit. We need to identify some people who can take some roles and try to look into option for that and present back to the council. There was also a discussion on purchasing baseball caps to publicize the council. Tom Wilson gave an update on IDNR. (Reinee provided the following update to Tom's update. The state is trying to separate the capitol budget from the Federal funding authorizations. This change would help DNR Urban and Community Forestry by allowing the state core Urban and Community Forestry funding from the USDA FS to be expended. flow. That would be very good for IDNR and Urban and community forestry. At the federal level there is discussion of lumping funding together so forestry would get budget and the feds would say "do with it as you will".

Mike Brunk asked if there was any indication of how the new federal administration is going to handle the Urban and Community Forestry funding? Will there be any cuts? Reinee Hildebrandt explained that Urban and Community Forestry funds are tied to the State and Private Forestry (S&PF) funding allocation. From the S&PF office, the comment was, the Trump administration

budget that went forward in Feb./March drastically cut state private forestry. It was unclear whether the cuts were related to transfer of the fire program to IEMA or they were across the board program cuts. Obama's president's budget had always put us equal to where we were or greater. The budget goes through the Senate and the House budget process before we have any concerns about what is going to happen, but there is a likelihood of cuts for future federal funding but current contracts are still in place for five years.

Discussion on documents storage on the IDNR website

Reinee mentioned that a link was created on the IDNR- Urban and Community Forestry Website under Partnership Initiatives. Documents were hyperlinked. The links were checked internally and externally yet there was an issue with access per peoples emails. We spoke with IT before leaving today. (There was some technical issues related to permissions on the page to access. But it is rectified by the meeting time by the IDNR technical staff. Both Mike Brunk and Sandy Mason could access the links during the meeting.)

Rob Sproule also discussed having a current folder and a historic folder on the DNR website for public to access all the documents to maintain transparency. We also need to talk to Bill Gradle from the Forestry Development Council to add an extension of their website so we can link items from the Forestry Development Council page.

Discussion on the Formalizing the Committee structure

Rob Sproule summarized the actions to date. Last meeting, we talked about looking to formalize the committee's structure, bylaws and developing a committee vision just to have a clear understanding for the people who or on the committee or outside the committee so they know what we are doing and where we are going. Reinee and Sravya provided documents including the Act Authorizing the Illinois Forestry Development Council. It outlines the scope and the responsibility of the Forestry Development Council and their responsibilities. From that they took the first step and developing committee bylaws but made it focus Urban and Community Forestry. They also included the committee documents from other locations like Wisconsin and Minnesota Council Bylaws. I looked through the internet and found other committee bylaws and most of them have the same structure: name, membership, goals, officers, meetings, and committees.

Rob drafted a committee chairperson and secretary job description that could be put in as part of the bylaws. He also started the process of contacting members of the committee through the email concerning their commitment to the Committee. Some responded and some didn't. He will confirm interest through the email responses.

Rob focused the committees time to focusing on the bylaws and making sure that the purpose section, in addition, to representing Illinois Forestry Development Council, identifies the Committee's strategies and terms and types of officers.

A section by section accounting is below.

Discussion on the Committee bylaws and Structure documents:

Reinee Hildebrandt summarized the MN and WISC. Documents. The summary is provided below with the committee's final decision on each section in brackets.

Section 1. NAME Both have "Organization's Name" as the first article. [The committee agreed to add this to the current template as the Urban and Community Forestry Committee of the Illinois Forestry Development Council]

Section 2. PURPOSE Both of them have the "Purpose". (The template that Sravya and I have provided basically, converted the Forestry Development Council language to Urban and Community Forestry language, but there is nothing saying that we have to do it that way). [The Committee discussed 1) keeping it as is or 2) Keeping the Council purposes and expanding the Purpose section or 3) converting it to only urban and community forestry and referring to the Council Purpose dot points (and our committee's overriding purposes since we are a subcommittee of the Forestry Development Council) as "pursuant to the Purposes found in the Forestry Development Act. Continued discussion at the next meeting.]

Section 3. DEFINITIONS There was a Definitions Section but that might not be needed. If we don't need definitions, we can strike that section off. [The UCFCommittee decided to delete this section.]

Section 4. MEMBERSHIP Both have membership and we might want to compare the membership and how they do their membership. The Minnesota Council has been a non-profit organization with a Board of Directors and various sub-committees. Wisconsin has the officers. Membership lists were modified to embrace all known Illinois urban and community forestry interests. There were 27 categories/organizations listed in the Illinois template. [Rob indicated that we don't have officers so that would be good to add. Rob stated it would be good for the committee to formalize its membership structure. He indicated that this would help us network, provide more stability to the committee and get better representation. With a formal structure the group could have formal membership by having organization sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Beth suggested developing a nominating committee for vacant positions so we can have full representation. going. She suggested adding language concerning recruitment. Rob indicated that the MOU would make it the organization's responsibility to provide a person for that position. But we could create a system for individual memberships that aren't attached to an organization and a system for officers and sub-committees where we could have a nominating committee. Reinee referred to the Wisconsin document as an example of how many people, how many voting and then gives you the terms, years, term of office and how to deal with vacancies while Minnesota has an open membership regardless of residency for all who actively encourages and is involved with or interested in the status of the urban and community forests, and encourages with the purposes and objectives of the organization. The group decided that they liked Section 1 of the Minnesota document and that it should be added to the Illinois version. Mike Brunk raised the question of when there are the decisions to be made, then who are the members who can vote and who are the non-voting members (aka industry representatives, citizens at large or may be not as non-voting members depending on how we handle Section 1. or people are in state or out-of-state). So there would be specific voting members and an open door for non-voting members. The committee discussed that and

Sandy questioned why anyone would attend if they did not have voting rights. The discussion focused on making all listed positions voting. Mike speculated that the state forestry council might not want the people to be residents of Illinois, but that doesn't mean that organizations can have an employee be a president of the council out of state. There was discussion on who should vote without any final decisions made. Rob encouraged the committee to think about that for the next meeting. There was agreement to delete the "At Large" voting membership position. Mike reminded us that the final voting members number is also tied to having a consensus or quorum. If there are 26 voting members and only 8 to 9 people show up at a meeting will we have enough people to make decisions? Can we define what a quorum as being majority at the meeting. Plus, we need to consider the Open Meetings Act regulations with respect to determining a quorum. Mike Brunk raised the question of what to do about absentees and whether they will be asked to leave the organization. There was a discussion. Sandy referenced the Wisconsin language, "Individuals may be subject to release from membership" and there was general consensus that it provided a good starting point.

Rob asked everyone to think about that section for membership eligibility and suggest memberships for next meeting and maybe we look at coming back with an idea on how to break up that structure in terms of voting and non- voting structure.

Section 5. OFFICERS The next section was the officers. [Rob developed two officer descriptions and that language could be injected into the bylaws. The Chairperson was defined as a member of the council who shall be responsible for the council, for the committee and it's a two-year term. This description mirrors the language from the Forestry Development Council Act. The secretarial position description should also be added. The committee is to review that language next meeting.] Sandra suggested including the chair, vice chair and past chair to add continuity. The committee was in agreement.

The committee will revisit the officers section next meeting and Rob will try to get a little bit definitive language on each position. more you know down. In the next section is

Section 6. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE Reinee reported that the template included language taken from the Forestry Development Council language from their missions and functions sections plus a summary of current committee actions such as 1) We oversee the Urban and Community Forestry Section, of the Illinois Forestry Development Action Plan; 2) We created an annual work plan and 3) We develop an annual Work Plan. [Rob instructed the committee to take a look at that and will revisit it at the next meeting.]

Section 7. FUNDING [Daniella raised the question of compensation for services funding being included in the funding section. Reinee had already placed the language under the list of members saying they still serve without compensation. It was decided to not include a funding section in the bylaws.]

Section 8. MEETINGS Mike suggested we add a Meeting section to serve the purpose of setting a standard meeting date throughout the year so the public can come to the meetings and plan for them. Beth added to tell people where and how we will post them. [The language decided on was:

The Urban and Community Forestry Committee will meet the first Thursday of every other month starting January through March, May, July, September and November or as determined by the Chair. Special meetings maybe called from time to time by the executive committee.

Post Discussion section assignments:

Rob: Section 6, Duties of the Committee

Sandra: Section 4: Membership

Discussion on Work Plan and Council Report

Rob Sproule moved on to the Work Plan Review an update everybody should got a copy of the work plan based on something comments we collected at the last meeting. I don't think we need to go through every item today as on the interest of time. But everybody should just be encouraged to look at that, make sure what was attached to their name, their needs and expectations for those things was appropriate.

We need to look at is the annual report. Which was brought up at the last meeting and the Forestry Development Council asked us to prepare our annual report by May sixteenth meeting, so that they have time to incorporate that in the Illinois Forestry Development Report for the legislature by July. No historical documents were available. Mike Brunk will check for past copies. Rob will check with Steve Ludwig who did a report two years ago and maybe asking Steve, 2016 Chair, if he wants to include anything then we'll use the 2016 work plan and the updates provided at the last meeting to draft this year's report. I will get it and send it out to everybody and then we can review it at the next meeting before it goes to the council.

Mike suggested that in the future at each meeting we decide on what goes from the minutes into the final report. This would make the job easier when preparing the final report. Stepwise, this is an idea. All agreed with Mike's idea. Rob mentioned that the Final report should identify things from the minutes' summary that should be equated in the annual report. The annual report should not be a summary of all the individual accolades of partners' organizations. They should what the actual count or committee accomplishments.

Discussion on the Forestry Summit

Rob Sproule: The forestry summit, that is something we kind of got to know that's been an interest of individuals and the committee in general of trying to get together for a forestry summit. The Forestry Development Council at the last meeting gave us the authority to pursue the possibility. At minimum we need to do some research and come up with some different options and ideas to present to the Council. Are there individuals that are interested in participating in that process or feel like they have expertise and I will obviously be involved. If there are other individuals who have a lot of experience with doing that kind of program development, I know there's been a lot of different ideas of what it should be? Then we should come up with two or three different options and propose them along with and even I think, they kind of want like locations and potential cost.

Beth Corrigan offered her assistance and past outline as one example. Daniella volunteered to assist. Rob Sproule suggested that Daniella and Beth we would be able to maybe meet once or twice before the next meeting, even if it's just a conference call. Mike Brunk suggested attaching the Summit to something whether it's IAA's Annual meeting or maybe IAA's summer conference and maybe there's things outside IAA. He cautioned that this strategy might make it hard for participants to schedule it in with the other events. Rob Sproule suggested developing a smaller package that can be delivered two or three times that covers the same information versus one larger summit. We also need to decide what should be the focus of that meeting? Should it be to present the focus of the arena, present some direction that Illinois Forestry Development Council us to present or are the things this committee should focus on or should the point of the summit be what are the things you think we should focus on? Reinee suggested that summits are to bring people together and let them have a voice in my opinion. It's not for us to go there and say this is the voice that we have. It's to collect and empower people. Mike added they are to create partnerships. Rob suggested that we should tie in with the action plan since it would be a good opportunity to actually present a formal action plan. We could say based on the actual plan, there are all of these things in here so what are the things that we should focus on out of this larger thing? Food and drink always is draw. I mean if we do one as the tie on to the Arborists Association meeting and follows after is the free food and drink and it's a two-hour program that presents something user voice and then comes out of the summary and we do the same thing.

Discussion of Partner Updates

CITY OF URBANA, Mike Brunk: Actually I do. I'll share experience that I had and just for your information purposes, but I have some timber land down south that Ameren decided to put a transmission line on. So there is a state agreement that they have to follow. The state actually created that dictates that they follow the A300 standards. They have their own best management practices and standards. The thing that was lacking is erosion control standards and tree protection standards and matters on how they were going to manage the land. There may be an opportunity for us to encourage the ICC Commerce Commission to recognized by the state such as the Urban Manual's best management practices. He likes the one for the Tree Protection and Forest Protection Standards. The one that I asked for that I didn't get was that tree protection standard where the fencing was to be installed right off easement line. I requested it right on property line prior to any of the tree removal They did provide me good best management practices for a number of thing, but that those kinds of things weren't necessarily in state agreement and you had to negotiate those on your own. So It's just for your information, it's kind of interesting. But the state has a lot of good best management practices I really like the one with the tree protection that works for not only urban trees but also for forests.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, Reinee Hildebrandt: I presented their Urban and Community Forestry Report for December to February to my boss for internal purposes and to Chris Whittom for the Illinois Forestry Association and I'm going to share those with you today. Basically, Tree City USA & Growth Award and Tree Campus USA applications were due December 31st. About two hundred and fifty applications Tree City USA were entered into the electronic applications system and hundred with sixty-seven Tree City USA

applications have been approved at the national level. Twenty-seven Growth Awards and fifteen Tree Campus USA, one Tree Line USA applications are approved. But there are other tree line USA applications from companies that serve Illinois but that are headquartered in other states such as Iowa or Missouri. They get their applications through the state where their headquarters is located. We have other Tree Line USA's but I actually may have to I think we have two with a local municipal one also. Our first deadline was March first, so anybody that has their application in and was nation approved will be shipped to us very shortly. Applications not approved to date will have another opportunity in April and with no guarantee that they will get it by Arbor Day. The ones that are being shipped now, we are hoping to get those out to everybody by Arbor day. We still have the problem of not being allowed to do the conferences again this year and we're handling the northeastern part of the state through the Illinois Arborists Association and at the Northeast Municipal Foresters Meeting. We're going to go ahead and partner with them to do the distribution at that time. (There was a discussion on the potential costs of shipping the awards vs. the conference.) **Reinee:** The other things that we have done during this time, we also do a lot of reviewing tree care ordinances. I look at those very extensively when I review the applications. Some that are certified that have been reviewed before I don't. But all new ones I look at provide update and suggestions and as sometimes the suggestions don't mean that they can't get Tree City USA but I just give them the advice anyway. There's some old language in some of these ordinances that needs to be updated. Also, I give a lot of advice on Tree City USA compliance and the standards. I get suggestions on how to improve Arbor Day events and how to become a Tree City USA community and other guidance to communities. So it is not just reviewing applications. There's a lot more that goes into it and at this time. Tree City USA, it's not the only accomplishment. TCU Newsbits continues with eight issues sent out already this year to Tree Campus Tree City USA and partner organizations.

IDNR works with this committee and Sravya to get the minutes and provides technical assistance to the Urban Committee on the Tree Protection Standards and have just been able to get back to the Tree Protection Standards. They are close to being posted for final public review and posting. We have contracts through the USDA Forest Service with Openlands, Morton Arboretum and Trees Forever. IDNR and Trees Forever have been in constant contact since part of their contract is tornado relief. I'm sure with the recent tornadic weather my activities when I get a little more intense working with Trees Forever as we determine how we can help these communities. The Community Accomplishment Reporting System CARS data has been posted on the website and I am pleased to announce that communities have called and are actually calling to use the data to try to get professional staff in their communities. These communities who are using the CARS data to help them do comparative needs. We are also working on the famous and Historic Tree Arboretum Signage project funded by the Council on Forestry Development grant. I am looking forward to getting the trees protected better. The grant is only \$5,000 so it won't provide signage for all the trees. It would be nice to be able to use some of the Urban and Community Forestry federal – state core funding to finish the projects that I started 15 years ago. However, the alternative is to do fund raising so we can have a complete project. We would do this as an adopt a tree project. Morton Arboretum or Master Gardeners or a Garden Club could adopt a tree.

OPENLANDS, Daniella Pereira: I have a question for the group then an update. One of the things that we've been asked to search on has been tree giveaway program specifically looking at one that target grammar school children with the idea that they take home small seedlings and are able to planting them out. I know that that does not excite many people and it doesn't excite me necessary but we're doing research on different national programs and I have a list of probably about twelve to fifteen different programs and I'm just wondering if I could send that list to this committee and if you have heard of anything different than the one that we have on this list, if you could just give us maybe information of the name of the organization that's doing it or even a Web site related to it so that we could kind of put something comprehensive down together. Does that sound ok to everyone? **Beth Corrigan asked** Reinee to add to the TCU Newsbits something about this because so many of the Arbor Day celebrations across the state have giveaways they might be able to weigh in on it more than those of us here on the committee. Reinee asked Daniella just send me something for the TCU Newsbits.

Daniella: I'll just send you guys a two-page spread sheet and that's not to distribute publicly. I'll give Reinee the Newsbits but if you have anything else or if you are just interested at least it has the links on there for the two different groups that have done that. So I would appreciate anything. Second thing is I've been working with TCIA to bring them to the Chicago Region (their national coordinator who set up apprenticeship programs and training programs for arboriculture) and so we've been in conversations back and forth for a little while and it looks like we are going to set a date on April sixth from 9:00 to 11:00 AM on the Arterials Alaska campus as a part of the city colleges program to have a meeting with our arborist employers with the idea to really start asking them what they need what they're lacking. A lot of times through care industry hired a lot of people trained in-house and then most of the time don't last more than six months. So part of our push is to see if there would ever be incentive for them to put money toward starting a training program so that you know one of the biggest things that they need are people that even know that this is a career. And so we will have a lot more people in attendance than just employers but those people will be sitting on the side and really aren't going to be in the conversation but are open if you would like to join, I believe I will get invitation to send out tomorrow so all in all if there is anyone that is bound to call or no other group that might be really helpful to have present there, I think there if you would let me know I will send them an invitation. Does anyone have any questions because I'm sure that that was way too short of a statement on such an important topic.

Beth asked if SMA was included in that discussion. Society of Arborist runs an internship program and has grants for posting interns in the Chicago area. They have a training program for student studying forestry or urban forestry. They also provide grants to cities or park districts to hire interns for the summer. The funding is on both the student and sponsor side of that. Beth will send Daniella a contact for that program.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Derek Reiking: Got involved via another student He is taking Forestry with emphasis in urban forestry.

MORTON ARBORETUM, Beth Corrigan: All right so the Community Trees Program is completed all four Northern Illinois regional workshops. Had touched a bunch of new communities which was great we're continuing to follow up with those and I'd love the help of this committee to help us promote the next two urban forestry workshops state and federally funded for central Illinois in Bloomington and April 14th and in Mount Vernon on the 13th of April So those workshops are hoping to pull in tree board members, decision makers and anyone in some of the Central and Southern Illinois communities. to learn about urban for street and we're partnering with Trees Forever to provide these workshops. So I can send you guys the flyer for it and would love all of your help and promoting. And just finding the right people to connect with to get folks to come to this workshop. **Reinee mentioned that** IDNR has already posted this information on the IDNR UCF website Calendar. Beth stated that people are gearing up for Arbor Day outreach so we have three tags available again and have a bunch of applicants there already so just help in communities celebrate Arbor Day. That's enough to keep me busy.

Rob: For sure. It looks like by Benjamin who jumped on the call at some point.

Bob Benjamin: Yeah. I don't have anything at this time.

Other Business

The current version of the Illinois Forestry Development - Illinois Forest Action Plan was discussed. Everyone was appraised of the many changes to the committee driven work that was submitted. And all were encouraged to provide comments to Rob. Beth offered her assistance in this review.

Meeting Adjournment and Next Meeting

Rob: thanks everybody now.

Reinee: Moved to adjourn

Sandy: Seconded

All were in favor.

Rob: Next meeting in two months at Oak Park.