

# Michigan Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Council



An advisory committee to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources

[Michigan.gov/UCF](http://Michigan.gov/UCF)

## Meeting Minutes –November 2, 2020

Michigan Municipal League, call to order at 10:05 AM

### Present

Kevin Sayers, Dean Hay, Lee Mueller, Ada Takacs, Annie Kruse, Rachel McDonald, Asia Dowtin, Kerry Gray, Fai Foen, Joan Chadde-Schumaker, Paul Hickman, Emily Hanson, Geoff Kempter, Doug Schultz, Jill Johnson, Heather Griffin, Hannah Reynolds, Tyler Kliffman, Scott Jones

### Approval of Agenda:

- Motion: G. Kempter; Support: D. Schultz; Approved unanimously

### Approval of Minutes of March 26, 2019 meeting:

- Motion: D. Schultz; Support: K. Gray; Approved unanimously

### Public Comment:

- Paul Hickman, President of [Urban Ashes](#) and affiliated with the [Michigan Urban Wood Network](#)
  - Very involved and interested in developing and expanding markets, jobs and awareness of urban wood use in Michigan, regionally and nationally. Based in Ann Arbor
- Rachel McDonald, Tribal Forester with [Keweenaw Bay Indian Community \(KBIC\)](#) in Michigan's Upper Peninsula
  - Invited to attend and consider joining the council representing forestry, native American and regional interests and connections to the upper peninsula of Michigan. Based in Baraga.
- Emily Hanson, [Area Manager for Ecological and Urban Forestry Services with Davey Resource Group](#).
  - Invited to attend and consider joining the council. Newly returned to this region from previously working with New York City – Forestry. Has broad connections and experience in urban forestry. Based in Auburn Hills

### Old Business:

#### DNR Forest Action Plan (FAP)

- Thank you to members who contributed time/comments/participation in the stakeholder process.
- Scott Jones (DNR Forest Planner) - provided update on status of FAP. Deadline – end of year
  - Note – Annual stakeholder input and review meeting will be new engagement process next year
- Language outlining goals, objectives is often vague and many items have nonspecific timelines.
  - L. Mueller - this allows ample opportunity and latitude for how council and stakeholders

interpret and address items (pros and cons).

- Many UCF objectives highlighted:
  - Increasing DNR staff capacity for UCF program – Long-standing issue, may be slow progress.
  - Data needs - Currently it is deficient in many areas, not consistent and needs to be addressed to help guide the program. This is why the Assessment phase showed little for UCF portion.
    - Suggestion of forming a NEW committee to help frame issue and identify existing and future data needs.
    - Committee members: A. Downtin (initial lead), K. Gray, T. Kliffman, K. Sayers, L. Mueller
  - Climate change – numerous items related to planning, adaptation, species, outreach
  - Wood utilization – Several items related to promoting, planning and sustaining urban wood use.
  - Outreach/education/engagement – Multiple areas of focus and collaboration opportunities
  - Spatial priorities limited to community canopy cover and community management areas.

Action item(s):

1. *K. Sayers will share final version of plan as it is submitted to USFS.*
2. *A. Downtin to convene first meeting and discuss issue, goals and begin data discovery process.*
3. *MUCFC representative(s) should be prepared to participate in annual FAP review/update meeting.*

Committee Reports:

**Visiting Urban Forester Program (Sayers)**

- No progress

Action item(s): *None*

**Forest Health - Oak Wilt Coalition (Kruise)**

- Holding virtual meetings (next meeting 11/17)
- Spring 2020 emphasis was on creating and promoting Oak Wilt Awareness Month in Michigan.
  - Due to pandemic, Governor's office was not able to approve proclamation in March.
  - Focus was on creating oak wilt awareness graphics for use in invoices, websites, literature etc.
  - Pursuing grant funding to help implement awareness month outreach goals for 2021.
- G. Kempter and others - oak wilt awareness has definitely improved in past few years.
- L. Mueller – What is status of oak wilt legislation? A. Kruise advised that it is not moving until further research (currently underway) by MSU is completed to inform need/content etc.

Action item(s): *Kruise will keep council apprised of status of MSU research and legislation.*

**Tree City USA Banquet (Mueller)**

- Banquet set for April 2020 was cancelled due to pandemic.
- Tentative hold on facility for a possible in-person event in April 2021. Virtual event is more likely.
- Planning committee should meet to discuss next steps.
- Committee members: L. Mueller (lead), K. Sayers, A. Kruise, D. Hay

Action item(s): *L. Mueller will reconvene subcommittee by end of year.*

### **Advocacy (Kempter)**

- No progress
- G. Kempter suggested that the FAP has several items that focus on improving engagement of advisory committees and specifically addressing advocacy, i.e. “a license to move forward”.
- Committee members: G. Kempter (Lead), K. Sayers, J. Chadde, D. Hay

Action item(s): *G. Kempter to reconvene committee and continue work on creating event calendar for MUCFC members to target for engagement/outreach.*

## **New Business:**

### Member Terms/Appointments

- Membership and term limit schedule reviewed.
- Members with terms that expired at end of fall 2019 meeting: D. Hay, A. Kruse, T. Kliffman, all of whom renewed membership thru fall 2022.
- Members with terms expiring at end of this meeting (fall 2020): D. Schultz, G. Kempter, L. Mueller, K. Gray, all of whom renewed membership thru fall 2023.
- Council chair and vice chair positions up for annual renewal. L. Mueller declined renewal to vice chair position and is ineligible for chair. Maintains membership on council as needed.
- L. Mueller motioned to nominate D. Hay for another term as Chair. Support: G. Kempter. Approved unanimously and accepted by D. Hay for 1yr.
- Need nomination(s) for vice chair position. (email K. Sayers or D. Hay)
- Prospective new members to join council: H. Reynolds, E. Hanson, R. McDonald, H. Griffin and P. Hickman. All are interested pending supervisor approval as needed.
- Maximum membership is 17. Need to investigate absent members to ensure space for new ones.
- Motion to approve all outstanding renewals and add P. Hickman, R. McDonald memberships now and table further additions until next meeting: L. Mueller, Support: G. Kempter, Approved unanimously.

Action item(s):

1. *Members – Consider and send nomination(s) for vice chair to K. Sayers prior to next meeting.*
2. *Chair and/or Secretary to contact absent or renewing members about ongoing interest in membership.*

### 2019 Tree City USA Program Accomplishments

- 122 cities, 8 campuses, 1 [utility](#) and 1 healthcare institution
- New communities: Ferrysburg and Wyandotte
- New [Tree Campus - Higher Ed](#): Aquinas College, MTU
- New [Tree Campus - Healthcare](#): Spectrum (Blodgett Hospital)
- Arbor Day Foundation’s 2019 Michigan and national Tree USA programs infographic is well-done.
- J. Chadde requested information regarding [Tree Campus K-12](#) and how to get the word out.
- K. Sayers - formal deadline for 2020 applications is end of year

Action item(s): *K. Sayers to receive, review and approve 2020 Tree USA applications and report to council.*

### FY 20 UCF Program Accomplishment Report

- Annual Community Accomplishment Reporting System (CARS) report reviewed and discussed
- USFS led process to review and revise CARS definitions in 2019 to help clarify and streamline standards and remove problems of inconsistent interpretation.

- K. Sayers started applying these new definitions to the Michigan data this year and some numbers decreased but not across the board. This will continue towards full adoption reflected in FY21 report.
- FY20 Michigan population living in: Managing: 43% (-2%); Developing: 37% (+3%); Assisted: 5.6M(+.3M)
- Northeastern Area comparison: Managing: 52% (-2%); Developing: 26% (+1%); Assisted: 81M (-1.5M)
- Have not compared to other states in region but can as needed.
- Number of volunteer hours reported: 19,428 (+12K from 2019). Mostly attributed to Tree City USA self-reported volunteer numbers, which were not previously counted.

Action item(s): *K. Sayers will complete and submit annual 2-pg. highlight report to USFS by November 11.*

FY 20-21 Community Forestry Grant program

- Received 43 proposals requesting \$325K in funding (~\$100K available)
- Renewed inclusion of tree planting and created a new tree maintenance category this year.
- Proposal breakdown:
 

<u>Category</u>	<u># Appls</u>	<u>% (Appls)</u>	<u>\$ Requested</u>	<u>% (\$)</u>
○ Mgmt. Planning:	19	44%	\$229,453.00	71%
○ Education Training:	9	21%	\$65,671.00	20%
○ Tree Planting:	13	30%	\$24,550.00	8%
○ Tree Maintenance:	1	2%	\$4,750.00	1%
○ Arbor Day:	1	2%	\$500.00	0%
- Committee meets this week to discuss awards.
- L. Mueller – Council should undertake effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the UCF grant program to better understand what parts are working well vs. not and assess impacts and make adjustments/recommendations for improvement as needed.
- NEW Ad hoc Grants Effectiveness/Evaluation Committee formed.
- Committee members: L. Mueller (initial lead), K. Gray, E. Hanson, A. Dowtin, R. McDonald

Action item(s):

1. *J. Johnson will solicit input from other state and federal partners to see if there are examples of similar efforts that we could model after. K. Sayers will do likewise within DNR Grants Division.*
2. *L. Mueller to convene meeting of Grant Program Evaluation committee*

Municipal Tree Protection Ordinances

- L. Mueller – update on recent case involving Canton Township, MI litigation related to tree protection ordinance. Case was challenged and overruled (taking) by federal judge this summer.
- K. Sayers - Getting inquiries from communities seeking assistance and advice on how to review/modify their ordinances in light of recent ruling in Canton Township case. Some community contacts have no experience in tree related matters, ordinances or enforcement. How best to advise?
- D. Schultz – His firm has staff experienced in municipal planning and ordinance/policy development and evaluation and is willing to offer assistance in this matter.
- Group - Most appropriate action is to advise communities to maintain awareness and understanding of their local ordinances, evaluate relevance to current ruling, work within their internal legal framework to adapt as needed and seek outside consulting expertise for detailed evaluation.
- Might be an indication of need for UCF program to engage qualified partner organizations to provide further specialized training/workshops focused on community ordinances.

Action item(s): *D. Schultz to investigate recent Canton Township ruling and discuss with internal staff on options*

to assist council further.

#### Global Trillion Trees Campaign:

- Are members aware of this? Some yes, some no.
- What, if anything, are others doing?
  - F. Foen - City of Detroit is a committed partner (50K trees over 10yrs) and the [Greening of Detroit](#) is supporting city's reforestation efforts. [Related Trillion Trees media story](#)
  - L. Mueller - [ReLeaf Michigan](#) may be working on something regarding this?
  - A. Kruse - [ISA-Michigan](#) not familiar with the campaign but will bring it to the board's attention.
- What, if anything, should we (DNR UCF and MUCFC) do?
  - J. Chadde - could be a great connection with schools
  - L. Mueller - these tree planting/canopy campaigns often come without acknowledgment, support or plans for necessary long-term care and maintenance.
  - G. Kemper - in practical terms this would necessitate 20K trees per acre(?)
  - H. Reynolds - [TrillionTreeCampaign.org and tracking/donation tool](#).
  - K. Sayers - DNR's UCF program (and other DNR programs) should leverage existing tree planting efforts to promote work on this issue (e.g. DTE and UCF tree planting grants, Arbor Day, state forest lands etc.). Additionally, DNR Forest Stewardship Coordinator is drafting concepts for Million/Billion trees projects that could be done in partnership with stakeholders and sponsors, including use of USFS Landscape Scale Restoration funding.

Action item(s): *K. Sayers – Work with DNR Forest Resource Division staff to determine potential options for promoting or engaging in this campaign.*

#### Staff Communications

- K. Sayers:
  - Not working in office for unknown period. Just received permission to do site visits/field work.
  - MI DNR UCF e-news has shifted to [gov.delivery](#) format. Sign up if you're not receiving them and send any content items to K. Sayers by Wednesdays @ noon.
  - Working with national committee to revise [Urban Forest Strike Team protocol for forest pest detection](#) (MI specific to Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt). Other issues include Asian longhorned beetle and spotted lanternfly and others.
  - Continuing to collaborate with MSU Forestry on Urban Forestry teaching, research, extension and support of [new forestry curriculum development in partnership with community colleges](#).
  - Upcoming events: Arbor Day Foundation's [Partners in Community Forestry Conference \(11/16-20\)](#) and [International Society of Arboriculture Conference \(12/7/12-11\)](#)

#### Member Communications

- F. Foen: (Greening of Detroit)
  - [Upcoming Climate Change Adaptation in the Detroit Region's Urban Forest \(1/26-27, 2021\)](#)
- P. Hickman: (Urban Ashes)
  - Will be participating in [Countdown TED](#) talks presenting on urban wood and utilization issues. Will be seeking input from MUCFC in developing the talk(s)
- R. McDonald: (Keweenaw-Bay Indian Community)
  - KBIC approved a [forest-based carbon sequestration project](#) in August for 12,500 acres of its property.
- L. Mueller: (Davey Resource Group)
  - Working with ReLeaf MI, MDNR, IDNR SJRBC and six communities to implement a USFS, GLRI

funded watershed project ([website](#); [storymap](#)) in St. Joseph River Watershed of MI and IN.

## Next Meeting(s):

- Full Group: Tuesday, March 30, 2021
- Subcommittees: *TBD*

## Adjourn: 12:14 PM

Motion: Geoff Kempter; Support: Doug Schultz; Approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted: Kevin Sayers

---

## Members

Dean Hay (Chair), Lee Mueller, Annie Kruse, Rachel McDonald, Asia Downtin, Kerry Gray, Fai Foen, Joan Chadde-Schumaker, Paul Hickman, Emily Hanson, Geoff Kempter, Doug Schultz, Heather Griffin, Hannah Reynolds, Tyler Kliffman

## USFS Liaisons

Jill Johnson, Lisa Perez

## DNR Contacts

Staff Liaisons: [Kevin Sayers](#), 517-582-3209; Ada Takacs, 231-534-5569

State of Michigan, Department of Natural Resources  
PO Box 30452  
Lansing, MI 48909  
[Michigan.gov/UCF](http://Michigan.gov/UCF)