



# Urban & Community Forestry Council



## Meeting Minutes

Location: Virtual meeting

Date: March 30, 2021

### Roll call

#### Present for the Council (council):

- Dean Hay, chair
- Lee Mueller
- Doug Schultz
- Joan Chadde
- Tyler Kliffman
- Paul Hickman
- Annie Kruse
- Fai Foen

#### Present for the DNR Staff (department)

- Kevin Sayers, UCF Program Manager
- Ada Takacs, Department Specialist
- Sue Tangora, Section Manager, Forest Health and Cooperative Programs

#### Others Present (observers)

- Jill Johnson, UCF Regional Program Manager, USDA Forest Service
- Lisa Perez, Urban Connections Program Manager, USDA Forest Service
- Dan Coy, City Forester, City of Grand Rapids
- Hannah Reynolds, Program Coordinator, Michigan Arbor Day Alliance
- Heather Griffin, Waste Services Coordinator, City of Flint

Meeting called to order at 10:08 AM

#### Approval of Agenda:

Motion: Mueller

Support: Schultz

Approved unanimously

Approval of Minutes of November 2, 2020 meeting:

Motion: Schultz  
Support: Mueller  
Approved unanimously

## Public Comment:

Dan Coy, City of Grand Rapids Forestry - Attending as an observer. Interested in council and activities. He was previously involved with Indiana's State Urban Forestry Council

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

### **Grants** (Mueller for Gray)

- The Grants committee, under Kerry Gray's leadership, has met several times.
- To date, the Committee has explored all UF-applicable objectives in the State's 2020 Forest Action Plan, and examined how the State's Community Forestry Grant program can be used to advance State priorities.
- Currently, the [Community Forestry Grant program](#) offers grants in one of several categories: planning and management (up to \$20k), education and outreach (up to \$10k), maintenance (up to \$5k - tried for the first time in 2020), tree planting (up to \$3k), and arbor day celebrations (up to \$500).
- After exploring the forest action plan, the committee is recommending changing the categories to: Assessment & Data, Planning & Management, Innovation & Technology, Implementation. Further, all categories will have a limit of \$15-\$20k, instead of separate limits for each category.
- If you have any comments, questions, concerns about this, or would like to participate further in the committee, please send a note to Kerry Gray at [Kerry.Gray@davey.com](mailto:Kerry.Gray@davey.com)
- Discussion of the council's role in review/approval of Grants committee recommendations.
- Committee Members: K. Gray (chair), Mueller, Downtin, McDonald, Sayers, Hanson

### **Tree City USA Banquet** (Mueller)

- Tree USA virtual recognition event set for April 14<sup>th</sup> 10-12:30PM
- Free registration [online](#)
- Speakers/CEUs available, Sponsorships available
- Committee members: Mueller (chair), Sayers, Kruse, Hay

Action item(s): Mueller will report outcomes of recognition event at next meeting

### **Forest Health - Oak Wilt Coalition** (Kruse)

- Next Oak Wilt Coalition meeting is April 6
- May is Oak Wilt Awareness Month in Michigan
  - Governor's proclamation is awaiting Governor's signature
- DNR UCF grant to ReLeaf Michigan to help revise and create information brochures, graphics etc. for outreach campaign at major travel rest-areas in Michigan this spring
- Committee member(s): Kruse

Action item(s): Kruse to report outcomes from oak wilt awareness month at next meeting

**Advocacy** (Kempter)

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

**Visiting Urban Forester Program** (Sayers)

- An admitted lack of activity and progress by this committee was noted.
- The program has merit and relevance but due to a lack of capacity it was agreed that staff efforts should be prioritized elsewhere at this time.
- Motion to dissolve committee: Mueller, support: Kruse, approved unanimously

**Data** (Sayers for Downtin)

- Committee has met 3 times and completed initial goal of conducting data gap analysis
- Reviewed of data spreadsheet with categorized datasets
- Committee needs full council to review to identify any missed data sources
  - Hickman offered to provide some life cycle analysis data related to urban wood utilization in Washtenaw County.
- Recognition that true urban forest data should be prioritized before and other data that, while helpful, don't directly relate to improving urban forest management (e.g. census)
- Recognition of opportunities to partner with stakeholders on further data acquisition
- Need to make recommendations on highest data needs (e.g. urban forest inventory and analysis data and data necessary for Forest Action Planning)
- Next step: Set policies, standards, guidelines and plan for UCF program data management
- Discussion of who has access to data we collect currently, if/how we plan to make it available moving forward, what best management practices for data are or should be
- Committee members: Downtin (chair), Sayers, Mueller, Gray, Klifman

Action item(s): Sayers to share data spreadsheet with council for review, comment

OLD BUSINESS

**DNR Forest Action Plan (FAP)**

- Appreciation to members for contributions and participation in FAP process.
- Document has now been officially approved by USFS and is available online [here](#)
- Formal announcement via press release from DNR is pending deputy director signature
- Annual FAP stakeholder update meeting to be scheduled later this year
- State UCF FY 21 program narrative to USFS will address select objectives including: Staff capacity, Low canopy areas, Underserved areas, data needs, climate change, wood utilization, outreach and education
- Discussion on using FAP to address issues related to underserved areas, canopy cover, and recruitment/training for careers in natural resources. Examples given.

Action item(s):

1. *Members to review the plan and share comments with DNR directly or via council chair*
2. *Sayers will communicate schedule and plans for annual stakeholder FAP review meeting*
3. *MUCFC representative (chair) to participate in annual FAP review/update meeting*

NEW BUSINESS

**Member Terms/Appointments** (Hay/Sayers)

- Membership and term limit schedule reviewed.
- Edwards position expired at fall 2020 meeting. Recent communications with him, and chronic absenteeism from meetings, confirms that this position is now vacant and should be filled.
- Members with terms expiring at upcoming fall 2021 meeting: Downtin, Baeckeroot, Chadde and Foen.
- Chair and Vice-chair positions up for annual renewal at fall 2021 meeting. Vice chair currently vacant.
- Prospective members pending vote at Fall meeting: Hannah Reynolds, Emily Hanson, Heather Griffin

Action item(s):

1. *Members – Consider nomination(s) for open Vice-chair. Send to Chair or Secretary prior to fall meeting.*
2. *Members- Vote to elect Chair, Vice-chair and enroll new members at fall 2021 meeting.*
3. *Chair and/or Secretary to contact absent or renewing members about ongoing interest in membership.*
4. *Secretary to communicate appreciation to Edwards for his past service as a member on the council.*

**Annual Letter to State Forester** (Hay)

- [Previous letters](#)
- Oversight that this wasn't done after last meeting but needs to be done soon or delay until after fall 2021 meeting
- Please provide highlights to Chair or Secretary by end of April if possible.

Action item(s): *Hay and Sayers will draft a letter reflecting 2020 highlights and plans for 2021 and share with council for review before submitting to state forester.*

**2020 MI Tree City USA Program Accomplishments** (Sayers)

- 124 cities, 9 campuses, 1 [utility](#) and 1 healthcare institution
- New communities: Madison Heights, Orion Charter Township
- New [Tree Campus - Higher Ed](#): North Central Michigan College
- [Tree Campus - Healthcare](#): Spectrum (Blodgett Hospital)
- Discussion about how Tree City USA program can be leveraged to increase awareness and

use of green infrastructure (specifically for stormwater) in communities. Opportunity for growth award.

- Takacs provided update on Arbor Day Foundation's ongoing efforts to initiate a Tree Nation program for native American tribes. Next meeting is on April 12.

Action item(s):

1. Takacs to include R. McDonald on communications about Tree Nation USA initiative.
2. Sayers to share 2020 MI TC USA infographic with J. Johnson

### **Open Federal Grant Opportunities (Sayers)**

- [2021 USFS Challenge cost share grant](#) (\$1M)
  - Deadline: April 16
  - National
  - Multiple entities eligible
  - Grants of \$100K-300K, 2-3Yr
  - 2 categories and focus on replicable projects
- [2021 USFS State Urban Forest Resilience Grant \(SUFR\)](#) (\$2.5M)
  - Deadline: April 16
  - National
  - Only States eligible
  - Grants of \$50K-250K, 1Yr (short timeline is BIG barrier for DNR)
  - Only 1 award per state (multiple applications allowed)
  - 2 categories (EAB Reforestation - \$2M, Other UCF Resilience Projects - \$500K)
  - Possible DNR project ideas: Detroit reforestation, statewide tree planting and urban wood utilization planning

Action item(s):

1. Sayers and Hickman to discuss collaborative project focused on urban wood utilization planning for SUFR grant (category 2).
2. Foen has interest in Detroit reforestation project for SUFR Grant (category 1) and will discuss with Greening staff and follow up with Sayers

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

- Sayers:
  - No in office work yet. Permission to do site visit/field work is expiring
  - Working on program narrative for FY 21
  - UCF e-news is highly visible and serving as model for Wildlife division to copy.
  - BI sawmill work in Detroit – Phase 1 (roof) near completion.
  - Events:
    - Arbor Day at Capitol on 30th
    - [Partners in Community Forestry Conf. Call for Proposals open](#)
    - Coffee with the state forester Monday, May 3 at 8AM (ISA-MI to publicize)
  - Grants:

- DTE Foundation Tree Planting Grants RFP in late April
- GLRI application period anticipated to be announced in May-June
- Johnson:
  - Announced that MN and WI are working to host a virtual Midwest state UCF council meeting in September. Will send details as they become available.

#### MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

- Foen: Greening of Detroit's spring events calendar is [online](#)
- Hickman: Announced new partnership between [Urban Ashes](#) and [NextCycle Michigan](#). Press release is forthcoming. Also announced he is helping lead a renewal of the [Michigan Urban Wood Network](#)

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 26, 2021

ADJOURN: 12:00 PM

Motion: Hay

Support: ?

Approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted: Kevin Sayers