

WISCONSIN URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL

March 14, 2014

Wisconsin State Capitol – Madison, WI

In Attendance: Todd Chwala, Christopher Deegan, Marla Eddy, Patty Dreier, Dan Green, August Hoppe, Shirley Brabender-Mattox, Thomas Landgraf, Tony Nowak, Art Ode, Dan Siewert, David Sivyer, Jordan Skiff, Jeff Treu, Kelli Tuttle, Les Werner, Kevin Westphal, Jeff Wolters

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

Members Absent: Bruce Allison, Tom Dunbar, John DuPlissis, Mark Freberg, Brea Grace, Leif Hubbard, Don Merkes, Blake Theisen

DNR in attendance: Jim Warren, Bob Mather, Olivia Shanahan, Brain Wahl, Becky Gray,

Public guests in attendance:

Call to Order and Introductions

Marla Eddy

Marla Eddy called the meeting to order at 9:35am and asked council members to introduce themselves. Jeff Treu moved to approve the 11/15/13 meeting minutes; seconded by Jordan Skiff. Motion passed.

UF Informational Materials

Dan Siewert & Laura Wyatt

Laura Wyatt reviewed the change in process of supplying UF support materials to UF Council members for outreach purposes. DNR staff can respond to requests for information and data, but not be involved with formatting the information into presentation materials. The UF Council and newly organized outreach & advisory issue group will be providing leadership in this area.

As folks meet with their elected officials, it is important to remember you are not officially representing the Council or the DNR. You are speaking as a resident educating folks on the value of urban forestry.

As an UFC member you can share information but the Council's role is that of advisory to the DNR. The UFC is not engaged in advocating or setting policy. This is especially important in a budget year that your conversations are not misinterpreted. As identified in our bylaws, the UFC chair is the official spokesperson.

Dan Siewert has stepped forward to serve as lead for the UFC outreach and advisory issue team. A core group of UFC members (Christopher Deegan, Patti Dreier, Brea Grace, Les Werner, Leif Hubbard) are serving on this issue group. If you are interested, contact Dan Siewert. You can be actively engaged or participate as an observer, commenting when you have something specific to share. Marla Eddy will be the UFC Executive committee member liaison to this issue group.

Thank you to Marla for making color copies of UF information support materials for UFC members. Marla reminded members of the TED Talk which was shared at the September meeting regarding contacting elected officials http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/omar_ahmad_political_change_with_pen_and_paper.html and encouraged UFC members to establish themselves as the "go to person" regarding urban forestry in their legislative districts. Marla also recommended members follow-up visits with a written thank you letter.

Shirley Mattox shared her experience last March when what she thought was a routine scheduled visit with a representative turned out as special recognition. She was called-up and recognized in the Assembly Chambers for her work with urban forestry and natural resources (SEE PHOTO). You never know what will happen, but Shirley reminds all that our elected officials are driven by their desire to serve; just like UFC members. We have a lot in common. Jeff Treu shared that a meeting with legislative staff is just as important and maybe more so, because staff often serve as "traffic engineers" for an office. Jeff also asked if the issue group could identify which districts are not being covered by UFC with an UF message.

ACTION: Contact Dan Siewert with feedback regarding legislative visits; interest in serving or participating on the outreach and advisory issue group.

Division Update

Bob Mather

Bob Mather shared apologies from Paul DeLong regarding not being available to attend the meeting. Paul hopes to stop in between meetings. Bob reinforced the advisory role of the UFC to the DNR and that it is imperative that it does not appear that the UFC is lobbying or advocating on behalf of the Division of Forestry or DNR.

Bureau Highlights:

- Filled vacant UF coordinator position-welcome Brian Wahl
- Four new forest products/utilization positions will soon be filled
- New forest economist position will soon be filled and will be able to support UF issues, i.e. green industry business survey
- Approximately 15 Division of Forestry positions will continue to be held vacant

Federal Budget:

- Support for community and urban forestry is down approximately \$15 million to \$23.68 million
- Over the last 4 years, federal support for UF is down 15%
- There is an increase in “landscape restoration” funds which applies to some UF projects
- WI receives approximately \$250,000 annually from USFS for UF

State Budget

- Mil tax generates approximately \$80 million annually, and is combined with additional revenues from timber sales, federal grants resulting in approximately \$100 million; this is a non-lapsing account
- Legislature authorizes expenditures from this account: \$55 million forestry, \$25 million grants and other, \$13.5 million debt service for land purchases and other expenses. Account balance close to -0- by FY “15.
- Forestry budget for 2015 to 2017 is no frills.
- Jim Warren advised when looking at the federal and state levels of investment, do not equate the budget or investment level to level of priority; investment based on need; UF is a priority.

There is a strong contingent that feels USFS should address only traditional forestry. Paul DeLong is an advocate for UF. Fire does consume a significant portion of the USFS budget which does create an increasing strain.

Marla Eddy expressed thanks and appreciation to the Division of Forestry on behalf of the UFC for the filling of the UF Coordinator position and hiring of four additional forest product services staff which the UFC has been invited to comment on.

DNR UF Program Report

Jeff Roe, Olivia Shanahan, Olivia Witthun

Jeff introduced Brian Wahl, the new urban forestry coordinator working out of the Fitchburg office. Brian was most recently employed by We Energies and spent 7 years as a municipal forester in Waukesha. Brian has a graduate degree (urban forestry) from UWSP, an urban forestry technical degree from Mid-State and an undergraduate degree from UW-Madison.

Certified Tree Management Institute CTMI (third series) will be offered this fall. The intensive program is designed to provide urban forestry management training for municipal staff that are responsible for managing their UF but lack any training. 30 slots are available. Having trained UF municipal staff supports federal priority outcomes which are considered in our federal competitive grant process. Refer to the November DNR UF Program report for additional information on federal reporting.

Jeff recognized Olivia Witthun for completing the National Municipal Forester Institute. Congratulations!

Urban Forest Inventory and Analysis (UFIA) scoping document is continuing to be developed. This was reported on at the November UFC meeting by Andy Stoltman and Dick Rideout. It will soon be shared with the Forestry Leadership Team and will then be released to partners. The Farm Bill identified additional funding for the UFIA and Wisconsin may be able to benefit from this new prioritization.

Olivia Witthun introduced the current DNR UF Program Report and directed UFC members to the wide assortment of partnership related activities which are covered within the report. Marla Eddy complimented the report for the level of information provided and the professional presentation.

Olivia Shanahan reported that \$617,474 was awarded through the 2014 grant program. We were able to fund 76% of requests. She reviewed grant information shared in the UF Program report. Please contact her if you need additional information regarding the grant program. The grant program will be incorporating some minor changes (tweaks and adjustments) into the process. The changes will need to go through a public input process which will be facilitated electronically. Look for an opportunity to comment on suggested revisions in mid-May. Olivia and Brian Wahl are working on a scoping document (available in June) which will outline potential major revamp of the grant program. The extent of changes may require a rule change which could take three or more years. A budget initiative to increase UF grant funding to \$1 million annually was prepared and submitted to DNR leadership for consideration. The initiative supports a recommendation contained within the UFC Advisory Report.

Art Ode requested additional information on the multi-community inventories and management plans program. A small amount of DNR funds have served as seed money supporting expenses such as travel for students. The program provides valuable training for UWSP students and has sparked interest in the urban forest within communities with little or no UF program or capacity. Art was concerned about potential impact to the private sector consultants and suggested that within the project description there be clear boundaries so there is not any confusion regarding the potential of public and private sector competition. Les suggested Art Ode and Kelli Tuttle be invited to student presentations. Partners may want to consider how to engage the private sector with the program.

ACTION: Les will share conversation with Rich Hauer at UWSP.

Urban Wood Issue Group Report

David Sivyer

David Sivyer reported on participation at the Governor's Forestry Economic Summit. This was an invitation only event held in December with David, John Gall, Les Werner, John DuPlissis and Bruce Allison attending. David felt that traditional forestry and urban forestry have more in common than ever before. Interesting information: *there is a shortage of saw logs driven by reduced harvesting from state and federal lands; *forest fragmentation is a huge issue – 50% of wood is on property less than 10 acres in size, making it difficult for loggers to achieve profitability; *mills are locked into processing 22" logs and much of WI wood is larger. David saw a potential in scaling down harvesting methods to accommodate urban wood. Mill operators are more and more receptive to urban wood. . .David reported that Milwaukee County parks have recently been contacted by a mill near Green Bay regarding availability of their wood resource. Rusty Dramm working with forest products utilization at the Forest Products Lab is interested in working with urban wood effort. David had the opportunity to "chat" with Governor Walker regarding the summit and issues of urban wood several times; they both have their hair cut at the same establishment.

The Council's urban wood issue group was invited to submit a proposal to participate at the US Green Building Council's Midwest meetings in September. John DuPlissis submitted a proposal for a panel discussion.

The UFC, led by John DuPlissis, offer a successful workshop addressing urban wood opportunities at the WAA/DNR Annual UF Conference in Green Bay. Jessica Simon from MI provided an excellent overview of the

MI program. Most of the source logs in MI are from private tree companies; where as in WI most of the urban source logs are coming from municipalities. Panel discussion and break-out sessions also a part of the workshop. Representative Fred Clark was in attendance.

DNR Forest Health Update

Rebecca Gray

Rebecca is the new Forest Health team leader. She was formerly with DATCP working with their gypsy moth and emerald ash borer programs. She was undergraduate and graduate degrees in forestry and forest entomology. View <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestHealth/> for additional information on this program area and support staff locations. Be aware of availability of regional newsletters which you can sign-up for. Presentation highlights:

- Looking forward to filling forest health position in NW WI within next few weeks
- Gypsy moth – low populations ; suppression spray program very limited-one block in Rock County
- EAB – 2013-44 new municipal finds; 6 new county quarantines-Douglas, Dodge, Winnebago, Sauk, Dane and Jefferson; 9 new finds already in 2014
- 40+ parasitic wasps recovered from initial release in 2011 indicates population established in Newberg
- Cold temps of “13/”14 have probably knocked back populations of GM & EAB but need to treat and manage still present
- Imperlis damage continues to be an issue; Les asked if impacted wood materials can still be disposed of in landfills. Rebecca will check into this. *Reply added to minutes: Yes they can*
- Blue ash exhibiting tolerance to EAB; phloem tissue appears to heal over the galleries much faster

DATCP-Plant Protection Section

Christopher Deegan

Plant Protection is part of the Plant Industry Bureau lead by Brian Kuhn-mission to protect and promote plant agricultural resources of WI. The bureau is composed of plant protection services (inspection, regulation, compliance headed by Deegan) and pest survey (trapping, control, eradication headed by Melody Walker). Programs include: nursery & Christmas tree growers licensing & inspection, import/export compliance, State Apiarist (bees), forest pests, firewood certification program, seed certification, seed potato certification, and phytosanitary certificates for international export. Interesting note: 1/3 of international export certificates are for wood products; over the last 5 years veneer log exports certificates have increased 10x and kiln dried lumber certificates 3x.

Break in Agenda

Tom Landgraf

Tom shared an experience he had with one of his real-estate development courses. Upon a field trip to a development using solar and thermal panels. . .the energy savings are published monthly for residents and include carbon offset information which was translated through trees. Many of the students had never calculated their own carbon foot print and were not acquainted with the values/benefits/relationship to trees.

Opportunities for outreach are there☺

Council Business

Jeff Treu & David Sivyver

Jeff Treu thanked everyone involved with making the awards program a success; those submitting nominees, the review committee, those folks assisting with the awards announcement at the conference and those members helping to present awards to communities. Jeff recruited members to assist with presentations in Stevens Point (Patty Dreier and Les Werner), Menasha & CN (Jordan Skiff and Shirley Brabender Mattox), Mequon (August Hoppe), Sparta (Todd Chwala), Milwaukee Zoo (David Sivyver), Milwaukee urban wood (Jeff Wolters), and Fond du Lac-Laura DeGolier (Jeff Treu). Jeff reminded everyone that it is not too early to submit nominations for the next recognition cycle. The elected official category is generally light on nominees and should have additional consideration. The committee is always interested in additional member support; please contact Jeff for additional information. Jeff has enjoyed his leadership role with awards and is open to sharing and/or passing this role on to other UFC members. This would open-up other opportunities for him to be involved in additional aspects of the Council.

