

## Illinois Forestry Development Council – Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2024

**Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting

**Attendees:** Eric Holzmüller (IFDC Director), Lorrie Karcher (IL Finance Authority), Scott Schirmer (IL DOA), Kenneth Jolly (IL DNR), Joel Pisoni (Industry), Mike Brunk (IL DNR), Avery Viadero (SIU), Kim Watson (IL DCEO), Nicolas Mott (IL House Rep), Steve Graves (Private Timber Grower), Justin Dodson (USFS), Mike Chaveas (USFS), TJ Benson (IL Wildlife Society), Chris Evans (University of Illinois), Tricia Bethke (IFA), Joe Hansen (IAA), Casey Calvert (Walnut Council), Amelia Gooding Cheek (IL FB), and Matt Pustejovsky (IL Tree Farm)

**Call to Order:** 9:00 a.m. – Chris E. IFDC Chair

- Brief introduction of members present

### **AGENDA ITEM: Review of the previous meeting minutes**

Meeting Agenda and Minutes of the July 10, 2024 meeting of the IFDC were sent by email to members by Director, Eric H.

- Council members were given time for review and asked if any errors or omissions were noted in the minutes as distributed.
- MOTION to accept by Casey C., SECOND by Tricia B., Motion PASSES unanimously.

### **AGENDA ITEM: Executive Director Report**

Eric H. presents this report.

- Annual report for was emailed to IFDC members and will be mailed to IL General Assembly.
- Attended State Fair DNR informational booth.
- Had a conversation with a concerned sawmill owner who feels too many logs are leaving Illinois and processed in other states/countries and wanted to bring this issue to the attention of the Council.
- SIU Forestry enrollment is up in 2024 – currently have about 160 students in the program.
- Please complete your 2024 State Training (Ethics/Discrimination/DEI).

### **AGENDA ITEM: Legislative Update:**

- Eric H. - HB1855 - Illinois Forestry Fix – approved by Governor on 8/9/24
- Mike B. – Legacy Tree Program Task Force was created to establish recommendations for the development of a statewide legacy tree recognition program.
- Mike C. – US Farm Bill is not progressing – current one may be extended with hopes a new one next year.
- Chris E. – IL Exotic Weed Act changed to IL Exotic Weeds Act. Species will now be added/removed through administrative rule rather than change of law.

## **AGENDA ITEM: Illinois Department of Natural Resources Urban & Community Forestry Report.**

Report by Mike B. on IL DNR urban activities.

- DNR [urban forestry website](#) has been updated.
- Core funding is now available as is IRA funding.
- CARS reporting to USFS revealed over 500 communities received assistance including providing 75 communities with financial assistance.

## **AGENDA ITEM: Illinois Department of Natural Resources Forestry Report**

Kenneth J. reported on IL DNR forestry activities.

- Thanks to all who volunteered at the redesigned DNR Forestry tent this year. Over 11,000 people visited the tent this year.
- DNR fire crew assisted with fires in Montana and Oregon this year.
- Seeking additional federal funding for the state nursery and cost share program this year.
- DNR forestry staff has represented IL at several national meetings in recent months and will attend NASF meeting in September.
- Work continues on FDA cost share program administrative rules – will notify the Council when available for comment.
- Staff is being trained as Tree Farm Inspectors.

## **AGENDA ITEM: New / Old Business**

- FY25 small projects program – IFDC received three additional proposals.
  - Council members discussed submissions. 6 proposals were considered for funding:
    - AISWCD – 4-H Green Communities Tree Program - \$7,500
    - IFA – Advancing Forest Management & Training - \$8,778
    - ITF – Family Forest Field Day - \$4,726
    - IFA – Reprinting Invasive Species Guide - \$5,365
    - SIPBA – Continued Presence of SIPBA - \$4,100
    - SRCF – Printing of IL Forestry for the Birds - \$3,649.58
  - MOTION to approve 6 proposals was made by Joe H. SECOND by Casey C. Motion PASSES unanimously.
  - Funding is still available and additional proposals will be considered on a as needed basis.
- Roundtable discussion was opened to members.
  - Matt P. – ITF membership list has been cleaned up and there are a little over 400 active members with ~36,000 acres in the program.
  - Joe H. – The IL Urban Forest Strike Team was deployed to IL Beach State Park.
  - Casey C. – Walnut Council national meeting took place in July in Ohio. Meeting next year will take place in Rockford, IL, July 27-29
  - Tricia B. – IFA annual conference is coming up in Carbondale, IL (Oct 24-26).
  - Justing D. – SNF has noticed some oak wilt – typically in areas dominated by red oak. The old growth forest amendment comment period end in September. SNF

has several ongoing sales and is concerned with difficulty to find companies to bid on NNIS work.

- Scott Sch. – DOA is working with DNR to implement IL Exotic Weeds Act. Spongy moth numbers decreased in 2024 after spiking in 2023 (attributed to a large blown in event).
- Chris E. – U of I Extension is hosting the Southern Illinois Beginning Forest Landowner program again this fall and registration is almost full. The Tri-State Forestry Conference will be held in Dubuque, IA on March 1, 2025.
- Mike B. – Please complete your 2024 State Training (Ethics/Discrimination/DEI).

**AGENDA ITEM: Next meeting**

November 13, 2024 – will be a virtual meeting – Eric H. will send out a calendar invite.

**MOTION to ADJOURN: Motion carries.**

The September 11, 2024 virtual meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council is adjourned at 10:45.