

## Illinois Forestry Development Council – Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2019

With addition of APPENDIX I: IL Law  
(Illinois Forest Development Act/IFDC)

**Location:** NRCS – Conference Room, Champaign Field office, Champaign, Illinois

**Attendees:** Joe FitzSimmons, Temporary Chair (IFA), Eric Holzmueller (SIU), Ray Herman (AISWCD), Stan Curtis (Forest Industry), Katherine Janes (Representing Senator Barickman), Paul Deizman (IL DNR-Forestry), John Groninger (SIU), Roy Bailey (Tree Farmer, Forestry Tech), Jay Hayek (U of I), Chris Whittom (IDNR), Paul Deizman (IDNR), Dave Gillespie (SAF), Wade Conn (NRCS), Patti Cludray, Recorder (SIUC). By Phone: Jacob Stuckey (Illinois Finance Authority); Late Arrival by Phone: Rob Sproule (IAA); Late Arrival: Elliot Lagacy (IDOA),

**Call to Order:** 10:10 a.m. – Joe FitzSimmons, Temporary IFDC Chair welcomed members and guests.

**AGENDA ITEM: Minutes of the May 8, 2019** – Meeting Agenda and Minutes of May 8, 2019 meeting of the IFDC were presented to members by Recorder, Patti Cludray.

- Joe FitzSimmons, IFDC Temp Chair, indicated that the Council would be given time to review the minutes and the Council would move the Executive Director/Agreement renewal between SIUC and the IDNR up on the Agenda. Council agrees to this.

**AGENDA ITEM: Executive Director/Agreement renewal between SIUC and the IDNR** -- To open Council discussion on this item Joe Fitzsimmons reminds the Council of the 2 Proposals that were presented to the Council by SIU at the last meeting. In addition, per the May meeting, the Council was asked to submit their own proposals to the Council for consideration today as well, if there were any.

- Paul Deizman indicated that he has brought a 3<sup>rd</sup> Proposal with him today for Council consideration...
- Copies of each Proposals details are presented to the Council members and Joe gives a brief summary of each proposal.
  - Proposal 1: Basically a renewal of the SIU/IDNR –IFDC IGA for 3 years under the same agreement terms regarding hiring and funding of the Director position as a direct SIUC external hire; going through hiring process as required by SIU.
  - Proposal 2: New IGA between SIU/IDNR-IFDC in which the duties of the Director are completed by a current SIU faculty member for a lesser amount than was being paid to the Director in Proposal 1. The amount of pay for person in this position would be an amount equal to 2 months of faculty salary. (Eric Holzmueller has agreed to fill the position under the terms of this proposal)
  - Proposal 3: New IGA between SIU/IDNR-IFDC in which the duties of the Director would be filled by a person suggested by IDNR or agreed on by the IFDC membership. This Proposal would include a reduction in line-item costs and a lower Director salary.
- The Council discussed the differences in the proposals, and their concerns.
  - Chris W. questions, who would fill the position in each of these proposals. Proposal 1 would require an approval of the position through SIU human resources; advertisement of the position through SIU with the formation of a search committee to review candidate applications. Proposal would not require advertisement of the position as per the terms of the IGA the duties would be performed by a current Forestry faculty member (Eric Holzmueller). Proposal 3 would also require approval/posting of the position this would be done through the granting

agency, IDNR.

- Chris W. related a concern of Tom Gargrave in Proposal 2 both positions (Director and the Chair) would be filled by SIU faculty members. This concern was discussed;
  - ❖ Stan C., - noted that in the past the position of Chair has gone back and forth between SIU
  - ❖ The Chair does not go to SIU by default, however SIU has a Liaison on the Council. Dr. John Groninger (in attendance today) has agreed to serve in that position. The Chair will be selected by the Council. There is really nothing to say the SIU Liaison can't serve the Council as Chair; Jim Zaczek did this for years which included time when Bill was Director. Bill was hired through a search and he became an SIU employee on a term contract, he was not from SIU. In the past when University of Illinois managed the IFDC grant Dick Little was paid through them.
- Joe F, addresses the Council. When looking at these Proposal the Council needs to consider which Position will better serve the needs of the IFDC. In addition, is the Council ready to make a decision to go forward with one of these Proposals and do we have a quorum here today.
- Jay H. points out the differences in the proposals looking from a monetary perspective.
  - Proposal 1 would basically be an extension of the Director under the terms that Bill Gradle was hired. In that Proposal approximately 68% of the gross IFDC budget would be spent on the Director salary, fringe, with variable amounts for the other line items.
  - Proposal 2 would account for 51-55% of the gross IFDC budget, with Director Position duties and variable amounts for other line items.
  - Proposal 3 – would account for 45% of the gross IFDC budge with the Director Position and reduced amounts for other line items. Council members considers and discusses the proposals.
    - ❖ Is the Council even ready to make a decision on the Proposal; have they had enough time to review. Ray H., is there a Position description included with each Proposal? Yes for Proposal 1 and 2, but not for Proposal 3. Paul indicates that the duties would be similar in that Proposal, although they could be reviewed and changes made per the Council's direction.
    - ❖ Ray H., asks, did the Council achieve its goals with the current Director position. Paul D., - the Council was asked by Jim Zaczek for input (by email) on the Position Description when he began working toward renewal of the Directors position for the new IGA with IDNR (he and Tom G did present suggestions, some of which used), not sure if anyone else sent Jim suggestions. Question; who evaluates that the Director is fulfilling those duties? That evaluation would be up to the Chair and the Council members.
- Council continues discussion on the three proposals and which would best serve the needs of the IFDC and whether any of the proposals limit the IFDC in any way.
  - Proposals 1 and 3 would take time; Council could likely be without a Director for 4 – 6 months, because the position for 1 or 3 would need to be approved / advertised, a search committee formed, etc. Proposal 2 would be a contract solution, and would not require the position of Director to go through the same hiring process, because it is a contractual agreement with Eric Holzmueller, who per the terms of the contract would perform the duties of IFDC Director for a set amount each year.
- Questions about the terms of the new IFDC/IDNR contract with SIUC were discussed.
  - The past contracts between the IFDC/IDNR and SIU as administrator of the IFDC / DNR grant was for 3 years.
    - ❖ Wade C., would it be possible to reduce the contract term to 1 year. Chris W., this may be a good idea but 1 year would not be enough time to get anything done, perhaps 2 years would work better. Wade C., don't like the idea of waiting 4-6 months before we can fill this position. Council members discuss that the option of a being able to fill the position quicker is desirable.

- Joe F., asks Council members if they have had enough time to consider the proposals?
  - Stan C., would like further time to discuss and consider the proposal. Proposal 2 would still require approval of the grant between SIU and the DNR, right? Yes, it just fills the position as a line item in the budget, 1 month of summer salary for an SIU staff member. It is noted that Eric Holzmueller, has agreed to fill the duties of the Director for the term of this Proposal.
  - Dave G., also, we need to have better communication regarding how the funding is being spent, also we need to get more grant monies out there. Council discusses and agrees that the IFDC grant program was worthwhile and needs to be reinstated.
  - Chris W., asks is there any legal issues with not having a search conducted for the Director position? Jay H., since 1983 we have not had an issue. Joe F., - There is a precedent for appointing someone to serve as Director. Dave G., - Gary Rolfe did it this way for years. Joe F., - It is in the Councils power to choose to fill the Director position in a different way. Would personally suggest choosing on the side of expediency and going with Proposal 2.
- Paul D. - Before we vote on any IFDC business we need to determine if we have a Quorum.
  - The attending members verbally declare their status to make this determination. Membership agrees from this count that a Quorum has been met.
- John G. – Makes puts a motion before the Council; that if the council has had enough time to consider the proposals would they feel comfortable voting on which 3 year Proposal would serve the IFDC best. Note: There is no second of this motion, however; IFDC temporary Chair, Joe F., asks if there is any further discussion prior to voting? There is none.
- Vote on the Proposals commences: Voting IFDC members go around the room verbally declaring which of the Proposals they choose. The IFDC member vote is unanimous for Proposal 2 (*1 member would like option to modify duties of the Director in Proposal 2 in the future*) with the exception of 1 member voting as present.
- Joe F., calls for any objections or further discussion. There is none. It is declared that the IFDC has elected to go with Proposal 2 for the next 3 year term IGA with SIU, having an SIU staff member serve as Director of the IFDC.
- Joe F. requests that the Council now move to select someone to serve as the new Chair of the IFDC. Asks the Council members who wishes to submit their name for consideration.
  - Jay Hayek and John Groninger both indicate their desire to be considered for the position. Wade C., nominates both Jay and John for the position as IFDC Chair.
- Joe F., calls for any further nominees or discussion.
  - Council discusses that term of the Chair should be the same as the Director, 3 years. Question is raised does the Chair need to be a voting member. The former Chair, Jim Zaczek, was also the SIU Liaison with voting rights, but abstained from voting; that was his personal choice.

**MOTION:** Ray Herman makes Motion that the nominations be closed. David Gillespie seconds the Motion. Joe F., calls for any further discussion.

- Paul D., - Lydia could not be here today, but sent some notes reflecting her position for the Councils consideration. By law it is stated that the Councils appointees should be elected from the Council members and should serve for 2 years and may serve 1 additional year. The IFDC has used the laws as written as guidelines, it is noted that there are 13 deliverables in the Law/By-Laws that are not necessarily being done. Also, Gary R and Jim Z both served as Chair for extended terms with no objection of the IDNR or Council. Membership discusses that a review of the Law/By-Laws may be helpful. Jay notes that a link to the Law is posted on the web-site.
  - It is requested that a copy of the Law/IFDC By-Laws be included with the July 10, 2019 minutes for review and discussion at the next meeting of the IFDC in September.
- Joe F., calls for a vote on the Motion before the Council. Motion carries
- Joe F., asks the Council, how they wish to handle the voting process, for the IFDC Chair.

**MOTION:** Dave Gillespie makes Motion that the voting be conducted by secret ballot. Chris Whittom seconds the motion. There is no further discussion. Motion carries. IFDC temporary Chair, Joe FitzSimmons will be charged with counting the ballots.

- Joe reports the following distribution of votes. 2) Abstain; 1) Eric Holzmueller; 1) Present; 1) John Groninger; and, 7) Jay Hayek.
- Jay Hayek is named Chair of the IFDC. Jay accepts the position.

*Jay Hayek in capacity as elected Chair of the IFDC returns to Council to AGENDA as distributed.*

**AGENDA ITEM: Annual Report to the IL General Assembly.** Copies of the Annual Report 2019 as written by Bill Gradle were distributed and made available to the Council members. The IFDC discusses the Report.

- Patti C., reports that Bill Gradle emailed this Report to Jim Zaczek and herself; it was reviewed and printed at SIUC. A mailing list of the Illinois General Assembly was compiled and the report was sent to all members of the Illinois General Assembly with a cover letter from the IFDC Chair, Jim Zaczek. The mailing list included members of the Legislature, Senate and Executive branches. The report went out via U.S. mail between the dates of June 18 – 20, 2019.

*Note: Patti Cludray, Secretary excuses herself to make lunch arrangements. Meeting notes taken by Eric Holzmueller in her absence.*

- Copy of the Report was sent to the Council in pdf form.
- Ray H. - the report should be given personally to the Governor and Senators. Senator Barickman's representative, here today, will try to make sure that the Senator has a copy.
- Patti should be commended for her work on getting these reports out to the General Assembly before the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.
- There is no further discussion noted on this Agenda item.

**AGENDA ITEM: IFDC Landowner engaged in farming – Steve Hosselman as recommended by the Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB).** This item is open for discussion and consideration of the Council.

- Prior to leaving his position as Director, Bill Gradle forwarded this recommendation to the Governor's office. Council discusses.
  - Steve is an active member of the IFB from Clay County, IL.
  - Letters of invitation to the next IFDC meeting should be sent to Steve and also, Linda Lurkins of the IFB.
- There is no further discussion noted on this Agenda item.

**AGENDA ITEM: Update on the report from Ancil Glink on the Workmen's Comp RFP:** Discussion led by Rob Sproul (via telephone).

- Stan Curtis, sent an email to Douglas Sullivan of Ancil Glink indicating what the IFDC wanted for the \$5,000, as approved by the IFDC. Sullivan said he would get back to Stan. Stan reports that Ancil Glink was initially unresponsive.
  - Stan C. - emailed again, on the June 29<sup>th</sup>, a report was sent. There was no bill; the report was good but needs more information. Council discusses.
- IL has a more liberal Workmen's Comp policy which in turn = higher rates.
- Jay H. – the Council needs historical comparisons in this report.
- Ray H. – this report lacks “forest resources” – it needs to be more specific to forestry.
- Stan C., - rates have decreased – but they are still too high; there is more information out there, it just needs to be compiled.

- Paul D., - how can this be fixed. Stan C., really not sure, but change must come from Springfield – the State sets the rates and it is no secret that the WC rates in IL are driving people away. Attempts are being made to decrease the number of people on the ground; more mechanized work, but this is not always possible.
- Stan C., - rates should be specific to the position, for example: a cutter may be higher than a skidder operator.
  - John G., in current IL -WC are the rates for mechanized higher? Stan C., - yes they are still high.
- Paul D., repercussion of replacing people with machines. Stan C., this has shrunk the industry – we are seeing lots of father/son businesses; it is hard to find good employees.
- Jay H. – the Ancil Glink report needs to be sent to the Council members; then members please send your comments to Stan after reviewing the report. Is there any further discussion.
  - Paul D. – for consideration, should IL WC reduce benefit?
- Jay H. – Thanks Rob and Stan for their work on this.

*Note: Patti Cludray returns to duties as recorder of meeting minutes.*

#### **AGENDA ITEM:**

**Illinois Forest Action Plan Edit update (IFAP):** Provided by Paul Deizman on behalf of Mike Brunk. Paul provides an overview of past actions.

- Mike Brunk and Paul volunteered to work on edits with Charles Warwick.
- Plan was accepted, but the Assessment of Needs Report (AON) needed to be updated. The Forest Service requires a re-ordained plan for 2020. Charles, et.al have been tweaking the FAP through the 30<sup>th</sup> of June.
- Edits are completed and the FAP is now ready for the Council’s review. The edited FAP will be sent to the Council members and they will have 2 months to review prior to the next meeting of the IFDC in November.
  - Mike B. would still like to tweak the urban portion of the FAP, since it covers a 10 year span.
  - Expected that the Council should have had time to review the FAP, and have it ready to move to the NA to ordain the edited FAP.
- Paul D. – asks for questions. Council discusses.
  - Since the IFAP is ready to be reviewed by the Council, when will we get a copy to review? This will be emailed to the Council membership. In the 2 months prior to the next meeting, if any re-edits are needed they can be made and then at the meeting in September a vote can be made to accept the changes, and, the final FAP will be ready to get out the door to the Forest Service. If there is something missing the NA will let us know so we have time to get it back for move tweaking before it goes further.
  - What was actually tweaked in the Assessment of Needs (AON)? Appendix A of the AON was where most of the edits (corrections/updating) took place.
    - ❖ 2017 IFA data replaced 2005 data.
    - ❖ The Urban sections were expanded making them more robust.
  - Wade C., How did you get the new data? Paul D., reports, ancillary data was used. The IFDC previously voted to use the data-set that was compiled through the USDA Forest Inventory. This is based on an annual report, per State, every five years. It is a much bigger and comprehensive data set.
- Paul states if there are no further question, he would like to make a motion.

**MOTION:** Paul Deizman makes Motion that the Council prepare to ordain/approve the ILFAP at the next meeting of the Council in September. Joe FitzSimmons seconds the motion. There is no further discussion. Motion carries.

- Jay thanks Paul for this report. Paul indicates that the ILFAP will be emailed to the Council members on Monday.

## **AGENDA ITEM**

**IDNR REPORT** – This report is provided by Chris Whittom on behalf of Tom Gargrave, Acting State Forester who could not be in attendance today.

- Moving forward, still need to fill critical positions. The State Forester position has still not been advertised; not sure what the hold-up is at this point, it is in process.
- Jenny Lesko is now covering 2 district offices with help from Wade Bloomer.
  - The Sparta District Forester retired mid-June; there is no set time to fill the position.
  - Back-filling positions are typically taking 6-9 months with no glitches.
  - Mark Brown will come back on a 75% contract to train replacements.
- Tom Gargrave., is at the Trail of Tears State Forest today with Director Callahan and others reviewing the “Let the Sunshine In” initiatives. The work in southern IL has caught the attention of the Forest Service at the Washington DC level.
  - Three Federal grants have gone to the Shawnee and “Let the Sunshine In.”
  - F.S. Fish and Wildlife are showing positive interest and they want to know more; even perhaps may consider using program as a model.
  - This was a positive way to get the new Director out there to see what is going on in Forestry; they met this morning. Will be meeting with partners and hearing concerns; will be looking over demo area.
- Staffing is still an ongoing problem: Still a clerical position open at Stephen Forbes. Tom G, in his capacity as Acting State Forester has been staying active for filling these positions.
- Ray H. – asks, how can the IFDC help; would sending a letter to the Governor help get these position filled? Not filling these positions, seems to voice a concern that Forestry is not important here in the State. Chris W. – Tom is fighting the good fight. This fight has been on-going for a long time; we will go on fighting putting forth that Forestry is important.
- Paul D. - this is a crisis no one knows about/understands.
- Question is raised about the Forest Health position; there is no information that this has moved forward. Stipulation from State and Private Forestry; Chris Young knows we need people, there is a question of funding for the position. Dave G., - Budget of the DNR has been paid by General Rev Funds; when those are expended then they get into the 4%. Hopefully it will help having the Farm Bureau move aware of Forestry issues.
- Jay H. thanks Chris for providing the Council with this report.

## **11:45 a.m. - MEETING ADJOURNED**

- **LUNCH:** The March 2019 meeting of the IFDC is adjourned for lunch. Jimmy John’s provided by Stan Curtis, since there is no IFDC/DNR – SIU IGA at this time. Thank you Stan. IFDC.
- **12:30 p.m. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

## **AGENDA ITEM:**

**Urban Committee Report:** Rob reports that the Urban Committee (UC) did not meet; does not have a report for the meeting.

- Thanks to Rob for this update and the Council will look forward to his next report.

## **AGENDA ITEM: Other Business New or Old: Group**

- Ray Herman would like those members giving reports to give a brief written rundown of their report; a summary/outline which could be given to members to follow during the meeting. Council agrees with Ray, this is an excellent idea; those presenting reports to the Council will be encouraged to do this in the future.
- Question is raised has the IFDC ever set up sub-committees? Yes, 2 Permanent/ and Ad-hoc as needed. So, does the IFDC have any way to keep our partners/other groups informed of what we are doing, do partners/groups have the ability to give the Council feedback so that the Council can review problems or concerns in order to take action? It may be beneficial to have a sub-committee that would handle this; they could submit the top 2 action items to have the Council work on. Council members discuss this.
  - Paul D., there are 10 action items in the ILFAP; it would be nice to see the Council working on these.
- Paul D., Since we are a governor's council we may be whose charge it is to study and evaluate forest resources and industry concerns in IL we should look at the Ash tree salvage on State Lands.
  - The salvage process would begin with a team who goes into the area evaluates the trees then takes out some of the Ash to sell without damaging other species. If this moves forward after August 1<sup>st</sup>; we need to agree and take it forward.
  - Everyone likes the idea of doing this until they see the skidders; need to educate public.
  - This would give State Forestry office the chance to recoup some funds from the State Lands; other organizations make money for other projects on State Lands.
  - Wade C., questions is there much of a market for Ash. Paul D., - looking into this, not sure. There are major blocks of State lands with Ash which could be harvested; but, the harvest could range from only Ash to other species that need to be removed to facilitate the harvest of the Ash trees.
  - Jay H., it is a fact that Ash goes punky after infestation. What kind of harvest window are we looking at? This would need to be evaluated. There would need to be a set procurement process.
  - Paul D., the buyers would need to go through the bid-buy process. Wade C., it seems like this will take a lot of staff, time and money to implement. Paul D., There are still a lot of questions to consider.
  - Stan C. to Paul – Do you have participating areas in mind for Ash harvest? Paul – Our State Foresters would determine this with site by site review to determine if there are Ash which would be qualified for sale. Stan C., Other States have been doing heavy cuts/harvesting of Ash. Paul D., we must look at meeting threshold of liability issues.
  - Jay H. to Paul, please keep the Council posted on this especially if you need support.
- Joe F. – would like to suggest the formation of a sub-committee of volunteers to help prepare a set of by-laws addressing the transition of leadership in the IFDC. Council discusses.
  - Paul D. to Joe F. are you talking about Administrative Rules. Joe F. – more like suggested protocols.
    - ❖ Jay H. – this sounds like an excellent idea, but it could be a double edged sword.
    - ❖ The Council meetings fall under the Open Meetings Act.
    - ❖ Dave G., - this is true, when you make rules, the more you have people out there watching, and perhaps waiting to nit-pick the Council apart.

- ❖ Does the Council need to have set rules for meeting conduct, bringing motions to the floor, etc.
- Wade C., - What does the IFA have. Joe F., - The IFA has by-laws. Let's talk about this at the next meeting; to discuss what the IFDC needs.
  - ❖ Because we are under the IDNR umbrella, we need to be sure what rules apply to this Council. It may be a good idea to consult the IDNR Office of Legal Counsel.
- Paul D., - Mike Brunk would like a determination as to whether he can still serve as the Governor's appointee to the Council representing Urban Forestry or will this be a conflict of interest. This will be looked into, the Council will give Mike a determination at the next meeting.
- Jay H., - the Council needs to determine if it wants the U of I to keep hosting the IFDC website. Council discusses this matter.
  - What is the cost to the Council? Cost of hosting is less than \$500 per year. U of I prepares an invoice and it is submitted to the IDNR. If the IFDC wants U of I to continue this service, it needs to be formalized. Council agrees that hosting should be added to the Grant as a budgeted item. Eric H. will take care of this.
- Dave G. – Is there a current Consulting Foresters list and how do we add names to the list? Names should be sent to Jay. Many may want an updated IL Consulting Foresters list.
  - Paul D. It was suggested to let the IFA own the list and there would be a small fee for Consulting Foresters who wanted to be on the list. IFA could make this a fund generator.
- Jay H., if anyone needs mileage reimbursement for attendance of today's meeting please contact Paul D. about the process of how to prepare and submit a travel voucher. Chris W., it is best if reimbursement vouchers are submitted month by month.
- Stan C., - when Dick Little was the Liaison a 1 page budget statement was prepared every 2 months and presented to the Council. This was a simple statement of the financial status of the IFDC funding; would be great is this was something we could get again. Paul D., anything like this would come from IDNR financial. Would SIU be able to provide a budget expenditure statement bi-monthly? John G., doesn't see why SIU couldn't provide something like this once the grant has been signed and is in place.
- Eric H., wants to be sure that the Email list is correct; Patti will send out a test email to the Council, please respond with any additions or corrections.

**MOTION to ADJOURN:** Stan Curtis makes Motion to adjourn; Joe FitzSimmons seconds the motion. Jay asks for any further discussion, none noted. Motion carries.

The May 8, 2019 meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council is adjourned at 2:00 p.m. The next meeting of the IFDC will be Wednesday, September 11, 2019, at the Ballard Nature Center in Altamont, IL if the Nature Center is not available, Wade C. will make arrangements for a room at the NRCS.