

## Illinois Forestry Development Council Meeting

**Location:** NRCS State Office, 2118 West Park Crt., Champaign, IL 61821

**Date:** August 11, 2016

**Attendees:** Bill Gradle, Director (IFDC), Jim Zaczek (SIUC), Karla Gage (SIUC), Mike McMahan (IFA), Heath Hagy (IL TWS), Paul Deizman (SAF/IDNR), Mike Brunk (Urban Forester-Urbana), Chris Whittom (IDNR), Jay Hayek (UI), Terry Davis (Guest), Elliot Legacy (IDOA), Wade Conn (NRCS), Ray Bailey (Woodland), Lydia Scott (Guest-Morton Arboretum), Patti Cludray, Recorder (SIUC)

- **CALL to ORDER:** 10:10 a.m. - The August meeting of the IFDC was called to order and members were welcomed by IFDC Chair, Jim Zaczek.
- Bill Gradle distributed the minutes of the IFDC meeting held May 12, 2016. Minutes were reviewed and discussed by committee members.
- **MOTION:** Jay Hayek, made a motion to approve minutes as written; seconded by Paul Deizman; Motion carried.
- **AGENDA ITEM:** IDNR Update – presented by Chris Whittom
  - New agreement between SIU/DNR: The IFDC FY17 budget of \$118,500 has been initially approved and contract has been submitted and is in process – procurement to SIUC for signatures and then back to State. There is approximate 2 week signature time once back from SIU, then monies will be available.
    - 3 year contract in the amount of \$240,000; \$38,000 to work with for proposals.
    - Any contract deliverables to be charged to the amount distributed through the stop-gap budget must be completed and invoiced prior to the end of December.
  - Budget Impacts: Chris was asked by Wade Conn if there has been any discussion at the DNR about Cost Share. Chris reported that there is no provision for Cost Share in the stop-gap budget; agencies now working with general revenue funds. Member discussion of this issue followed with no real ideas for how the IFDC could help resolve this issue. Jay Hayek suggested that the efforts of the IFA and other affiliates may help. Wade Conn did remind members that the IFDC needs to remain non-political as much as possible. Elliot Legacy questioned whether or not there was any report on how much of the 4% has been distributed. Paul Deizman offered that no real report is available but there are records available, and reminded members that approximately 75% of landowners are not in cost share management. He added that the likelihood of a Cost Share comeback is good. Jim Zaczek thanked Chris Whittom for the DNR update.
  - Update given on IFDC member, Tom Wilson, who typically gives the IDNR update. Tom has gone to serve with fire dispatch leading a group from the Division of Forestry to Boise, ID.
- **AGENDA ITEM:** IFDC Plan of Work:
  - Discussion opened by Jim Zaczek- Members were given proposed IFDC Plan of Work for FY 17 and Plan was open for discussion focusing on 1 or 2 objectives at this time. Bill Gradle suggested that the council members discuss the 2 items of focus, Silviculture Manual and the Forestry Summit.
  - Plan of Work/RE: Silviculture manual – It is complete but the IFDC did not have to pay for this, cost borne by IDNR. It is presented as a public document and will be posted on the website. Wade Conn questioned if the manual would lend itself to printing; Paul Deizman only if there could be a targeted plan for who it would be printed for. Chris Whittom questioned if this type of publication really needed to be printed anymore. This manual will be sent electronically to anyone who wants it. Bill Gradle asked if the IFDC would want to

have the manual printed.

- **MOTION:** Paul Deizman made a motion that the IFDC find out how much it would cost to have 500 full-color copies of the manual printed. Wade Conn seconded the motion. Motion carried. Patti will check with SIUC Printing and Duplicating to find out how much it would cost to have manual printed/ full color/spiral bound.
  - Plan of Work: Further Discussion: Question was raised regarding availability of funding to make payments for budgeted items and other items like copies of the Silvics manual through the SIUC/IFDC grant funding after stop-gap budget passed. Bill: basically we had FY 16 money for 1 day – not a re-appropriation. Stop-gap budget SIU/IFDC grant funding for FY 17 in the amount of \$38,000 must be expended by December 31, 2016.
    - Mike McMahan asked if money would be available for grant proposals; indicating that Phase 2 or the IFA proposal as previously presented to the IFDC could be completed by the end of the year. Jim Zaczek suggested that specific proposals should not be discussed that this time and that the Council should get back to discussion of the Plan of Work. Mike agreed and discussion returned to Plan of Work.
    - Overall membership agrees that our Plan of Work should carry the mission of the IFDC. Jay points out that it should be focused and that IFDC should continue to reach out to our partners for proposals that can help us meet our Plan goals. Focusing on and having partners who help us meet those goals, collecting wisdom from outside the IFDC. Question is raised, should the IFDC be requesting proposals with no guarantee of funding? Wade believes that the IFDC Plan of Work goals should strive to make things better for Illinois's forest industry and landowners.
    - How does IFDC -Plan of Work for FY17 coordinate with Long Range Plan (LRP)? Regarding the LRP it was decided that this action should wait for the Forest Action Plan (FAP) to be finalized. Paul noted that the FAP (draft) is both an assessment and action plan and suggests that the IFDC goals and objectives should be included in the FAP if they are not addressed in it already. Mike McMahan suggests that when considering projected goals, the door should be kept open for urban forestry projects.
- Discussion turned from Plan of Work to Council membership and open member positions as it is important the council have enough voting members for a quorum. Jay Hayek reminded council that Bill has been having a hard time getting members approved and that this has been a problem as it is a low priority with the State. This may be in part because the IFDC and the work it does is not well known. Jim Zaczek asked about the open IFDC seats. Bill noted that 2 positions are in the works with 1 more available (with name submitted: a landowner involved in farming). Regarding the IFDC legislative positions, there are 4; 2 from the majority and 2 from the minority, in addition the Governor names one member, who represents him. Bill notes that unfortunately, people have not been interested in serving as members of the Council. Wade notes that the IFDC meetings are open and posted on the website and that a quorum is based on active members.
- Discussion returns to Plan of Work.
  - Question is raised by Jay whether the Council has had a formal Plan of Work in the past and if the IFDC is really working from a Plan of Work. It is noted that the most recent Plan of Work that is posted on the website is from 2000-2002, however, it is noted that part of the website has not been updated for a long time. Jim Zaczek answers Jay's question noting that the Council has some direction in general however there is no formal Plan currently. Elliot, notes, in general that you should have a Plan if just to justify your existence as an organization.

- Paul notes that the Council's plan must be married to the FAP and adds that the IFDC exists because of State statutes and that the goals of the council are incorporated into the FAP, therefore the goal of finalizing the FAP is a priority. Jay puts forward shouldn't there be 2 different plans,
- Jim reminds members that IFDC represents more than just the state and that we need to work together with stakeholders. A goal of IFDC has always been the awarding of grants for submitted proposals, however, does the Council have time to offer a new call for proposals or should we reach out to those who previously submitted proposals.
- Bill questions if the IFDC Plan of Work for FY 17 should include things that are in cue already or new/other things we need to do. Paul suggests that members should focus efforts and leave the meeting with a Plan of Work, Jim adds that thinks there should at least be a list of action items.
- Plan of Work. RE: Forestry Summit. Bill questions if members still want to do a Summit. Discussion regarding the possibility and feasibility of a summit ensued:
  - Questions were raised regarding Summit design. Bill noted that typically they last 2 full days with speakers; breakout groups; possible tours. Jay suggests that a Summit may help focus the IFDC; Mike Brunk wonders if the Summit could be planned around the state fair. It is suggested that the cost of a Forestry Summit could be well over \$20,000. Lydia offers that Morton Arboretum could help administer and coordinate events, however since the Arboretum is so far North there would be worry that southern IL would not attend.
  - Question is raised, about the goal of the Forestry Summit. Bill suggests the need to speak with the Forestry community to find out what is of importance. Mike suggests that there may be an advantage of looking at past Summit Reports, since a Summit is a major undertaking and it would be advisable to know what has worked in the past. Wade questions if the Summit should be based on the IFDC Plan of Work; then the goals could become topics of the Summit, or if it could be more focused on the FAP using the top 5 or 7 as topics of discussion; it is noted that the Summit would be a great way to get the FAP in front of people. There could be one speaker/facilitator per topic discussing in a round table format. Karla Gage notes that the Forestry Summit format sounds much like the Vital Land Summit and suggests that the Grand Victoria Foundation may be able to help with funding. To apply for this funding a grant proposal must be submitted – the FAP may be within their goals.
- Jim Zaczek suggested bringing discussion of IFDC Plan of Work to a close, adding that perhaps a dedicated discussion focused on coordinating the Plan with the FAP may be in order. Mike agrees that it appears that the Council is not ready to complete a Plan of Work until the FAP is finalized and that members could better focus on the Plan at another meeting. Jay Hayek voices a concern that the Council is getting in a rut of being re-active and needs to be more pro-active.
- Bill questions if the Council members want to meet next month, September 18<sup>th</sup> to continue this topic. Council membership agrees to meeting in Sept. Paul will get a draft of the FAP out to all members before next meeting.
- Jim suggests that for future planning; at the last IFDC meeting of the fiscal year the Plan of Action should be reviewed/discussed/updated.
- Karla questions if members should also consider grant proposals at the next meeting – if not a Summit.
- **MOTION:** Wade Conn makes a motion that in addition to discussion of the Plan of Work; members review existing proposals making funding determination of spending of FY 17 budget

withholding a portion to fund other efforts at the September meeting. Call for discussion:

- Many feel the need for clarification on proposals, should they look at only those previously submitted FY16 or new ones. If council wants to look at new proposals then those who have previously submitted proposals need to be contacted to determine if they are still interested; Terry Davis adds that he thinks that existing proposals should have priority, if they will provide a revised proposal and if they can meet the December 31, 2016 deadline; Karla questions, should preference really be given to previously submitted proposals; Heath notes that sometimes agencies have zero control over when things get billed; so the invoiced and billed before December 31, may be difficult even though a project is finished.
- Motion on floor is revised and, that a Request for Proposals “RPF” should be prepared and distributed designating two groups; Group 1 for proposals for which projects can be completed and invoiced by December 20, 2016 and Group 2 for proposals for projects which can be completed and invoices by June 20, 2017. Awards being subject to the availability of funding and decision of the IFDC voting members. Motion seconded by Chris Whittom. Jim Zaczek called for discussion:

- Discussion ensued regarding amount of funding which may be available; right now looks like some funding will need to be spent by December; should get clarification before RFP goes out whether there will be a need for two groups; maximum amount of proposals should stay \$5,000 or under as in the past. Paul notes that this motion does not address whether or not proposals will be accepted today. Members discuss and agree that previously submitted proposals should be resubmitted under new RFP. Jay Hayek will post the RFP to the website based on previous RPF language; there will be a very short turn around if council to review these at September meeting; details of RFP deadlines will be worked out through email.
- Jim Zaczek called for vote on motion if no further discussion. Motion carried with 2 abstentions (Elliot Legacy and Mike McMahon).

- 12:30 p.m. Meeting of the IFDC adjourned for Lunch. Jimmie John's provided by the IFDC. Meeting convened at 1:10 p.m.

- **AGENDA ITEM:** Legislative Update: Provided by Jay Hayek
  - SB 3289 (WTCA) Wrongful Tree Cut Act
  - SB 2587 (DNR Fee) to enroll in Forestry Development Act
  - SB 0179 (Nursery Sales) Sell Nursery Stock to private landowners<sup>4</sup>

All bills were referred to the Rules Committee; could be revisited in April or May.

None of the bills made it, so they are technically dead. However they could be resurrected at another time.

- **AGENDA ITEM:** Planned October Activities: Update by Lydia Scott (Morton Arboretum)
  - Lydia provided information on how to get your organization/group signed up for OAKTOBER. Last year 83 signed up.
  - There is a new logo available for OAKTOBER if anyone would like the new logo and information, please take a thumb-drive provided by Lydia.
  - If you have any promotional ideas, please let Lydia know.
- Jim Zaczek: The Council thanks Lydia for provided an update on activities.
- **AGENDA ITEM:** Oak, Hickory Improvement Project: Update by Bill Gradle
  - Discussion: The project will focus on four target areas, covering 37 counties in the State and

representing 1.1 million acres of oak-hickory forest type, about half of the remaining ecosystem. We are working with NRCS on a Memorandum of Understanding to get program off the ground however this is still in D.C. Ranking criteria is in place, but have been told to slow down. Right now, sign-up is slated to start January 2017. This will give producers more time to get plans in order. Even with state delay there is 5 million in place up front for 5 years. The 5 year period will start in 2017. With the 5 million obligation plans can be funded. Hoping to get as many Forest Management Plans out there as possible.

- Questions: Wade Conn: Money is available for 5 years right? When the money is allocated does it come off the books or does it stay there until contract is in place. Bill: Finalization is progressing but it is unfortunately hurry up and wait for final details.
- Jim: Thanks to Bill for all his efforts on behalf of the IFDC and for this update.

- **AGENDA ITEM:** Committee Reports Stewardship/Forest Legacy and Urban Committee

- Stewardship/Forest Legacy report presented by Chris Whittom
  - Administrative Rules: After many revisions the b-base proposal is submitted to JCAR (the Joint Committee for Administrative Rules) but have not heard anything; after a month. This is typically a long process; after JCAR it will go up on a 1<sup>st</sup> notice of review. DNR-Forestry must give 45 days for comments; committee must address any questions-thoughts-complaints raised. After that it will go through a 2<sup>nd</sup> notice of review then it is available for 45 days to the public for comments.
  - Process of getting new d-base up and running. Last year the Department of Revenue (DOR) was not happy and DNR-Forestry was in the hot seat for a while, but actually the complaints of the Dept. of Rev resulted in the implementation of a good change which was the new data-base. The old data-base is being transformed. The hope is that the new data-base will make posting to members easier and quicker. Things will now be sent electronically to the Department of Revenue, no paper. The DOR is now pleased with DNR-Forestry and they have a much improved relationship.
  - Controlled clean-up of data that is in the Data-Base is needed. For example, Chris has identified a lot of “do not sends” by landowners; and, many have been forgotten, which in turn causes certifications to be out of date. Many may not even be owned by the original participant. This concludes Chris's report.
- Urban Committee report presented by Mike Brunk.
  - Group is focused; ½ on the Forest Management Plan: Providing input on updates to the urban portion of that plan. Excited to see the new plan. ½ on the new DNR Urban site. If you have not seen it yet, it is much more visual. Reinee has been busy updating, you should check it out. IFDC is linked listing goals and upcoming events. There is a video page with a gallery of very interesting How to Videos: of special interest to the IFDC may be the *Wood Utilization* section.
- Jim Zaczek offers the Council's thanks Chris and Mike for their reports.

- **AGENDA ITEM:** Website hosting billing for FY 2017 presented by Bill Gradle.

- Received bill from UI for \$475.00. There was no bill for FY16 due to budget issues, because of which they did not submit an invoice. A motion must be made to UI to pay the bill for hosting.

- **MOTION:** Paul Deizman made a motion to pay the bill from UI for website hosting. Seconded by Wade Conn. Motion carried.

- **AGENDA ITEM:** Illinois Forest Action Plan Update (FAP) presented by Paul Deizman.

- The Urban Committee is still working very hard on 2 major sections of the plan which are very important. It has been synthesized into 2 good documents.
- The rural side has been a little slower. District foresters and the IFDC committee comments

- have been received which Paul will send out. Now looking for more input critiques for the rural side – will be looking for aid. Would like this to be on the IFDC agenda to look at a more polished document. Rules need to be more uniform and parallel.
  - Next release: the next version approved by the council will be available for public review. Then after any other comments/edits are made the FAP will be sent forward
  - Paul will send comments and suggestions to the IFDC membership. Will continue to coordinate with IFDC and c committees.
- Jim Zaczek offers the Council's thanks Paul for this report.
- **AGENDA ITEM: Other Business**
  - Discussion was opened on the matter of proposals that were brought to the IFDC meeting today.
    - Paul brought 2 proposals with him today. Was not sure the Council would discuss them today, but they are the 1. The Ginseng Conservation Program of the IDNR. \$2,500 is being requested for the purchase of sample cards to complete the survey; the DNA cards will be used to collect genetic data from 30-40 ginseng populations in IL. 2. Updating of the TIGER Inventory software to mimic ifidap classes for inventory trees and attributes and mimic the output of ifidap.
    - Council members briefly reviewed these proposals and Paul answered a variety of questions about the proposals. In particular if these proposals should be considered pre-submissions for the FY17 - RFP or if funding is needed right away. Paul indicated that funding for the Ginseng Program is needed right away as the work is to begin immediately in August. Wade and Jay both voice that giving funding for proposals may be conceived as setting a precedent for the future that would not be fair or in keeping with the way the council has funded proposals.
    - Paul also brought up a proposal for Reinee Hildebrandt, who was present at the meeting. This proposal references an amount of up to \$10,000 to be spent on famous historical tree arboretum. Chris along with other members think that this as well as the other proposals should be submitted as part of the new RFP.
    - Paul reminded members of the proposal that Mike had spoken to the council about earlier in the meeting; IFA Phase – 2 the newsletter. Council members discussed this proposal there was a suggestion that perhaps Phase 2 may be accomplished quicker by going through the DNR; the council encourages Mike to go back to the IFA with a request that this proposal be brought back to the IFDC as a resubmission under the new RFP.
  - Jim Zaczek called for any other business; there was none. The next meeting of the IFDC will be held on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016; details of the RFP will be determined via email; the IFDC meetings will get back on track with the Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.
  - **MOTION:** Jay Hayek made a motion to adjourn, motion is seconded by Elliot Legacy. Motion carried.
  - The August 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council is ADJOURNED.