



Michigan Urban and Community Forestry Council

An advisory committee to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

MEMBERS

Joan Chadde
Pam Blough
Bill Drews
Ryan Edwards
Kerry Gray - Chair
Dean Hay
Rich Kobe
Geoff Kempter
Annie Kruse
Amy Mangus
Lee Mueller
Mary Wilson

DNR STAFF

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Meeting Minutes

March 31, 2015

DNR Outdoor Adventure Center (OAC) – Detroit, MI

Present:

Conference Call: Bruce Morrison, Bill Drews, Amy Mangus, Rich Kobe, Joan Chadde

In-Person: Dean Hay, Kerry Gray, Lee Mueller, Annie Kruse, Ryan Edwards, Marshall Baeckeroot, Margaret Studer

Absent: M. Wilson, Pamela Blough, Geoff Kempter

Present for DNR Staff:

K. Sayers , Scott Jones

Other Attendees:

Jill Johnson – USDA Forest Service, L. Perez – USDA Forest Service

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve L. Mueller; seconded D. Hay; carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

March 25, 2014 minutes reviewed.

Motion to approve, L. Mueller, seconded A. Kruse; carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

Organizational Items:

Membership Terms/Vacancies

Sayers presented the status of current membership,

- The Landscape Architect position held by Pamela Blough is expired at end of this meeting and is term limited, i.e. no 3rd term.
- Self-introductions provided by Marshall Baeckeroot (Oakland Community College) and Bruce Morrison (Grand Rapids Community College) in expressing interest to be considered for the Community College vacancy on the council.
- Group reviewed results of membership matrix to get a better sense of diversity of backgrounds shared by current members of council.
- Suggestion of adding geographic location to matrix
- Many gaps can be filled by existing members.
- Discussed issue of members with continued absence to meetings.
- Suggestion of adding a medium-size community (10K-75K) to group.

Action Item(s):

- *K. Sayers will schedule a summer conference call for council*
- *K. Sayers will thank Pamela Blough for her time and service on council*

Old Business:

Budget

Sayers reported current program budget balances and status of FY 15 budget advice from USFS:

- FY12 (\$27) and FY13 (\$7K), FY14 (\$159K) Detroit/Belle Isle (\$240K)
- FY15 funding has not yet been announced but is expected soon

Action Item(s):

- *K. Sayers will provide council with email update when FY15 federal financial advice is released.*

Council Polices and Procedure discussion

L. Mueller updated council on the discussions he and G. Kempter have had regarding possible changes to the policies/procedures document:

- Need to revisit the mission and vision statements
- Discussed removing term limits from membership
- Discussed establishing policy for attendance at council meetings.
- Instead of having a set number of members on the council, establish a range (e.g. minimum of 11 and maximum of 18) to allow for flexibility.

Action Item(s):

- *L. Mueller and G. Kempter lead a subcommittee (incl. J. Chadde and R. Kobe) to review and recraft council mission and vision statements*
- *K. Sayers will schedule a summer conference call for the full council to continue discussion of changes to policies/procedures documents*

New Business:

MDNR Forest Action Plan Update

S. Jones (MDNR) presented on the status of the Michigan Forest Action Plan and plans for the required 5 year update to the National Association of State Foresters and USDA Forest Service.

- Plan approved in 2010 and due for review and/or revision after 5 years. Revisions are required at 10 years
- General agreement that the present plan is inadequate for our forest management purposes and that a complete revision of the document is required. It is also agreed that the major revision cannot be accomplished as part of a mid-term review in 2015
- Primary needs are for breaking document into two pieces, an Assessment piece and an Issues piece and undertaking a completely new assessment and issues analysis.
- Council's role will be significant in helping to identify relevant issues that should be captured and reflected in revised plan.
- DNR Forest planning section will be leading this and maintaining contact with all relevant advisory councils to keep them abreast of plans, timelines and work sessions etc. with an ultimate goal of creating a new plan by 2018-19, in advance of the 2010 deadline.

Action Item(s):

- *K. Sayers will be the point of contact for council and DNR Forest Planning section to maintain ongoing updates.*

Oak Wilt discussion

- A. Kruse led discussion on the issue of Oak Wilt awareness and training needs for both professionals in the tree care industry as well as public outreach and education:
 - Recent oak wilt preconference held in conjunction with arborist conference and was very successful. Major concern noted is that arborists are not getting consistent and current information on oak wilt. Neither are homeowners.
 - Arboriculture Society of Michigan (ASM) recently submitted a grant request to state of Michigan for disease identification/testing and creating public awareness campaign. Unfortunately it was not approved.
 - This is a very important issue recognized among industry and state/federal/local and nonprofit partners and an outreach/education campaign needs to be developed and promoted.
 - ASM has offered to lead the campaign and would like to harness the networks developed through this council and partners to start crafting messages.

Action Item(s):

- *A. Kruse will create a new committee to focus on this issue.*
- *Other committee members: B. Drews, G. Kempter*

DNR Staff Updates:

- Sayers:
 - Federal Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) grant awards announced. One from Michigan was approved (Forest Stewardship Program - \$300K)
 - MI DNR submitted 13 proposals totaling \$1.8M (all urban) to the FY14 Federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) program
 - Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) status determination to be announced by US Fish and Wildlife Service on April 2nd. Much discussion about the potential impacts to urban forestry/arboriculture industry in Michigan. Bottom line, wait to find out what determination is, i.e. threatened vs. endangered. True impacts will be known based on that.
 - 2014 Tree City/Campus/Line USA in Michigan. Numbers are down from last few years. 119 Tree Cities (-6), 3 campuses (no change) and 1 utility (-2).
 - Arbor Day Foundation has released the final report of their "Faces of Urban Forestry" project. Shared copy for review. Arbor Day is Friday April 24th

Member Updates:

- Kruse:
 - Presented to National Science Teachers Association on the Detroit Urban Forestry Teacher Institute
 - USFS recently recognized the Urban Forestry Teachers Institute as a success story
 - Much interest in continuing this program.
- J. Johnson:
 - New USFS publication: "Common Diseases of Oaks in the Midwest" coming soon.
- L. Perez

- USFS is hiring a permanent position in Michigan and is posted online.
- Working with J. Chadde on the Science Teachers Association training in Detroit.
- Kobe:
 - Forest Pathologist position being interviewed for this fall. Partial extension duties.
 - Other positions in Forestry Department open 1) Social Science 2) Economics/Policy
 - Dan Brown is leading the MSU campus wood utilization project “MSU Shadows”
- Studer:
 - Discussed her new role with the Friends of Grand Rapids Parks as the lead for Urban Forestry issues, including the “Urban Forest Project” and urban wood utilization
 - Indicated the availability of a portable kiln for use on local urban wood utilization projects (connection to MSU campus wood utilization efforts).
- Baeckeroot:
 - Discussed marketing of Oakland Community College landscape maintenance courses and training opportunities
 - Needs help in finding appropriate employment opportunities for students

DNR Outdoor Adventure Center (OAC), Hantz Woodlands and Belle Isle site tours

- Group participated in optional site visits and tours of the new DNR Parks and Recreation facility (OAC) as well as the Hantz Woodlands and Belle Isle Park site visits.

Next Meeting(s): Conference call (TBA this summer) and October 27 (face-face)

Meeting Adjourned: 12:30 PM

Respectfully submitted: Kevin Sayers