

Illinois Forestry Development Council – Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2022

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Eric Holzmüller (IFDC Director), Jay Hayek, (U of I, IFDC Chair), Mike Brunk (DNR), Dale Schumaker (AISWC), T.J. Benson (Wildlife Society), Lydia Scott (Environmental), Scott Schirmer (IL DOA), Nicholas Mott (Windhorst IL House Rep), Robin Hanna (IL Rural Affairs), Rob Sproule (IL Arborist/Urban), Scott Swisher (Forest Industry), Joel Pisoni (Forest Industry), Lorrie Karcher (IL Finance Authority), Austin Omer (IL Farm Bureau), Casey Calvert (IL Walnut Council), Tom Walsh (IFA), Steve Graves (Private Timber Grower), Jennifer Lesko (IL SAF), Wade Conn, Tricia Bethke (IFA), Kim Watson (IL DCEO), and Lisa Helmig (USFS)

Call to Order: 9:05 a.m. – Jay Hayek - IFDC Chair welcomed members and guests with introductions

AGENDA ITEM: Minutes of the November 10, 2021 Review.

Meeting Agenda and Minutes of November 10, 2021 meeting of the IFDC were sent by email to members by Director, Eric Holzmüller.

- Council members were given time for review and asked if any errors or omissions were noted in the minutes as distributed. None were indicated.
- MOTION to accept by Robin Hanna, SECOND by Dale Schumaker. Motion PASSES unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM: Executive Director Report

Eric Holzmüller presents this report.

- Will have a new State Forester as Paul Deizman has retired.
- Received project updates from several partners.
- Additional discussions with DNR about TBLA act – discuss further in meeting
- Eric asks for any questions, none noted.

AGENDA ITEM: IFDC Member Update

Eric H. presents this report.

- Member updates are ongoing. Working with State to update and correct the State Member list. Official approvals are pending.
- Tom Walsh was elected IFA president and replaces Mike McMahon.
 - Tom lives outside of Rockford, IL and is a retired real estate appraiser with a 35 acre farm
 - Thanks for Mike M. for his service to IFDC

AGENDA ITEM: Legislative Update:

Eric H. leads discussion.

- Timber Buyers Licensing Act (TBLA) has been a bit of a roller coaster. Previously DNR agreed to work on some changes with IFDC before moving forward. Senator Murphy

filed (old) legislation unbeknownst to DNR but is now willing to meet with stakeholders to negotiate language. Eric H. will contact Senator directly to discuss.

- Scott Swisher – Voices his displeasure and wants to see revised language to see if additional changes need to be made.
- Austin O. – No other bills he is aware of that concern IFDC at state level.
 - At Federal level - Waterways of America proposes to return to Obama era rules but nothing is certain yet.
- Scott Schirmer – No news to report.
- Lisa H.- SNF is under a continuing resolution and have been moving forward with the hiring of multiple existing and new positions
- Robin H. – Institute of Rural Affairs is having a virtual conference this February – typically get 300-400 people to attend

AGENDA ITEM: Urban and Community Forestry Report

Rob Sproul presents report to the Council.

- Committee met on 12/9/21 – have some new members from southern region
- Developed work plan for 2022
- Outreach with Tree City USA
- Will investigate marketing project to replace Under the Tree Canopy program
- Will meet again in Jan/Feb

AGENDA ITEM: Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Urban and Community Forestry Report. Mike Brunk presents this report to the Council.

- Urban program is busy with Tree City USA
 - 191 applications including utilities and campus applications
 - Number of communities are making progress achieving Tree City goals
 - Also have a number of communities that go above and beyond expectations – USFS will showcase these communities to other states
 - USFS working to revise CARS definition to be more encompassing
- Also working with Forest Assessment Strike Team
 - After storms the strike team will work with communities to determine what trees can be salvaged and areas for new plantings.
 - Will identify pest and pathogen impacts.
- Now have FIA information on canopy cover, heat island, etc. for urban areas.

AGENDA ITEM: Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Forest Stewardship and State Forester Report. Mike B presents this report to the Council.

- Acting State Forester is Tom Gargrave
- Promoted two office assistants from 50 to 80% to assist with calls.
- 75 day contracts extended to Paul Deizman, Tom Wilson, and Barrie McVey.
- Paul D. Barrie M. and Steve Felt recently retired.
- DOT reforestation effort is under way for 3rd season – 72 acres planned this year and continued maintenance for existing plantings.

AGENDA ITEM: New / Old Business

- Jennifer L. – update from the field
 - 6 CRP technicians starting in the spring to look at tree plantings and help with other DNR forestry activities.
 - Partnership with NRCS to fund management activities on the ground with RCPP should be available soon.
- Wade C. – DNR gets paid for CRP (technical assistance) so that NRCS can provide funding so district foresters can complete other tasks. NRCS is also working on forest management planning process – new FDA plans might need adjustment so that they mesh with NRCS guidelines
- Casey C. – IL is hosting National Walnut Council meeting in July in Carbondale
- Scott Swisher – updates from industry
 - Wood products make up 49% of all raw materials used for manufacturing in US
 - Pandemic assistance is available for loggers
 - Financing for loggers needs adjustment so that more loggers are eligible
 - Timber markets are strong – Joel P.

AGENDA ITEM: Next meeting

March 9, 2022 – will be a virtual meeting

MOTION to ADJOURN: Motion carries.

The January 12, 2021 virtual meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council is adjourned.