

Illinois Forestry Development Council – Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2017

Location: USDA Service Center Conference Room, Champaign, IL

Attendees: Bill Gradle, Director (IFDC), Jim Zaczek (SIUC), Reinee Hildebrandt (IDNR), Chris Whittom (IDNR), Jay Hayek (UofI), Steve Ludwig, Wade Conn (NRCS), Roy Bailey (Tree Farmer/Contractor), Mike Brunk (Urban), Kurt Bobsin (TreeFarm), John Edgington (IFA), Stan Curtis (Forest Products), Tom Wilson (IDNR), Mike McMahan (IFA), Ray Herman (AISWCD), Rob Sproule, (IAA Oakpark), Patti Cludray, Recorder (SIUC)

Call to Order: 10:35 – The January 12, 2017 meeting of the IFDC was called to order and members were welcomed and asked to introduce themselves by IFDC Chair, Jim Zaczek.

- Bill Gradle distributed today's meeting agenda and the minutes of the IFDC meeting November 10, 2016. Minutes were reviewed and discussed by committee members.
- Errors were noted in November 10 Minutes attendee list: remove Tom Wilson, he was not in attendance and add Jay Hayek, who was in attendance. Patti acknowledged error, corrections will be made.
- **MOTION:** Ray Herman, made a motion to approve minutes as written with corrections; seconded by Tom Wilson; Motion carries.

AGENDA ITEMS

FY17 Funded Proposals Progress Reports Review: Bill distributed progress reports which have been received to-date for proposals for IFDC member review. Discussion and review of group followed.

- Ray Herman indicated that Tree Farm may not be done by deadline, Planting and Burning TSI will happen pretty quickly after mid-March. Group discussed the progress of the TIGER updates which received grant funding.

Discussion of publishing of the Revised Silvics Manual and updating other Council publications.

Jim Zaczek opened the discussion; quote from SIU printing and duplicating presented for review (500 = \$935.00; 1000 = \$1,789.94; 2000 = \$3,504.94 for stapled / add \$200 per 500 copies for coil with heavy cover).

- Group discussed the possibility of support for part of the cost of printing the Revised Silvics manual from other agencies as discussed at last meeting of the council.
 - Ray Herman talked with Tree Farm system about assisting with costs associated with publication of the manual, however, they think it is too techy for the general public so can offer no support.
 - Morton Arboretum would be willing to offer \$300 toward the cost of publication.
 - Jay Hayek makes observation that this manual is not something that every landowner would appreciate and we don't need to make a hard copy for every landowner.
 - Bill Gradle reminded members that the discussion at the last meeting had been that the Council would take care of the printing with the funding that is available.
 - John Edgington observed that the IFA was not asked to evaluate the revised Silvics manual, but he used the old manual and would support printing of a new manual.

- Bill noted that from what was discussed last week and what has been discussed today it seems to be the consensus of the Council that a hard-copy of the manual would be desired. What is needed is a motion to print these or not.
 - Questions were raised and discussed: Who is our target audience for this publication just some landowners? Discussion of this question/ landowners, timber buyers, forestry students, forestry professionals. How does this fit with the council's mission? Discussion of this question/ an important part of our mission is to provide technical support to those involved with forestry concerns.
 - Ray Herman questions how many printed manuals will be enough, 1000. Council discuss.
- **Motion:** Wade Conn makes motion to print 2000 manuals, 1000 stapled and 1000 coil bound, for a cost of approximately \$4,000.00 to be paid by the Council. Ray Herman seconds the motion. Further discussion; Jay Hayek suggests it would be good to add IFDC info/website to back of front cover; could include a short mission statement. Patti will check on putting IFDC information on back of front cover. Jim – asks for any further discussion, motion carries for the printing of the 2016 Revised Silviculture Manual.

Discussion of the purchasing of hats and other items. Jim asked that Patti present Council with information and quotes for printing of IFDC logo ball caps that she had been directed to research at last meeting.

- Council reviewed the cap styles, example quotes and discussed.
 - It was noted that caps are good promotional tools. Anything that promotes the organization would be great. Question is should we move ahead or just drop this. Well, people need to know about this group. In the past IFDC had embroidery work done on items that could be given out to supporters, etc.
 - **Motion.** Mike Brunk makes motion to have hats made in plain color with contrast stitching. Further discussion: How should caps look, some like the real-tree camo cap; how many caps are needed; if printing can be done of the back of the cap that may look good; do we need to check the cost of different location of print. Jim – asks for further discussion. Rob Sproule makes revised motion to have hats made, 50 plain/contrast color and 50 camo. Tom Wilson seconds motion. Motion carries. Bill Gradle, Council Director will work with Patti to proof caps and finalize ordering of the caps for the Council.

Lunch: 11:45a.m. – 12:40 p.m., Jimmy John's lunch is provided by IFDC.

AGENDA ITEMS (continued):

(Council will here Ray Herman's discussion after Tom gives IDNR Report)

- **IDNR Report:** Presented by Tom Wilson.
 - State Nursery: There is some good news the Governor has been looking at the State nursery staff lay-off list; New director recognizes the pollinator program has huge benefits. 100% of the credit goes to the director for saving the nursery.
 - CRP took the Governor's Chief of Staff on tours, i.e. Trail of Tears.
 - First time Director Rosenthal has been very supportive of forestry, it is encouraging
 - IDNR Positions: Conservation Officers - Good news here as well, there will be no layoffs; they did lose a couple of positions but overall not a lot. Going to allow to back-fill Kurt's old

Regional Forester position; Trying not to play favorites in house promotion; there was a net gain of 1. Some salaries will have to come out of the 4% timber tax; receipts are good. The 4% will not be used forever just until the state works through its timber problems. Everyone is waiting on a budget. Jay asks about any pending retirements. Tom, is not aware of any although some would probably retire if retirement package takes a hit.

- Stan questions – if budget is approved will 4% go back to cost-share. Tom, 2 million has been lost, 60%. If they get that back then the 4% will go back.
- Reinee asks – is there any real support for increased staff in the Forestry Division. Tom, yes all are on board, but need to find funding to do those hires.
- There is a senate bill giving the State Nursery the ability to charge fees. Jim asks – where will nurseries to charge fees which will help. Tom – back in 905. The Governor would like to see the Nursery self-supporting. Nursery is looking into getting setup to handle credit cards. Due to budget concerns trees weren't planted so going with 2 year old stock. Also, nurseries are working with pheasants forever and the NRCS is getting certified for the pollinator program. NRCS needs to certify stock weed-free process to certify seeds though.
- Ray Herman has several questions – CRP has large workload and the rumor is that FSA 1) may get money to implement practices by landowners. Are you the only one who does that? Tom- yes, are paid and also get help from other agencies (5 year contract). Several districts did nothing but plans however; now they need to get out there and certify. 2) Know we are shorthanded throughout the state and are they looking to push a statewide referendum, like Missouri. Tom-this has been floated several times, however, getting through the legislature is very different. 3) Where is the Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB). Tom-the IFB is supportive they will lobby if they know specifics and how it helps their membership. Ray – thinks the IFB is ready to act. Tom- Best way is for IFB to go to their members asking for support for forest issues, ask for specifics. They are a very professional organization who has main stream supporters.
- Roy Bailey asks about CRP; how are abstracts helping with county by county reenrollment? Tom-some are comfortable with this and others aren't as much.
- Jim Zaczek – is there any update on the \$2 license plate fee. Tom- this has not been settled yet. Looking at it as written it is interpreted as the money can only be used for streets/parking lots. The legislature is going to look at this. Kurt-that is why it was a problem making it constitutional. Thankfully no money has been taken. Tom- part of the reason it wasn't taken yet is that is was allocated for salaries right now. That is why allocation of 905 funding is so important.
- Kurt Bobsin asks about the TOT harvest. Tom- it is going well; money from harvest will go directly into the 905 and the original plan was that the money would in turn go back into the site. The plan is to expand this to all State forests; and, we do have the legal right to manage forests there. Question was there a problem with protestors. Tom – All did a fabulous job of promoting exactly what was going to be done and why it was good. People were invited to come out and look. Stan- still thought their would be problems but nothing came of it. Roy – back in the day everyone was angry about forest management. Tom – we are more inclusive now and work with the various groups – attitudes are changing, natural conservation is much more inclusive now.
- Discussion returns to Nursery pollinator program. The pollinator partnership is in good shape. With money that does come in the Nursery should be self-supporting without too much trouble. Jay – maybe the IFDC should send letter to Director Rosenthal for support of

the Nursery. Bill - will be happy to write letter but I think all members should send out hand-written notes thanking him personally. Bill will send Director Wayne Rosenthal's contact information to Patti to be included in these minutes.

Promoting Forest Resources – How? Discussion led by Ray Herman

- One month ago Ray sent letters to 5-6 professionals in various groups around the state discussing the fact that we need to coordinate action plans in our State. He received zero responses. Ray believes that here in IL we are struggling; need to get out on the land. We need to coordinate and he believes that the lead should be taken by the IFDC. Everyone here could make a coordinated effort. Ray presented the following points for discussion and consideration of the Council members.
 - Build a team. This group could provide technical assistance; who does that anymore, who gets out in the field?
 - Need to figure out a way to get more information out to the landowners.
 - Need to get the IFB involved with this group. In the IFB there are at least 100 forest landowners involved.
 - We need publicity to promote forest resources – IFB Farm Week would be a great way to get information out there. Providing a monthly article would be very beneficial.
 - Need an action plan to say to Springfield that we need to promote more activities to get the word out to landowners.
 - There are not enough Forest Management Plans in IL – 144,000 we have 10% and management plans are way too expensive. Need to make plans useful and easier to understand. When management plans are considered they look at what they have and what they can do with it. Part of the problem is that if landowners have no saw logs they do not have a plan, recreation usage is just as important.
- Group discusses some points presented.
 - There is always a lot of talk and no action, what is needed is leadership, action. Who needs to be involved to make this happen? Individual Groups don't have enough power; this needs to be a combined effort. Question may be, do we need to revisit the idea of holding a summit?
 - It is understood there are many landowners out there who need plans what would be the follow-up? TSP in the counties. Something to consider is that we need to find out who can do the work set out in the plans and then get that information out to the landowners. What it comes down to is getting plans in place and then making sure landowners know who can help them implement the plan. Need to figure out the best way to get this info to the landowners. What has been done in the past hasn't been working. There would be no problem in submitting another RCPP plan.
 - We can do a plan in the future, the challenge is immediate and that is implementation of management plans. That is what the workshops are for, there has to be a desire to complete the work, it has to be a good plan, cost-share is needed: if people are not vested in the management plan it is not going to get done. If it is a free plan, it seems they really don't care and are only in it for the tax break. Approx. 130,000 landowners don't have management plans and 54% of these landowners are outside of the farming community. It is a fact that most IFB members get the tax break; what is their official position statement and why isn't there IFB representation on this council? IFB members need to be made aware of the benefits of their forest land-woodlands.

- Need to develop some ideas about setting mandates for the Council to make a better bridge to IFB.
 - Kurt - Farm Week looks like a really good conduit. So we need an editorial team to provide regular content for the newsletter. This will be a good way to get information out and make a collaborative effort. Having a team would be a good way to assure productivity. Wade - Might be a good idea to meet with Farm Bureau and Farm Week editor. We need to be sure that Farm Week wants our articles and information in their newsletter.
 - John – Maybe we need to have a summit to discuss what we can and what we want to do. Lydia from Morton Arboretum offered to work on a summit. Membership not sure a summit could be done at this time. Perhaps individual council members could get more involved in their counties to work with landowners.
 - Jim- Getting back to the editorial group for Farm Week articles. Wasn't there already some Council members who were looking at articles for Farm Week? Yes, Rob Sproule, Kurt Bobsin, Jay Hayek and Wade Conn. Need to find out how many words are available for our articles. New articles don't necessarily need to be written, previously written articles could be submitted to Farm Week. It seems like it would be important to get to know what IFB members are dealing with so you can work with them to find out what kind of information would be important to them. Articles are a good way to get the IFDC name out there and inform a lot of people about forest land issues that are important to them. Wade – need to find out if an article runs in Farm Week do they restrict it's publication in other places. Steve- need to look at what will be the best way to get the editors of the different factions together. A big sharing group would be great. Drop-box – press release on drop box? Wade- agree that need to look at best ways to share.
 - Group agrees that Ray's main goal in presenting these items for discussion is to develop a relationship with IFB and engage them as a partner. Submitting an article for the Farm Week Newsletter may be the best way to begin. Ray – would like to see an IFB representative to sit at our table. Kurt- agrees that is a good idea but in reality that may take time; and that we need to let them know who the Council is and what we represent. Jim questions, does the IFB have a woodlot committee. Kurt-They have a natural resource team, they get-together once a year. Jim- perhaps the question is how do we get representation on that committee.
 - Ray will look into facilitation of submission of articles for Farm Week.
- Jim thanks Ray for this information on promotion of Forest Resources.

Committee Reports:

- **Stewardship Report** submitted by Chris Whitton, IDNR.
 - 2 years ago, 9 years had not been filed. Now all have been filed. This is important because it brings information up-to-date. Could not intelligently discuss all the problems until all the paperwork was filed.
 - Now the next steps will be.
 - Looking at renewal letters from 2013. District Foresters will have until April 23, 2017 to do updates and if these updates are not received then they will be canceled. Will be another year before renewal letters go out; it makes no sense to send out renewal letters to people; when they just get the renewal letters back due to bad information.

- Organizing filing with the database. This will help determine that the database matches the file copies – numbers will be assigned.
- Problems with the data base were ongoing for a long time, some of the District Foresters have tried to make progress in updating the database but others have not.
- It would be nice if cost-share were in place.
- Amendment rules for Forest Stewardship are in (1536 and 1537); now they have 45 days to review, date review is to be complete 2/15/17.
- IFDC membership discussion of report.
 - Jay-they will be gracious with extensions for filing. Question – are there any other groups willing to help with record cleanup? There is a problem with that paperwork comes through the District Foresters to Chris. The IL Department of Revenue is the only agency that could legally help with clarification/clean-up of the database. Chris – This database was supposed to be up and running a year ago, but due to IT problems it was unusable (it was sorted by casefile number so it could not be searched by last name). This had to be fixed. So not up yet but will be very soon.
- **Legacy Report** submitted by Chris Whittom.
 - No new updates at this time.
- Jim thanks Chris for these reports.
- **Urban Committee Report** submitted by Rob Sproule, IAA
 - Met last week with 14 present to discuss Strategic Plans. Presentation was given about committee and mission.
 - Update on Strategic Plan
 - Formalize member position on bi-laws for Council
 - Once Strategic Plan ready then may want to have summit on Urban Issues; looking for commitment.
 - Develop Annual Report to include with the IFDC Annual Report to the Legislature sometime in May.
 - If additional funding is needed by the committee they will let the Council know.
 - Bill is working on the 16-17 report. Kurt asks – who do you send the report into? Bill - Madigan, Cullerton, Radogno, etc. It will be included in the General Assembly Report. Law requires this report has to be done so-many days within the end of the fiscal year.
- Jim thanks Rob for this report.

Other Business -Group

- Going back to the idea of holding a Forestry Summit.
 - The Urban Committee would be interested in doing that summit as part of the Strategic Plan.
 - Need to discuss this further, determining where and when. Would it be a good idea to poll the IFDC membership on this (i.e. Doodle Poll).
 - Does the Council have enough money to pay for a summit, this FY/next?
 - Consensus is yes. Question - Bill, could you come up with some estimate of cost of holding a summit? Question - is the Council interested in the Urban Committee helping with this. Yes, the Urban Committee will work on this; the Council is supportive.
 - RCPP Press Release.

- January 20, 2017 committee will gather and rank proposals. They will see how the ranking goes, then will come back to Bill on March 17th with ranked proposals
- A joint press release will go out.
- Questions regarding award.
 - In early discussions 2 million had been mentioned, yet they are only releasing 725,000 for the first sign-up. Bill will talk with Greg. All the money is there, not sure why 700 thousand is there, this may be an arbitrary number. Need to have money in the system; sign-up continues.
 - Are park districts eligible to submit proposals? No, not unless they qualify for EQIP, without that eligibility you can't get funding. Can you have more than one cap in EQIP? You can only install one practice at a time; can have EQIP on different parcels.
- Jim Zaczek calls for any further discussion or other business, if not calls for motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Mike McMahan makes motion to adjourn; seconded by Ray Herman. Motion carries.

- The January meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council is adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Council will be held on March 9, 2017 at the Springfield, IDNR office.