



Urban & Community Forestry Council



Meeting Minutes

Location: Virtual meeting

Date: October 26, 2021

Roll call

Present for the Council (council):

- Dean Hay, chair
- Lee Mueller
- Doug Schultz
- Kerry Gray
- Tyler Kliffman
- Annie Kruse
- Fai Foen
- Asia Dowtin
- Rachel Tarpey
- Emily Hanson
- Heather Griffin
- Geoff Kempter
- Dan Coy
- Hannah Reynolds

Present for the DNR Staff (department)

- Kevin Sayers, UCF Program Manager

Others Present

- Abbey Johnson – Student, Michigan Technological University (MTU)

Call to Order: 10:03 AM

Approval of Agenda:

Motion: Kruse

Support: Kempter

Approved unanimously

Approval of Minutes of March 31, 2021 meeting:

Motion: Schultz

Support: Kruse

Approved unanimously

Committee Reports:

Grants (Gray)

- Over the course of several meetings this year, the committee worked to assess the UCF grant program and revise the Community Forestry Grant application.

- Committee work is on hold until after current grants are awarded and applicant input is received via survey to gauge feedback on the changes.
- Committee Members: K. Gray (chair), Mueller, Downtin, McDonald, Sayers, Hanson

Action item(s):

- Reconvene committee to assess grant applicant feedback and revise application as needed.

Tree City USA Banquet (Kruise for Mueller)

- 81 attendees
- Post-event user survey had light response (22) but high satisfaction of virtual event
- Committee will need to start discussion on plans for 2022 (in-person or virtual, budget etc.).
Committee members: Mueller (chair), Sayers, Kruise, Hay

Action item(s):

- Reconvene committee before end of year to discuss plans for 2022 event.

Forest Health - Oak Wilt Coalition (Kruise)

- Major highlight was achieving state proclamation of May as Oak Wilt Awareness Month
- Secured DNR UCF grant to support awareness month outreach
 - 10K bags, 15K trifold, 300 posters, news articles, billboard advertising
 - Targeted public areas (libraries, MDOT Welcome centers, other)
 - Hope to continue this campaign in 2022
- Provided Oak Wilt Qualified training for new (15) and recertifying (20) individuals.
- Next Oak Wilt Coalition (OWC) meeting is November 16
 - Need to have DNR Forest Health present on Oak Wilt Viewer and data process
 - Consider rescheduling if there is a conflict with Arbor Day Partners Conference
- Committee member(s): Kruise

Action item(s):

- Confirm and announce schedule for upcoming OWC meeting

Advocacy (Kempter)

- No report given
- Committee members: Kempter (chair), Sayers, Chadde, Hay

Action item(s):

- Convene meeting of committee to discuss goals and activities

Data (Downtin)

- Convened several meetings during the year to assess available program data, identify data gaps and discuss potential use and distribution.
- DNR is currently initiating a data dashboard system which would be a logical clearinghouse for this data. Kevin is working with DNR staff to start data migration and build-out of site for UCF program data.

- Committee members: *Dowtin (chair), Sayers, Mueller, Gray, Klifman*

Action item(s):

- Reconvene committee to provide input and hear details of DNR data dashboard.
- Kevin will help in coordinating meeting/presentation with DNR GIS staff.

Items for Discussion:

Membership (Hay)

- Annual Chair and Vice-chair election:
 - Hay offered to renew as chair and Rachel Tarpey nominated to fill vacant Vice Chair
 - Motion to approve Hay and Tarpey – Kruse
 - Support – Gray
 - Approved unanimously
- Expiring Terms: Baeckeroot, Chadde, Dowtin, Foen
 - Baeckeroot – no response and no recent attendance.
 - Motion to not renew Baeckeroot – Kruse
 - Support – Mueller
 - Approved unanimously
 - Chadde declined renewal but extended appreciation/thanks to council members
 - Foen and Dowtin requested reappointment
 - Motion to reappoint Foen and Dowtin – Mueller
 - Support – Schultz
 - Approved unanimously
- Nominees for new appointment: Emily Hanson, Hannah Reynolds, Heather Griffin, Dan Coy
 - Motion to approve all Hanson, Reynolds, Griffin, Coy – Tarpey
 - Support – Schultz
 - Approved unanimously
- All new and renewing appointments are to 3-year terms to end at Fall 2024 meeting

Forest Action Plan (FAP) Stakeholder meeting (Sayers)

- As part of the DNR FAP process, an annual stakeholder meeting is being planned with the goal of discussing progress and making recommendations for any updates or future actions.
- DNR Forest Resources planning staff have tentatively identified early December for this meeting, which may take place in person but more likely via virtual platform.
- No date or time has been announced but council chair/vice-chair should put tentative hold on calendar pending details to come
- All council members are requested to review the UCF goals in the FAP and share any progress their work may have made towards listed goals with the chair or secretary.
- Additionally, council members should share any ideas or thoughts on what expectations they have for this annual event.

Action item(s):

- *Sayers will communicate meeting details to council chair, vice-chair as soon as they are available*
- *Sayers will share FAP UCF goals with council for reference.*

Recap Midwest State Urban Forest Council meeting (Hay)

- A multi-state, virtual meeting of Midwest UCF council chairs and state coordinators was held in September
- Hay shared background and information about the meeting, participants and outcomes
- Mostly informational and learning from other states about how they operate and interesting activities.
- Interest and expectation is to have this again and in-person if possible.

Action item(s):

- *Hay will share video linked recording of state council chair presentations with the group.*

Annual Letter to State Forester (Hay/Sayers)

- The annual letter to the state forester was not done for 2020
- This letter is a courtesy outreach from the council to the state forester as a means of maintaining visibility, sharing information, and creating dialogue.
- A follow-up in person meeting between the chair and state forester is often scheduled to reinforce this communication.
- A suggestion was to consider copying this letter to DNR executive office (Director) as a professional courtesy.

Action item(s):

- *Hay, Tarpey and Sayers will work to draft a 2021 letter by December to share with council. Goal is to submit to state forester in early January 2022.*

Public Comment:

- Abbey Johnson – Current Forestry student at Michigan Tech. University. Observing meeting as part of a class project. Hoping to get a sense of what the council is, how it operates and what the current issues are. Interested in all aspects of forestry and career opportunities.

Staff Communications:

- Sayers:
 - Update on return to office work schedule. Can travel, perform field work and attending/hosting meetings with basic COVID protections in place.
 - Finalizing FY21 MI UCF program accomplishment report for USFS
 - Approved to draft position description for new, limited-term UCF program staff position. Once finalized and approved, recruitment and hiring to follow.
 - Working on renewal of DNR/MSU Forestry partnership agreement (exp. Sept. 2022).
 - Working with DNR Forestry staff to create and promote DNR MI Trees 1T.org pledge.

- Tree City USA applications starting to arrive. Goal of new record. Deadline 12/31.
- ADF released new [Economic Analysis of UCF reports](#). Helps establish baseline data.
- Phase 1 (roof) restoration work complete on Belle Isle urban sawmill in Detroit. Phase 2 funding (exterior below roof) is in place and work set to begin.
- Events:
 - Partners in Community Forestry conference in November (Louisville, KY)
 - Tree City USA banquet in April 2022 (anticipated)
 - Coffee with the state forester May 2022 (suggested)
- Grants:
 - CFG Grants -
 - Update on recently closed FY21 program grants.
 - Update on review of FY22 program grants (17 proposals, \$168K requested. Awards soon)
 - DTE Foundation Tree Planting Grants -
 - Update on 2021 grants - 27 grants and \$94K awarded
 - Submitted 2022-24 funding proposal to DTE Foundation (\$100K/yr)
 - No urban projects submitted to 2021 USFS Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR)
 - GLRI proposals: Implementing one in-state and one multi-state project (funded in previous years) and received denial on one submitted during FY21

Action item(s):

- *Survey Community Forestry Grant/recipients for input on recent grant application experience*

Member Communications:

- Downtin
 - Working with the Greening of Detroit (Detroit), Friends of St. Clair River (Port Huron) and potentially another partner in Flint on gravel bed nursery research and production projects.
- Kruse
 - ArborCon winter conference to be held in-person in Lansing in February
 - Call for presentations for ArborCon will be posted to website soon
 - Upcoming Tree Risk Assessment Qualifications (TRAQ) trainings:
 - [Re-Qualification \(1-day\) November 29, Port Huron, MI](#)
 - [Full Qualification \(3-day\) November 30-Dec. 2, Port Huron, MI](#)
 - Other training events planned for west Michigan in May ([watch calendar](#))

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 29, 2022

Adjournment: 11:50 PM

Motion: Kempter

Support: Gray

Approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted: Kevin Sayers