

MI Urban & Community Forestry Council

- Minutes of -

Thursday, March 29th, 2007

MUCC – Lansing, MI

Members present (voting):

Nancy Carpenter, Jeff Dunmire, Vic Foerster, Bill Lawrence, Rebecca Salminen-Witt, Robert Taggart, Marshal Baekerroot, Bert Cregg, Robert Gentry, Tom Abramson, Marshall Baekerroot, Bob Bricault, Bert Cregg,

Members present (non-voting):

Katie Armstrong, Kerry Gray, Scott Heather, Donna LaCourt, Kevin Sayers, Ada Takacs.

Other attendees:

Jim Kielbaso, Bill Van Liere, Dennis Worst

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by Chair Vic F.

Approval of Agenda:

Robert T. moved to accept the agenda. Rebecca S. seconded the motion.

Approval of Minutes:

Rebecca S. moved to accept the previous meeting minutes. Robert T. seconded the motion.

Announcements:

Kevin S. announced that Dan Reed, planning director for City of Boyne City, will be resigning his position on the council effective immediately due to accepting a new position with the City of Daytona Beach, Fl.

Rebecca S. announced that the National Arbor Day Foundation will be in Detroit (Lodge Elem.) as part of their 10 city Arbor Day tree planting effort. Kevin and Katie will also be in attendance.

Jim K. announced that the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) had completed their 2006 annual report and developed a 10yr. strategic plan. Handouts provided. Additionally, NUCFAC will be holding a public forum on Catastrophic Storms

and Urban Forests June 6th in Biloxi, MS. More details to come.

Kevin S. announced that the Michigan Arbor Day Alliance (MADA) will be displaying the state Arbor Day Poster contest winner on billboards (~50) throughout the state starting in April. Adams Outdoor Advertising is donating \$50K in billboard value. Additional funds are from the MADA savings account. Markets are: Ann Arbor, Lansing, Jackson, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids

Kevin S. announced that Michigan was now ranked 8th in nation with 111 certified Tree City USA communities (3 new) and 4 Tree Line USA utilities (1 new). Awards have been mailed and several presentations scheduled. Press release set for April.

Kevin S. welcomed Ms. Donna LaCourt as Michigan's new State Forester and Assistant Chief of the Forest, Mineral, and Fire Management division. Donna discussed her background and gave overview of her role within DNR, describing challenges and opportunities to states forests (esp. fragmentation and invasive species). Donna is excited to be with the DNR and welcomes the opportunity to work with MUCFC to address Michigan's UCF issues at state and national levels

Old Business:

Membership vacancy and reappointments:

- Bob B., Marshall B., Kathy F. reappointed to new terms **expiring at Fall 2009 meeting**
- 2 positions vacant - (Planner and CD/Arbmn.)
- Bill Van Liere from Meijer Gardens attending and interested in CD/Arbmn. vacancy.
- Ad hoc Nomination Committee should be formed to ID candidates for Planner position

Action Item(s):

1. *Invite Bill V. to fill vacant CD/Arbmn. position*

2. *Appoint members to ad hoc Nominating Comm. to ID and fill vacant Planner position.*

Revisions to Council “Policy and Procedures”:

- Vic F. reviewed changes to document based on suggestions at previous meeting.
- Motion to accept approved unanimously

Action Item(s):
N/A

Restoration of Our Trees (ROOT) program:

- Kerry G. reviewed details of ROOT program and provided update on current status
- Trees went on sale w/local partners Feb. 1st
- Overwhelming demand w/several selling out on first day. Saginaw did not sell out. Trees redistributed to other partners
- Many residents interested in other sources to purchase trees. Partners currently do not keep waiting lists for next year.
- Distribution of trees to begin at partner sites in April.
- DTE Energy Found. has renewed financial support for program for 2008 (\$40K)
- Program will increase no. of trees for next year (~400/partner) but remain limited to quarantine area.
- Looking into a possible lottery system to alleviate confusion w/tree orders for next year
- Issue of species lists (native/invasive eg. Norway Maple) generated much discussion
- Jim K. offered the idea of communities developing a tree buying consortium modeled after IL communities.

- Action Item(s):*
1. *Assess and update group on 2007 tree distribution outcomes*
 2. *Determine if program will be open to municipalities in future*
 3. *Announce next round of partner appls.*
 4. *Share details of tree buying consortium with group (Kevin – video, Jim/Robert G. – literature, contacts)*
 5. *Research committee to work on native/invasive species lists issues*

New Business:

07 UCF Program budget update:

- Kevin S. gave overview and update of 07 budget
- Federal program budget decreased ~\$400K to \$28M ('08 budget suggests 38% reduction)
- State program budget increased ~\$11K to \$271K
- State budget increase attributed to changes in USFS allocation formula which benefited MI
- MI also benefited from increased assistance to communities (esp. highly populated ones) primarily as a result of EAB assistance. These factors play critical role in new USFS formula.
- State program budget continues to be allocated as in the past (ie. salaries, grants and indirect exp)
- Kevin S. provided group with handout summarizing current status of MI communities relative to USFS program goals (ie. developing /managing status) and suggestions as to how to increase performance

Action Item(s):
Group – Review handout on status of MI communities and provide comments/questions to Kevin before next meeting

USFS Update:

- Lisa Burban (USFS) was unable to attend mtg.
- Kevin S. provided handout highlighting key USFS update items including:
 - USFS State & Private Forestry restructure
 - UNRI webcasts
 - Northern Tree selection website
 - UFind website

Action Item(s):
N/A

MSU Extension Citizen Planner Program:

- Kevin S. provided handouts and gave overview of the program.
- Goal is for council to establish subcommittee to work on creating an urban forestry module for program.
- Group reviewed draft outline for module and was in support of these efforts
- Committee consists of Georgia Peterson,

Kevin S., Kerry G., Katie A. and Bob B.

Action Item(s):

1. *Refine outline*
2. *Develop presentations/materials*
3. *ID qualified presenters*
4. *Have module ready by August 2007*

USFS Urban Connections Detroit:

- Katie A. (USFS) presented on the Urban Connections effort in Detroit and how it fits within the different branches of USFS
- Urban Connections is not Urban Forestry
- Goal to connect underserved youth with state's National Forests and USFS.
- Detroit effort guided by Core team
- Many ongoing projects including: Greenfield Village, Det. Public Library
- Council can partner to share messages of program.

Action Item(s):

1. *If interested in being on Core Team, contact Katie A.*

IUFRO Conference recap:

- Rebecca S. presented on her recent participation in the International Urban Forestry conference in Denmark.
- 19 participants from 13 countries
- Goal was to study real world examples of effective communications strategies and to devise/improve for communicating about the Urban Forests globally
- Key Theories and tools:
 - Media Relations
 - Politics and Lobbying
 - Marketing and Branding
 - Interpersonal communication
- Participation in this conference has led to invitation to speak at upcoming European Forum on Urban Forestry in Germany

Action Item(s):

N/A

EAB Quarantine/Community Preparedness Plan:

- Angela Riess (Dept. of Agriculture) gave overview and update on EAB quarantine changes.

- Certain aspects of the Federal quarantine (eg. pallet wood) are changing to be consistent w/state quarantine.
- Federal quarantine currently restricts movement of items from some states (MI, IL, IN, OH) but not all.
- MDA will continue to survey upper peninsula during 2007
- Mackinac Bridge checkpoint continuing to be staffed.
- Group had been given advance DRAFT of EAB Community Preparedness Plan for review and comment during meeting
- Goal of plan is to provide communities throughout the state with basic guidance on addressing current or future EAB infestations.
- Majority of group had not reviewed draft plan document.
- Kevin S. and Kerry G. requested that everyone review document and provide comments to Kerry by 4/9/07.
- Final version of plan should be available for mass distribution by April 20th
- Primary marketing efforts will be focused on Michigan Municipal League, Township Association, Arboriculture Society of MI and Urban and Community Forestry community.
- Subsequent group discussion about plan generated several key comments including:
 1. Community response to EAB will be unique to specific make-up of community and EAB impact so plan may not work for everyone the same.
 2. Tree inventories will be critical to success of community response.
 3. Jeff D. indicated that stump removal was another key element in contract language for communities who use contractors for removals
 4. Bill L. suggested that communities should be aware that contractor bids may be cheaper depending on when bids are requested (ie. busy vs. slow season).

5. Multiple year contracts might make sense in some cases. How many years?
6. Vic F. noted that, from a contractor standpoint, specific details (e.g. maps, what to do w/wood/chips, stumps etc.) is very helpful.
7. Communities can get money from counties for county road removals

Action Item(s):

1. *Additional comments to Kerry by 4/9/07*
2. *Kevin S. – Were Toledo numbers based on climbing or bucket truck?*
3. *Add volunteer planting info to planting section of plan.*
4. *Possibly add education section to plan*

Reports:

Public Relations/ Recognition Committee:

- Kevin S. reported on progress of planning for Tree City/Line USA awards banquet
- Plans for this year were delayed due to timing and budget issues.
- Group reviewed cost estimates from several Lansing area facilities
- Group reviewed draft brochures /program for awards banquet
- ID potential sponsors (e.g. DTE) to cover some costs (e.g. meal, registration)
- Robert G. suggested this could be good venue for communities to discuss idea of tree purchasing consortium (*maybe have a keynote presenter from IL)
- Group was in support of this idea
- Kevin S., Kerry G., Ada T. Nancy C. Rebecca S. offered to help plan event.

Action Item(s):

1. *Establish proposed budget*
2. *Identify sponsors (e.g. DTE)*
3. *Identify banquet facility*
4. *Set date/times*
5. *Create program and registration*
6. *Advertise by February 1, 2008*
7. *Progress update by Fall meeting*

Critical Issues Committee:

- Rebecca S. reported on status of council activities relative to program strategic plan goals.
- Many goals are being addressed through program and council activities already. Examples include new newsletter, EAB preparedness plan, upgraded website, UCF display and brochure, consultant list and planning for Tree City USA banquet.
- Rebecca provided a draft letter seeking corporate sponsorship from utilities for UCF program.
- Kerry G. suggested group needs further discussion on what activities it is asking sponsors to support (eg. UCF program, grants, council activities)
- Rebecca requested that member keep their eyes open for any new/emerging issues they think MUCFC should address.

Action Item(s):

1. *Group should report any emerging/new issue to Rebecca that should be addressed via the council*

Outreach/Education Committee:

UCF Program Display/Brochure

- Kevin S. provided group w/Maureen McDonnough's revisions to UCF program brochure and display
- Maureen M. also created separate example of a bookmark describing MUCFC which could be used to increase council visibility
- Group supports proceeding with final revisions and development.
- Need to identify cost and printing options

Community Canopy Newsletter

- Ada T. provided group with DRAFT version of Spring UCF newsletter
- Robert T. suggested including Nat. Arbor Day Foundation weblink to 'Right Tree-Right Place' information.
- Robert T. agreed to write article on trees and utilities for next edition
- Kerry G. noted a grammatical correction: Change 'Resources' to Resource in fifth sentence of EAB plan section

- Kerry G. suggested dropping MDA weblink to Conservation Districts because it's too long and MACD link is sufficient

Adjourned:
Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm

Submitted: Kevin Sayers

Action Item(s):

1. Ada T. to make edits
2. Kevin S. will post on UCF website, send email announcement and mailing by end of April.
3. Robert T. will write short article on trees and utilities by Fall meeting.
4. Group – send article ideas to Ada T.

Misc. items

- Ada T. announced that she had contacted the John Tesch radio show (www.tesh.com) about the possibility of providing UCF and forestry information for their “Intelligence for Your Life” program. She will keep us posted if/when she hears back.
- Ada T. discussed idea of creating ‘Tree Hangers’ w/ information about proper planting and maintenance that could be given to retail nurseries to hang on trees for sale or hand out to customers. DRAFT copies of possible hangers were provided. Cost est. 1 color, \$230/2,000
- Ada T. discussed idea of developing restaurant placemats with UCF messages that could be used at the DNR’s Ralph A. McMullen Center in Higgins Lake and other sites. Costs est. 1 color, \$135/2,500

Action Item(s):

1. Ada T. and Kevin S. will continue to revise and send to group for comments

Research Committee:

- Kevin S. announced that the urban forestry consultant list is now posted on DNR website and available for MSUE/ASM to link to as needed.
- Robert T. asked whether there was a vetting process for adding individuals/organizations to the list. A – No, but there is a non-endorsement disclaimer
- List currently has 29 consultants

Action Item(s): N/A