

Meeting: NKUCFC Steering Committee

Date: 05-19-2016

Location: Mellow Mushroom, 1014 Towne Drive, Wilder, KY 41076

President: Crystal Courtney

Secretary: Tara Sturgill

In Attendance: Mathew Frantz, Bob White, Michele Stanton, Kris Stone, Rosemarie Santos, Rachel Comte, Sarah Gracey, Scott Beuerlien, Chris Kaeff, Mark Leopold, Tara Sturgill, Jessica Spencer, and Crystal Courtney.
Absent: Jenny Gulick, Lorna Harrell, Peter Stutts

1. Reading and Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 17, 2016

Tara requested edits to the meeting minutes from the March meeting. Mathew Frantz offered edits on the GIS Committee section of the minutes. Mathew motioned to approve the minutes with the edits offered, Bob seconded, and all approved.

2. Financial Report

Rachel passed out the NKUCFC (the Council) financial report to Steering Committee (Committee) for review. Rachel presented that she had filed the 2015 Kentucky taxes for the Council. Rachel asked if the Committee members had questions about the financial report. Committee discussed tax filing.

Mathew motioned to approve financial report, Michele seconds, and all approved.

Discussion amongst the Committee regarding why the Council's budget has a surplus. Rachel explained that the Public Tree Works Seminar (PWTS) come out \$850 ahead. Crystal stated that Reforest still had approximately \$2,800 most likely due to Boone County Conservancy providing funds for food/beverages and the \$4,000 grant from Toyota. Crystal explained that Financial Planning is the next Committee topic to discuss in detail at the next meeting.

3. Program Reporting

Tara presented a recap of *Reforest Northern Kentucky (Reforest NKY)* pertaining to the event, wrap-up meeting, and volunteer survey. Committee discussed some of the lessons learned from the Reforest NKY event. Bob stated that he felt the event was very well organized. Consensus amongst the Committee that the Reforest NKY event went smoothly.

Scott reported that he has not done a lot of preparation for the *Trees in our Community (TIOC)* fall dinner as of yet. Scott offered that he was having surgery soon and would have a lot of time to work on tasks for TIOC. Scott requested that the group decide if we want to do the silent auction after weighing pros and cons. Committee discussed the financial benefit of the silent auction. Rachel imparted that last year the silent auction raised approximately \$1,300 and that the Council's budget is not negatively impacted by TIOC because of the silent auction. Scott presented to the Committee the idea of charging more to attend. Discussion amongst the Committee on pros and cons of charging more for admission to the TIOC fall

dinner – member price vs. a non-member price was offered up for discussion. Rachel put forward the thought of having the TIOC fall dinner at a different location and to find a venue that may offer us a better price to hold the TIOC dinner. Rachel also mentioned asking Ric Urban about having the TIOC dinner at the Newport Aquarium. Tara stated that she is willing to help with the silent auction as she did last year and will speak to Jenny about being the chairperson of the silent auction subcommittee. Chris K. offered to assist with the silent auction planning. Scott requested that the Committee begin to think about and offer up some suggestions for a keynote speaker for the TIOC dinner. Committee offered keynote speaker ideas. Scott submitted having a keynote speaker from a profession not associated with forestry/parks, but rather an “outsider”, someone who could discuss the benefit and value of trees in terms of their profession (e.g., healthcare worker, real estate, etc). Scott requested that the Committee members reflect on their networks and be thinking of ideas for a keynote speaker from an alternate profession. Crystal asked Scott if there was a solid TIOC subcommittee established as of yet, last year’s committee was Mike Klahr, Tara, Jenny, Rachel, Scott, Crystal, and Michele. Committee offered volunteers for this year’s TIOC subcommittee: Tara, Michele, Scott, Kris, Chris (auction), Sara, Rosie (in terms of membership), and Jenny.

Jessica reported that *Northern Kentucky Taking Root (NKY Taking Root)* has been working on a master tree board list (Lorna and Michele created) compiling tree boards in our region. The tree board list will be used as a networking tool, members of NKY Taking Root will attend meetings of local Tree Boards. Crystal proposed that the GIS Committee should also be connecting with tree boards to present the Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) assessment. Discussion amongst the Committee about the most logical way to disseminate the UTC information to probable interested parties in the region. Jessica suggested detailing the services and programs the Council has to offer to the local tree boards through a general letter. Jessica also explained that NKY Taking Root has two copies of the Tree in Trouble documentary for the Council’s use and suggests getting schools engaged. Jessica presented that she has contacted Planning and Development Services of Kenton County (PDS) to get a list of cities with the least amount of tree canopy and use that list to plan events/showings of the documentary, also targeting those cities with Make a Difference Day (MAD) planting events. Jessica also submitted that NKY Taking Root meetings are quarterly, future meetings are scheduled for August 11th & November 10th at 6:30pm at the Planning and Development Services of Kenton County 2332 Royal Drive, Fort Mitchell, KY 41017

Crystal presented that Mike Klahr will be retiring in September and will need someone to volunteer to take over his role in the *Arborist Certification Program* that the Council supports. Kris agreed to take over this role. Crystal reported that there is a recent applicant – Matt Wessel. Crystal stated that Matt Wessel’s application is on Dropbox. Committee member suggested that an Arborist review team be created to assess applicants and promote the certification offered by the Council. Crystal requested that the Committee think of ways that we can promote the arborist certification program to those that would potentially be interested in utilizing the program. Kris advised that the applications be reviewed by the Committee to assure that all the criteria for certification is satisfied. Kris volunteered to follow up with Matt Wessel regarding his application. Sarah informed the group that there is also an arborist certification course offered in Frankfort, KY in June. Crystal indicated that we need to let the Kentucky Arborist Association (KAA) know when the Council approves an application so they will cover the training courses offered for the certification.

Sarah reported on some of the history of the Kentucky Urban Forestry Council (KUFC). Sarah explained that in the past KUFC, which is not a non-profit organization, but is an advisory board that determines how state funding is allocated with respect to grants, when the funding was no longer available the advisory board dissipated. There is an advisory board to KY Division of Forestry (KDF) which includes Crystal, Jenny, and Kris from our Committee. Sarah stated that the state apportioned \$35,000 in the form of a grant to Bill Fountain for his program which is a two-day training series held in October or November in several locations outside of the golden triangle (NKY, Louisville, and Lexington). Sarah expressed that Bill's training program will be a two day course geared toward green industry professionals, regular citizens, and council members and will focus on getting basic tree education to more regular people. Rosie raised the point that partnering with the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE) for this training would be beneficial.

4. Housekeeping

Crystal confirmed that the Council's President Bob White recently accepted a position in California and will be stepping down from his office for this new opportunity. Crystal congratulated Bob on his new position and Scott thanked Bob for all his hard work as President of the Council. Crystal affirmed that she is the acting President in Bob's stead and requested that nominations be made for Vice President (VP) to fill her vacated office. Crystal asks that nominations for VP be sent to her prior to the next Committee meeting. Rachel was nominated by a Committee member. Rachel reminded the Committee if she were to take on the role of VP she would no longer be able to be the Council treasurer. Committee discussion regarding the pros and cons of Rachel's nomination and possible stepping down as Treasurer if she accepted the VP office.

Crystal explained to the Committee that recently the Council's Dropbox account has been giving some Committee members issues in terms of not being able to upload documents, photos, etc. due to being over personal storage limits. Crystal expressed the need to look into possible solutions to the issue. Tara stated that she has been looking into other viable options for storage – Dropbox Pro, Box.org, etc. Tara requests that people offer any other ideas for storage that they might have used. Tara request Committee approval to look into other storage options and present at the next meeting.

Crystal requests that the Committee consider allowing Tara to create a Council specific Gmail account in order to send out meeting reminders/invites, meeting minutes, and other Council/Committee announcements. Committee approved. Tara confirmed that she will create a Council Gmail account and set up meeting reminders via Google calendar for all upcoming meeting dates.

Crystal declared the need to confirm Committee meeting times, at the last meeting it was discussed to make Committee meetings the 2nd Thursday of every month but Crystal explained that it would interfere with the NKY Taking Root quarterly meeting. Committee decided to have the Committee meetings the 2nd Tuesday of every month as to not interfere with NKY Taking Root meetings. Crystal explained that she sent out a survey to the Committee asking for members to weigh in on separating Steering Committee meetings from regular business meetings. Committee consensus to keep the meetings combined and not have separate meetings. Mathew questioned the Committee about meeting time in terms of evening meetings vs. afternoon meetings. Mathew declared that he preferred afternoon meetings and would like to see the Committee go back to that. Crystal explained that afternoon meetings are not accommodating

to a lot of people interested in being on the Committee and involved with the Council. Crystal requested that the Committee approve meeting times to be the 2nd Tuesday of every month, except for July which is the second Thursday, and August which will be the 3rd Thursday – June 16th will be the next general (membership) meeting at Ammon's Nursery. Kris asked the Committee to think about what to do for the meeting and suggested that the Council consider buying meat to grill out for the members, may help to promote the event as well. Crystal requested that that Kris send out a Constant Contact email regarding the June 16th membership meeting with details and RSVP information.

5. Strategic Planning – Membership (Rosie Santos)

Crystal asked Rosie to take the floor and speak about membership which is one of the pillars of the Council's strategic planning. Rosie explained that a few years ago, as part of a college course, she did an extensive audit of the Council's membership in terms of an evaluation of current membership strategy and from that Rosie formulated suggestions on how to improve the Council's membership and organization. Rosie suggests that the Committee should consider having a membership-at-large based plan similar to the KAEE. Rosie elaborated on what a membership-at-large plan would entail. Rosie suggested that the Committee ponder the questions: Who are your members? and Who do you want as members? Committee members state that currently membership includes professionals, municipal workers, parks employees, etc. Committee discussion on what types of members would be ideal in the future: laypeople, regular citizens, community oriented people, etc. Rachel mentioned that the Kentucky Roots signs have made a big impact in terms of getting the word out about the Council. Rosie proposed thinking about the current programs that the Council offers and digging into if those programs attract the membership that the Committee would like to have in the future. Scott reminded the Committee that targets are defined in the mission statement in terms of stating who we are trying to serve in the community. Rosie advocated for a pyramidal approach – Steering Committee being the top of the pyramid, then chairs of associated Council programs, Program sub-committee chairs, then the community at the base of the pyramid. In this model, people can work from the base of the pyramid up to the top. Rosie pointed out that the Committee members at the table today are here because they were nominated by officers to be a part of the Committee, so it is a privilege.

Rosie submitted that she was happy to work up a draft membership model for the Committee's review. Rosie presented that there needs to be a defined way to be a member of the Council and perks to being a member. Bob suggested membership dues being a part of the membership model. Rachel put forward paying to become a Council member, a \$10 fee was submitted as an example, and many Committee members agreed that was a fair amount. Rachel reminded the Committee that charging members would require management of those fees by the Council Treasurer which has both time and technological considerations. Rosie advised using the KAEE's structure as a template for the Council.

Committee discussion regarding Rosie's suggestions on the membership model. Kris reminded the Committee that the Strategic Planning is completed and we need to be moving forward on the ideas that were brought up as part of the planning and Rosie's suggestions. Rosie reiterated defining the levels of the Council is pivotal for Council structure. Rosie requests that the Committee vote on approving her to draft a simple, one page document of recommendations based on her formerly researched and written paper regarding Council membership to present to the Committee. Crystal motions to approve Rosie's request to draft a membership document for Committee review, Committee approved, no opposed. Rosie

explained that the document will contain general range of membership fees, programs, organizational needs, volunteer coordinator, volunteer orientation, code of conduct (tweaking the existing Council document), review of by-laws, etc. Sarah stated that there are already some of these documents that Rosie could review. Rosie asserted that as an example of the underlying disconnect of the Council, if these documents already existed, why were they not presented to her when the task of assessing membership was assigned. General Committee discussion about membership thoughts and inclusion of existing Council documents.

6. Next Committee Meeting

Crystal reminded the Committee that the next member (general) meeting will be on June 16th, and the next Committee meeting will be July 14th.

Crystal requested that Committee members bring up any other issues needing to be discussed. No Committee members interjected any further business. Crystal called meeting adjourned.