

**Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council Meeting Minutes**  
**10:00 am – 12:30 pm**  
**Tuesday, October 16, 2012**  
**Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines**

Council Members Present: Marty Adkins, John Batt, Matt Brewer, Emma Bruemmer, Kevin Conn, Ralph Conner, Heath Ellis, David Jahn, Mark Masteller, Patty Petersen, Jesse Randall, Terry Robinson, Tom Rosburg, Stephanie Sheetz, CJ Stephens

There are 12 voting members present, achieving a quorum (there are 19 voting members on the council, with the chair as a tie-breaker)

Others Present: Leslie Berckes (Trees Forever), Jeanette Hario (City of Des Moines)

Called to order at 10:00

Awards Luncheon – April 2, 2013 was selected to be the date for the luncheon. MidAmerican Energy has increased their sponsorship level to \$4,000. If you'd like to volunteer to score nominations or help plan the luncheon, please let Patty or Emma know. Kevin (awards) and Stephanie (either) volunteered to help. Patty submitted a copy of the budget from last year to the group. The luncheon had about 225 attendees and cost about \$12,000 last year. Jesse offered that his tri-state conference that had 500 attendees last year also cost about \$12,000. There were comments that the luncheon costs way too much money, and that we should explore other options for reducing the cost of the luncheon. There was also a desire to look at options for using some of these funds for other purposes, if funders are amenable to doing this.

Strategic Plan – The strategic plan has not been turned in yet, and Emma spoke with the Forest Service and we will submit it next year instead. The committee leads will get together (Emma will send out dates to the leads) to figure out where there are overlaps and put together the document. Once the leads have met and the document is submitted, the committees will dissolve and new committees will be formed to implement the plan. If new members would like to help, that would be great. We especially need help on Goal 2. It was also suggested that we establish a membership committee. Following are the committees, as of today.

**Goal 1 – Build Public Support of Urban Forestry**

Lead: Ralph

Team: Laura Wagner, David Jahn

**Goal 2 – Expand urban and community forestry education**

Lead: Chris

Team: Jan, Jeff, Mark V., Tom R., Leslie (offered, if permitted)

**Goal 3 – Expand and nurture volunteer participation**

Lead: Patty  
Team: Mark M., Matt B.

#### **Goal 4 – Protect and enhance urban forestry resource**

Lead: Terry  
Team: John B., Brandt, Emma, Stephanie

Forest Service Proposal, Advancing Statewide Urban Forestry – The grant proposal was approved, and a person will be hired through Prairie Rivers RC&D to split time between assisting the Council with administrative activities and publications, and assisting three communities (Ames, Ankeny, and Waukee) in developing their urban forestry programs. This will need to be approved by the Natural Resource Commission, and assuming that this goes as planned, the position will be advertised in November with a start date in January. Emma will send a position description to Council members.

Next Steps for the Council – Emma noted that to meet Forest Service requirements, the Council needs to have a four year report (we have used the strategic plan to address this in the past), meet quarterly, and advise the state forester. The group didn't see a need to change the general approach, and David suggested that these requirements be incorporated into future non-profit bylaws. It was asked what states have effective councils, and Emma mentioned New York, which focuses on workshops and is politically active. It was suggested that we address current issues, such as 1) handling the drought, and 2) adapting the urban forest to deal with climate change, and that we can assist municipalities with addressing these and other current issues.

5 Motions Related to Non-profit Status – Ralph read the motions to the group (see accompanying attachment). Marty (NRCS), Mark M. (DOT), and the ISU representatives stated that they would not be able to be members, but could be invited and involved in an advisory capacity to the non-profit group. According to CJ and David, the law firm is well-reputed and has handled non-profit matters for hundreds of other groups. The attorney work is pro-bono, and the entirety of the fees associated with becoming a non-profit are the \$850 filing fees. The process will not move forward until the \$850 is raised.

Discussion – Patty offered Trees Forever's services to handle the non-profit activities of the Council, free for two years with an undefined charge following the two years. Answering a question, Marty explained that it is all in how the bylaws are set up to determine who is represented and in leadership in the new non-profit, and that the attorney can help guide us through this. It was offered that a non-profit gives a lot of flexibility that is not available in a government body. Leslie suggested that we need to work together, since there is now a "Tree Des Moines" in addition to Trees Forever, and there could be a lot of confusion. CJ feels there would not be confusion due to the varied goals, and that this should move forward. Heath added the opinion that the non-profit would be an umbrella group for urban forestry in Iowa. Jesse offered that this is really a vehicle to handle our own finances, independent from any other entity.

**MOVED by Conner, SECONDED by Robinson, to:**

- **Discuss the motions individually**

**MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MOVED by Conner, Seconded by Stephens, to:**

**Approve:**

- **On a pro-bono basis, the engagement of Faegre Baker Daniels as the law firm applying for incorporation in the State of Iowa, and applying for IRS 501(C)(3) status.**

**MOTION APPROVED 7-0**

**MOVED by Conner, SECONDED by Stephens, to:**

**Approve:**

- **A non-profit Board of Directors as follows:**
  - **President – Stephanie Houk Sheetz (IA APA representative to IUCFC)**
  - **Vice President – Heath Ellis (IA Parks Assoc. representative to IUCFC)**
  - **Secretary/Treasurer – Kevin Conn (IA ASLA representative to IUCFC)**

**MOTION APPROVED 9-0**

**MOVED by Conner, SECONDED by Ellis, to:**

**Approve:**

- **A name change to “Trees Iowa”**

**MOTION FAILED 2-7**

**MOVED by Ellis, SECONDED by Conner, to:**

**Approve:**

- **A name change to “Iowa Urban Tree Council”**

**MOTION APPROVED 6-2**

**MOVED by Conner, SECONDED by Stephens, to:**

**Approve:**

- **Grant approval for Board of Directors to assume the continued role of pursuing non-profit status with Faegre Baker Daniels.**

**MOTION APPROVED 9-0**

**MOVED by Conner, SECONDED by Stephens, to:**

**Approve, with friendly amendment to remove second “approval” and add “review” in the first sentence (MOTION by Ellis, SECONDED by Stephens):**

- **Grant approval for Board of Directors to conjoin the legal elements of Non-profit Bylaws with the existing IUCFC Bylaws as applicable, with the guidance of Faegre Baker Daniels, and present such Bylaws to the membership at its next regular meeting for review.**

**MOTION APPROVED 9-0**

Forester and other Updates – Paul is out of town at a meeting. Emma stated that the Forest Service redesign grant proposals are due to Paul by Nov. 1, so please submit or contact Paul soon. Also, EAB has been found in Kewanee, IL. Also, the forestry budget to be submitted this year is for a status quo budget, which includes the \$100,000 for forest health. It's unclear whether or not this will include salary increases. Also, Emma will send out information on a small amount of funding available for publications. Also, there will be a bus tour next week to Minnesota to tour EAB sites.

Adjourned at 12:33

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 15, 2013 from 10-1 at a location to be determined**