

WISCONSIN URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL

March 6, 2013

Wisconsin State Capitol – Madison, WI

In Attendance: Todd Chwala, Christopher Deegan, Marla Eddy, Mark Freberg, John Gall, Dan Green, Leif Hubbard, Greg Kessler, Shirley Brabender-Mattox, Don Merkes, Art Ode, Dan Siewert, Jordan Skiff, Blake Theisen, Jeff Treu, Kelli Tuttle,

Ex Officio members in attendance: Olivia Witthun, Laura Wyatt, Jeff Roe and Dick Rideout

Members Absent: Bruce Allison, Patti Dreier, Tom Dunbar, John DuPlissis, Thomas Landgraf, Ken Ottman, Terry Sime, David Sivyver, Les Werner, Kevin Westphal, Jeff Wolters.

DNR in attendance: Jim Warren, Bob Mather

Public guests in attendance: Bob Dahl, Tony Nowak, Emma Roe

Call to Order and Introduction

Kelli Tuttle

Kelli Tuttle called the meeting to order at 9:32am and asked council members to introduce themselves. Kelli asked all to sign a card for David Sivyver who is recovery at home from a heart related procedure. Leif Hubbard moved to approve the 11/30/12 meeting minutes; seconded by John Gall. Motion passed.

Agenda modified due to members visiting with legislators.

Legislative Package

Laura Wyatt

Laura reviewed materials within the legislative packets. Jeff Treu and Mark Freberg provided suggestions on previous successful efforts. Mark attaches his business card to the folder and also prepares a cover letter with an offer to serve as an urban forestry resource. It was suggested that Mark distribute his cover letter electronically to the Council. Marla Eddy shared information from an article (2011) entitled, *Economic Impact of Non-Native Forest Pest Insects in the Continental United States*. EAB and Asian Longhorn beetle are costing \$1.7 billion in local expenditures. View the article at:

<http://journalistsresource.org/studies/economics/real-estate/invasive-forest-insects> .

ACTION: Laura asked council members to send a brief report to her regarding legislative visits.

Advisory Report

Kelli Tuttle

Kelli lead members through a review of the Advisory Report draft and asked members to provide input on what should be included, what needs to be emphasized, what can be omitted? Don Merkes suggested that there be more information on benefits. It would be valuable to quantify the return on investment through the grant program. Grammar and punctuation edits can be submitted electronically to Kelli and Laura. Jordan Skiff shared that the state may, in the future, be combining permitting processes for sanitary and storm sewers. These changes may provide an opportunity to introduce trees in the conversation.

ACTION: Members should send comment to Laura and Kelli.

Update on the Strategic Direction

Bob Mather, Jim Warren, Jeff Roe

Bob Mather shared how the Forestry Division is aligning staff and resources, budget and determining measurements for evaluation. Bob reviewed the staff organization chart. Hoping to reach an 8% vacancy rate by the end of 2013. A new inventory/analyst position will include an urban forestry component. Additional staff in forest services will be available to work with urban wood issues. Federal sequestration could result in a 5% reduction of federal support which could translate into a 9% reduction once enacted, late in the year. This is a legislative year and forestry is on the legislative radar. Shirley Mattox asked if there were any plans to reduce support for the urban forestry grant program. The forestry budget has been forwarded by the Governor with not reductions in UF grant program.

Jeff Roe reviewed UF program structure changes which brings all UF staff into the Bureau of Forest Management with Jeff Roe appointed as UF team leader/supervisor. UF has three vacancies; partnership coordinator, finance mgr. (grant manager) and SC regional UF coordinator (Jeff's old position).

Dick Rideout reported that DNR UF is going through more change than other programs; structurally and program related with moving from a street tree view to a total community canopy view.

Every other month the forestry leadership team (FLT) meets and ranks vacant positions to fill. Dick's position is holding one of the three identified UF positions. Jeff hopes to have one position filled by the end of the year. Bob Mather represents UF at FLT.

Marla Eddy asked what UF training is provided to newly hired field foresters. A one-day training is offered by UF DNR staff (Don Kissinger).

Urban Wood Utilization

John Gall

John Gall led a discussion regarding his urban wood utilization proposal. What can the Council do? We could coordinate a workshop to bring interested parties together to discuss building an urban wood utilization program for the entire state? Todd Chwala shared what the City of Eau Claire is doing with their urban wood waste and feels they could benefit from the efforts John is proposing. Jeff reported that there are several smaller groups within southern Wisconsin which have expressed interest in building a market supply chain. A shot-gun approach of activity is currently happening. Marla Eddy shared the City of Madison approach and new grant to rent a portable sawmill. John Gall explained that the role of DNR is to bring the stakeholders together; aggregate small users and suppliers. The need and UFC interest should be shared with DNR so new staff will have the skills to bring together stakeholders to discuss and identify "next steps" and help facilitate initial steps. Project will need assistance in aggregating materials and marketing.

ACTION: John Gall agreed to lead the effort to meet with DNR staff Steve Hubbard (wood products), and Laurel Sukup (environmental assistance manager) and interested stakeholders to identify concerns and needs and create an initial plan. Possible guest to the next UFC meeting could be Steve Hubbard. John will work with Jeff Roe, Todd Chwala, Marla Eddy and Kelli Tuttle are interested in participating. Others who are interested should contact John Gall.

ACTION: The UFC will review and discuss the plan at the June meeting.

DATCP Update

Christopher Deegan

DATCP has been able to secure federal funding to maintain a regulatory presence. Anna Healy will lead forest pest regulatory issues. Nursery inspectors will be cross-trained to include forest pests. State trapping/surveying of emerging forest pests will be coordinated by Melody Walker, DATCP. APHIS trapping in 33 counties. DATCP will be placing traps in 24 high-risk areas within central Wisconsin. Farm bill could provide support for thousand cankers of walnut surveying. Some of the DNR UF coordinators are facilitating trap dispersal for communities.

ACTION: Olivia will work with regional coordinators to compile a list of local municipal trapping which Christopher will try to incorporate into the state and federal trapping map.

ACTION: UFC Executive committee needs to invite Becky Gray, DNR Forest Health supervisor, to future UFC meeting.

Council Business

Marla Eddy, Jeff Treu

The WAA/DNR Conference Sunday evening roundtable event was a success. At one point 85-people were in the room. Thanks to Marla Eddy for coordinating and to all who assisted. It was suggested to have participants should have been encouraged to shift tables. Needed a microphone to announce shifts. If the UFC is asked to

organize this event again, who might be interested in helping: Chris Deegan, Dan Green, Jeff Treu, Todd Chwala, Jordan Skiff. Dick proposed the UFC request to repeat this effort.

ACTION: UFC will contact WAA/DNR annual conference program committee and offer to coordinate for the 2014 conference.

Art Ode asked if a UFCouncil meeting could be held in conjunction with the annual conference. Executive committee will discuss.

Marla shared an outline for the nominations committee. Marla asked for volunteers to serve on the committee. Blake Theisen offered to assist.

Jeff Treu reviewed UF Council awards which were presented at the Annual Conference. Jeff thanked those who submitted nominations and the review committee. Jeff is looking for members to serve on the awards committee and who would be available to review nominations. Award nomination deadline is December 30, 2013. Not too early to submit nominations or talk to someone who should submit a proposal. Jeff will need UFC members to assist in making local award presentation.

Issue Groups meet over Lunch to discuss evaluation.

DNR Update

Olivia Shanahan (DNR grant specialist) – When thinking about the grant program, remember “oversubscribed.” We received 72 requests and were able to fund 45 through, primarily with state funds and a small amount with federal funds.

Olivia Witthun – highlighted several activities within the DNR urban forestry quarterly report.

ACTION: Please review

OPEN MIC:

Marla Eddy – Dane County Tree Board is offering an EAB workshop in March. Madison is conducting EAB branch surveys this year. Marla has been engaged as a trainer for the Society of Municipal Arborist’s municipal forestry institute.

Mark Freberg – has been working with the Green Bay Bird City group in scouting for EAB.

Christopher Deegan – EAB/Invasives hot line number is still active

Dan Siewert – WPS is conducting a “life cycle” review of specific trees to determine if it is economic to move lines underground during construction. **ACTION: Laura asked if Dan could provide an article on the program.**

Tony Nowak – Greenville has a youth forestry council which functions under the Urban Forestry Board. The group meets monthly and plans programs. Great way to get youth involved in urban forestry and government.

Don Merkes - Menasha has been working with UW -Fox Valley sustainability group. Campus has achieved Tree Campus USA designation!

Jeff Roe – Insider should start back up in April. Print newsletter will be on hiatus.

Todd Chwala– Additional ethanol plants will be constructed and will accept wood biomass.

Jordan Skiff – Shared a situation that by discussing/working with Fond du Lac property owners, a solution was agreed upon where trees located along a construction corridor were saved due to homeowners investing in the project.

Olivia Witthun – Encouraged all to share and network with their regional coordinators.

John Gall - Be ready to see increasing numbers of EAB, especially in SE Wisconsin.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Next meeting date: June 21, location to be determined.