

WISCONSIN URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL

March 8, 2012

State Capitol – Madison, WI

In Attendance: Kelli Tuttle, Jeff Treu, Bryan Spencer, Les Werner, John Gall, Ken Ottman, Don Merkes, Shirley Brabender-Mattox, Kevin Westphal, Mark Freberg, Marla Eddy, Art Ode, Leif Hubbard, Greg Kessler, Jordan Skiff, Dan Traas, Jeff Wolters, Bob Brush

Ex Officio members in attendance: Laura Wyatt, Dick Rideout and Oliva Witthun

Members Absent: Joe Wilson, Tom Landgraf, Vijai Pandian, Patty Dreier, Tom Dunbar

DNR in attendance: Bob Mather, Paul DeLong

Guests: Representative Mursau, chair of the Assembly Committee on Forestry

1) Call to Order and Introduction

Les Werner

Les Werner called the meeting to order in Kelli Tuttle's absence while she visited with her legislators. Jeff Treu announced his retirement from We Energies and has offered to remain on the council as an at-large member. Approval of 11/4/11 meeting minutes: Leif Hubbard move; Jeff Treu seconded; carried by majority vote.

2) UF Legislative Packet Review

Laura Wyatt/Olivia Witthun

Laura Wyatt reviewed the support materials included in the legislative packets. Olivia Witthun provided additional information on the mechanized urban tree removal project conducted in Oak Creek which is featured in the packet. This type of removal project requires a large number of trees for removal at one time within the same general location. Timing and lining up work is critical in making this type of removal feasible.

Marla Eddy recognized Laura Wyatt for her work on compiling the data and information and putting together the legislative packets.

ACTION: *Council members are asked to send Laura a short summary of their visits with legislators. What were issues of particular interest? Questions? Is there anything that would be good as a follow-up to help keep the conversation alive?*

Special Visit by Representative Mursau –District 36

Representative Mursau shared a few comments including the allocation of stewardship funds to support work with invasives. He expressed an interest in learning more about issues facing urban forestry.

3) UFC Action Plan – Future Focus/Task Focus

Kelli Tuttle

Charting the council's future work planning. Council team leaders reported back on three of the four focus issue groups that were established at the November meeting: Expand and Manage Urban Canopy, Collaborations & Partnerships, and Job Creation.

Goals Identified –

1. Increase reach and impact of the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council to encourage and expand and manage a diverse tree canopy.

2. “Stimulate the creation of good paying, career oriented jobs in urban forestry/arboriculture.
3. Increase reach and impact of the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council by fostering collaboration and interactive partnerships with a broad range of individuals and groups throughout the state.

Strategies and actions plans associated with each goal were reviewed and discussed. Strategies 1.1, 3.3 and 3.4 were removed.

The UFC is considering how the council should best support the identified state forest strategies. UFC would continue to advise, but what, in addition to this, is the council interested in accomplishing. DNR staff will continue to provide the current level of support, but additional projects/tasks would need to be supported by the council. Work could be completed through individual members (members need to be realistic regarding the amount of time they have to contribute) but more importantly through the constituencies members represent and through additional stakeholder groups. The UFC role is often in facilitating. UFC also considered how the council could provide additional value or compliment the work the DNR is charged to complete.

Council members ranked the goals and strategies.

4) Lunch

5) Update on Strategic Direction

Paul DeLong

State Forester, Paul DeLong provided an update regarding the DNR’ Strategic Direction/Operational Plan implementation. All is going forward as was previously presented to the UFC last year.

All programs have been charged with developing a work plan for strategic direction implementation for this first year. This includes identification of objectives and tracking process.

The Council on Forestry is developing a business plan process for each program area which will translate the intent of strategic direction to concrete outcomes. How will DNR find success especially with the shift in strategic intentions? What will it take to be successful? How will progress be measured? Need to analyze measures as well as activities.

Bruce Allison has been appointed to the Council on Forestry as urban forestry representative. Ken Ottman suggested Bruce Allison be invited to rejoin the Urban Forestry Council.

6) Council Business

Awards:

Council presented a card of congratulations to Jeff Treu and invited him to continue on the council as a member-at-large. Jeff thanked UFC members for participation in the

awards program. Vijai Pandian was recognized for assisting with the program. Marla presented to Chris Williamson. Leif volunteered to present to Harry Libby in Middleton. Ken Ottman offered to present the Oconomowoc community awards in April 3.

Nominations:

Renewals and new member terms will start July 1. Review hand-outs regarding membership needs and forward suggestions to Kelli

John Gall reported that he met the representative from Rice Lake in the elevator. The representative mention the storm damage in his region and John (being acquainted with the information in the legislative package) shared that \$49,000 of urban forestry grant dollars had been allocated to the area. John received kudos from the UFC for his ready response.

Leif Hubbard offered to serve as representative of the WI-ASLA. We will seek official recognition by the organization.

CTMI-

Graduation is June 19 in Stevens Point. UFC members are invited to arrive in Stevens Point late afternoon to attend graduation and dinner. An informal networking function will follow. The next morning, UFC can attend a 4-hour municipal tour of Stevens Point forestry conducted by City Forester, Todd Ernster. After lunch the UFC will have a short business meeting with a vote on new nominees. Expense of travel, lodging and meals will be reimbursable. UFC are encouraged to attend.

DNR Report-

Olivia Witthun highlighted state-wide and region activity report. A lot of municipal staff changes have occurred within has lead to some positive and challenges. A few less Tree City USAs, but in some cases new blood and new energy. The UFC thanked Olivia for the informational report.

Bob Mather shared that there are 70+ vacancies within and that as new supervisor structure is put in place positions will be filled. This is a huge project which involves the entire division and will take time to implement. Some staff will stay in place and many will have new duties

Dick Rideout reported on the FIA, inventory & assessment project will be a repeat of 2001 plot based inventory. DNR received a grant for the project and is working with FS on specs. With rfps going out in April. Plot data collection will occur in the summer. Analysis done by Nowak of the FS within one year. DNR is looking at hiring a permanent part-time person to work with urban audiences and translating the information to users. Data collection 1 plot for every 6000 acres.

Greg Kessler reported that he hasn't heard of any movement on AB 3030, the bill which allows communities to opt out of Smart growth. Greg will share any updates or movement with UFC as they are known.

John Gall had a request from legislative staff for information on Forest Exploration Center. The UFC had a presentation on the project in 2010. Laura will ask the DNR liaison to respond to the request.

John Gall reported on his work with the DNR Invasive Species Advisory Group which advises the Invasive Species Council. John serves as a UFC representative with a municipal perspective/focus. They recently met to prioritize 15 plants as caution, restrictive or non-restrictive.

Olivia Witthun will be the incoming DNR coordinator representative for the next three years.

Meeting adjourned: 1:45pm

NEXT meeting: June 19 (late afternoon-evening) and June 20 in Stevens Point