

Meeting: NKUCFC Steering Committee

Date: October 11, 2016

Location: Mellow Mushroom, Towne Drive, Wilder, KY

Chairperson: Crystal Courtney

Secretary: Tara Sturgill

In Attendance: Lorna Harrell, Jessica Spencer, Kris Stone, Michele Stanton, Sarah Gracey, Tara Sturgill, Crystal Courtney, Mathew Frantz

1. Reading and Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 9, 2016

Crystal asked the Steering Committee (the Committee) for edits to the meeting minutes from September. Lorna offered edits to the minutes that she found. Matt motioned to approve minutes with Lorna's edits. Jessica seconded. All approved.

2. Program Reporting

Jessica reported that the *Reforest Northern Kentucky* (RNKY) met last Tuesday at the St. Anne's Site that is a potential 2017 RNKY event site for Campbell County. Due to some issues with site preparation the Committee decided to continue the search for a more fitting RNKY site for 2017 and at Mark Leopold's suggestion open up the site search to Kenton and Boone Counties. Michele mentioned she may have a site possibility to offer. Jessica explained that the RNKY Committee had already decided to hold the event in Boone County at a site formerly known as the Piner Property, north of Big Bone Lick State Park (BBLSP). Jessica submitted that the NKY University Center for Environmental Restoration (CER) has offered to allow the stream restoration site as the 2017 RNKY site – the stream construction will be completed prior to the March 25th event date and it will be prepped and ready for planting without any financial or physical effort on the part of the RNKY Committee in terms of site preparation (mowing, herbicide application, etc.)

Jessica explained that the RNKY Committee is approaching this year with a fresh look in terms of changing up the program to fit the needs of the community via some of the feedback we received during registration and/or post-event surveys of volunteers. Jessica put forth the issue with tshirts in the past and that the RNKY Committee is considering doing away with free event tshirts in-lieu of other options that are to be determined, though a reusable tote bag has been offered as an alternative to tshirts, while there is also the potential to brand the RNKY logo and offer a tshirt for sale. Crystal interjected that there is the potential to brand the RNKY logo and the NKY Urban and Community Council's (the Council) logo in one fell swoop.

Mathew reported that the *GIS Committee* has a meeting on the 25th at PDS, which also includes Chris Kaeff and Kyle Snyder, to discuss the basic framework of where the GIS Committee is going in the future, basically a strategic planning meeting. Mathew reported that DJ Scully found funds in Boone County to help with a pilot program and he is ready to move forward, though the city has yet to be determined. Mathew explained that the GIS Committee chairs plan to meeting and discuss the potential for the use of these funds and the program as a whole and then have a large group meeting to discuss.

Crystal inquired if the GIS Committee will be utilizing the Council's overall Strategic Plan. Mathew explained that it is hard to move the GIS Committee forward until the Committee (Steering) figures out a solution and implements the final chapter of the Strategic Plan. Mathew clarified that the meeting they will be having is to discuss what the GIS Committee can potentially do given the guidelines of the Council's Strategic Plan.

Kris reported that he looked into registration numbers for the ***Trees In Our Community Forum*** (TIOC) as part of his duties and said they were rather low for this close to the event. Sarah asked if the speaker and award-recipients have been registered. Crystal explained that no one has been assigned that task yet to inform the award-recipients that they were chosen to accept an award. Kris said he will notify the award-recipients once final decisions are made and Crystal will be ordering the award plaques. Kris clarified that an access code is emailed to the award-recipients that allows them and guests to register for free for the TIOC Forum. Sarah suggested it might make it easier for the award-recipients if they provide information and Kris registers them. Kris stated that with all he is required to do for the Boone County Arboretum's (Arboretum) Autumn Affair he would prefer not to have to keep track of registering award-recipients.

Michele asked about the auction items for the TIOC silent auction, specifically if there is a type of donation we are asking for this year. Tara explained that no, any donation is welcome but we always say that anything tree or forest related is a bonus. Michele asked if anyone on the TIOC Committee has contacted local nurseries for potential donations. Kris said he has already asked all of his local nurseries for donation for the Arboretum's Autumn Affair and will donate any unsold plants/trees to the TIOC silent auction. Kris interjected that he had not contacted Fort Thomas Nursery or Rolling Hills Nursery. Michele committed to call Kenton County Nurseries for silent auction donations. Kris said it is important when requesting donations from nurseries to stipulate that the donation plant materials need to be able to fit into a car. Sarah asked if there is any plans to pass out a flyer or something similar to the guests at the Autumn Affair announcing the TIOC Forum. Kris interjected that he planned on announcing the TIOC information at the event live. Crystal suggested that if Sarah could come up with a small "mini" flyer with TIOC information she (Crystal) could print it and get to the Kris in time for the Autumn Affair.

Michele reported that Boone County is the locale for the 2017 ***Public Workers Tree Seminar***. Crystal also reminded the Committee that Mike Khlar's position has not been filled since his retirement but people are covering his tasks, mostly Kris – more information is to come in terms of what next years' seminar will look like. Crystal asked Michele to reach out to the extension agents in Boone County for help and also Gina Ligon. Michele said the date is not set yet, but it will be the second week of March.

Tara had to leave for her daughter's fall band concert. Jessica began taking minutes upon Tara's departure.

Public Workers Tree Seminar continued...

Public Worker's Seminar for next year should be in Boone, but it's only 4 months away and there's no replacement for Mike yet (probably not until January). So Michele will work with Jerry to get things started since he has the authority to approve Boone County hosting without a replacement for Mike.

Maybe have it at the enrichment center and add pesticide credits in order to get more attendance. But then the next years in different counties there might not be a facility big enough to host that many people for the seminar. Michele confirmed

Taking Root Make A Difference Day October 22nd update by Lorna, Plantings include: Covington in Westside to replace the trees that were damaged, the Fort Thomas tree planting at Tower Park for a Mary Kathryn Dickerson memorial grove, but the city said they may not allow the large sign for her now. Lastly there is a planting at Pioneer Park off 17 to add to the 25 trees planted on October 6th. The other set back is the volunteer waiver which Matt said needs to be filled out in advance. Jessica to send event details to Michele for distribution via listserv and then check in with Joe about whether a background check is needed for volunteers on the 29th. The next meeting is November 11th at PDS. Taking Root NKY is helping Summit View Academy in Independence with a tree planting on their grounds Saturday October 29th in the morning. They're having students teachers and parents plant but could use some experienced tree planters demonstrate proper technique. I verified that volunteers do not need to go through a background check to participate! Hoping for 2-3 folks in addition to myself. Contact Jessica if you can help.

Strategic Planning

Crystal thinks the next meeting should be focused on where we're at and what needs to be done next; a cookbook of how to do all the programming. Sarah suggested working one evening at an office would be better since there would be less distractions. Matt asked how we decided to start having evening meetings and modeling what the Boone County Arboretum has done. We revisited the events that led to it including the lack of new blood and the need for some members to justify the meetings to their boss. Kris added also, big funders need to have a board to meet with before they'll take us seriously and know we have the capacity to grow. Crystal added the same people were getting exhausted doing all the work year after year without any rotation of duties to new folks. The consensus was that a quarterly meeting during the day would keep the other professionals engaged. Perhaps starting at 2pm would be better than folks heading back to work to kill 45 minutes after a noon meeting. Lorna suggested a retreat for developing a strategic plan. We did have that one time at Scott's house and it went well which kicked off the current direction. Kris warned that we struggle with retaining new blood. For example the Newport tree walk had 50 people but there's nothing to keep them engaged. Matt said there were a lot of benefits to the daytime meetings and keeping the extension agents involved.

Crystal recapped what we've accomplished this year but points out what we still have to tackle is the organizational structure. Matt stressed the importance of having regular member meetings for the larger organization, at least one a quarter. In terms of members Kris said it's important for members to feel they are a part of the organization and people value something more when they contribute money to it. Matt agrees with all of that, but asks what benefits the members would get through the Council. Kris said those benefits would need to be developed by talking to nurseries etc. Kris said the first step is developing a strong strategic plan is the first step so that we can get paid staff to have volunteer coordinators etc. Lorie has been doing this for 30 years and knows exactly what you have to do as a non-profit to be successful. Michele asked what the arboretum does to provide members benefits, Kris: discounts and first invitations for things, classes are for free, events discounted. Michele said for example could be a city membership

where all the staff could get in for half price. Rosie has already provided direction for the membership next steps, but she can not serve as a committee chair. Kris suggested we start with a wish list and start putting names with positions. Sarah suggested sending out a doodle poll via constant contact about finding the best meeting date and time for 2017. Lorna recommended including it in the survey that is scheduled to go out after TIOC. Crystal suggested even asking which types of meetings they would be interested in attending. Lorna recommended having a strong core, but reaching out to the larger group for projects rather than meetings, which is what Michele phrased as a “defined contribution”.

Lorna suggested some time after Thanksgiving we meet to come up with a game plan for the next 6 months of 2017. The next meeting is November 18th. Matt restated that alternating the types of meetings is the best recipe for keeping all types of members engaged. Obviously identifying corporate partners would be a move in the right direction. Matt suggested we recruit for sponsorship committee members at fun meetings. Scott has offered before to host a retreat (aka 2-3 hour meeting), Matt offered as well since they will be closing on their house in Ohio soon. There is plenty of parking and he has a pool. We also need to have an official board meeting before the year ends as part of our non-profit status. First part of December would be best, possibly Saturday December 3rd or 10th as the latest dates. We’ll put the two dates out to the steering committee to decide which date is the best. We would not have a November meeting then.

Matt moved to adjourn the meeting and Michele seconded. 7:40pm