



Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition

SUFC Steering Committee Meeting Summary June 20, 2017

Meeting called to order by Heather Doucet at 11:07 AM.

Participants: Cara Boucher, Jan Davis, Heather Doucet, Gerry Gray, Rachel Holmes, Wendi Hoover, Dana Karcher, Dan Lambe, Scott Maco, Kevin O'Hara, Dr. Paul Ries, Paul Ries, Steve Sinclair, Rebecca Turner, Josh Ulman, Danielle Watson

Welcome (Heather Doucet)

Heather gave update as official Convener. Reviewed agenda.

Report from Co-Chairs and Convener

Fiscal Agent Transition Update (Paul Ries) – SUFC has been transitioning since the Annual Meeting, and most systems are now in place. Thanked Don Winsett for his help, and also Becky Turner and American Forests for the many things they have done over the years. The new grant was awarded to Arbor Day Foundation (ADF). All appropriate agreements are in place between Ulman, Paul, Gerry Gray and Arbor Day. The grant year ended in May; non-grant funds of approximately \$30,000 will be transferred from American Forests to ADF. One more budget call coming up w/ American Forests to close out the old grant. The \$15K research grant will continue to be managed by American Forests until funds are used, likely in fall 2017. ADF is setting up websites and processes for capturing our match, processing payments, and enabling online registration for the next meeting.

Josh: Thanked Paul. SUFC has captured the retainer for Jen Hinrichs and admin services (Wendi Hoover). The transition with the fiscal agent prompted Ulman to review all their vendor contracts, including with Scott Ward/Fifth Estate. Working w/ Gerry and Paul to stream all into one contract.

Gerry: The co-chairs and other leaders are determining how best to leverage the Ulman Team and exploring how to use their policy skills and presence on the Hill.

SUFC on Capitol Hill, in Conjunction with TCIA (Gerry Gray) – Reported on last week's "fly in." The positive relationship Ulman has with Mark Garvin and Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) was obvious. Gerry introduced SUFC's priorities and how they relate to TCIA. TCIA has much credibility talking about the workforce issues in the tree care industry, and they make a great case for new standards for job training and opportunities in forestry. Discussed H2B worker issues and how there are many job openings working in infrastructure and power line maintenance. Meetings were very fruitful; 30 to 35 tree care members attended.

Josh: Thanked Gerry and noted he contributed greatly to the Hill meetings, informing the group about what SUFC is doing. Mentioned the President's Executive Order about apprenticeships. Key in changing dialogue regarding arborists and how it is a skilled trade needing safety standards and regulations. Unfortunately, the meeting happened the same day as the baseball field shooting where members of Congress were practicing, so some congressional members were missing (ex: Rep. Joyce).

Heather: Gerry shared the testimony that Becky & Danielle developed.

Josh: When introducing our testimony, Gerry focused on U&CF budget requests.

Becky: Thanked TCIA for including American Forests in their Hill Day. For other upcoming Hill events, American Forests can provide talking points. Gerry, Danielle, and/or Becky could possibly attend future Hill meetings.

Reports from Working Groups

Strategic Engagement and Outreach Work Group (SEOWG) (Rachel Holmes) – Rachel pointed out "Communications" is not in the title of their Working Group. Announced Red Edge was chosen for the website award; one main reason is the company understands SUFC's constraints and goals. Website goal is to be live by the next Annual Meeting. Mike Beacom is now officially the co-chair with Rachel. Two upcoming initiatives: (1) in partnership with Fifth Estate (Scott Ward and Claire Gould), will be setting up a communications network with the goal of launching in July. Purpose: make sure material is being disseminated clearly to member organizations. Focusing on advocacy—Advocacy is done by everyone. Looking to leverage this strength among the Coalition. (2) QMAD is the digest being used to provide information to the members. SEOWG decided the first QMAD should go out to the general Constant Contact list (1000+ contacts); asked if this is acceptable to the Steering Committee. No objections were heard. Goal is to send out mid-July. SEOWG wants to set up quarterly topics; Rachel asks for committee members to send her topics.

Policy Working Group (Becky Turner/Danielle Watson) – Becky reported on the visits on the Hill to the Appropriations Committee. Announced July 12 webinar with Alliance for Community Trees (ACT); it will be open for attendance. ACT will discuss providing training and talking points for contacting members, a draft letter through American Forests Advocacy Center, providing sample social media posts for contacting congressional reps (Twitter, FB). Will use Lance Davisson as an example, regarding his work w/ Simpson. Contact there was familiar California Grass Tops folks; California ReLeaf is the umbrella for all California groups. Will provide talking points for leaders.

Dana: Press release will go out to Treebune; will send details to Wendi to include in the July *News to Share*.

Cara: Have you developed training and talking points? NASF is working on its talking points.

Rachel: Working with four groups of interns this summer. Asked if the Policy WG might consider having a youth contingency for the webinar. Becky and Danielle agreed it's a great idea.

Steve: To Becky, have they thought about recognizing the congressional staffers that essentially do all the work, perhaps by doing a one-on-one presentation/workshop.

Becky: This has not been planned; in the past, one key hurdle was capacity. They would like to focus on creating an urban forest caucus, providing a next level of activity, and encouraging more fly-outs.

Cara: Did ACT put together a list of council members; is there a mailing list?

Dana: Will try to compile a list.

Josh: Suggested getting a majority or minority to do a bipartisan sub-committee briefing (10 staff members specifically tasked with this).

Heather: The next *Notes from the Chairs* will focus on the President's budget. Verified with Danielle that it is acceptable to include her name.

Leveraging the Network Working Group (Kevin O'Hara) – Updates will be shared in the first QMAD in July. Will send out a request for themes for a beehive discussion during 2018 Annual Meeting.

Diversifying Funding Working Group (Don Winsett) – Don was unable to be on the call. Josh reported that Heather and he met with Don, who is seeking funding opportunities. The three will meet again in July.

Urban Research Working Group (Dr. Paul Ries/Scott Maco) –

Paul: Submitted a FRAC nomination for Dr. Sharon Jane Phillipe, Associate Professor of Urban Forestry at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Discussed the refining of the Science and Practice proposal; they have been stymied by time constraints and limited resources.

Scott: Need strong means for communicating, such as a web-based platform to distribute Science and Practice Network information. He wants to talk with Rachel about adding a page to the new website.

Rachel: SEOWG will be assembling a small team for reviewing the website. She asked Scott to consider joining the team and also stated it would be nice to have a rep from each working group.

Governance Discussion (Cara Boucher)

Cara is working to update two documents: Operating Policy and Principles and the Governance document (including how SUFC operates). Topics for revision include: opt-in for sign-ons, as much time is spent to get sign-on by Coalition members; addressing how we do decision making; and Coalition vs. Steering Committee decisions. Cara may have questions for the Steering Committee while creating the drafts; she will send first drafts out to Steering Committee for input. Anticipates this will take a while to complete.

Comment for Cara/All Members: When preparing press releases and other communications, keep in mind that the SUFC bylaws give the Steering Committee a "right to review."

Membership Update (Heather Doucet)

There are three organizations who did not renew for 2017. Heather asked if any committee members have a relationship with these three organizations:

- America in Bloom, Janice Kunkle is our contact. Dan Lambe has contacts; he will try to connect and Heather will check in with Sean McBurney at American Florists.
- American Hort, Ken Fisher is our contact. Mark Garvin may have connection (Paul to follow up with Mark).
- Clean Air Task Force (CATF), Jonathan Lewis is our contact. Paul Ries stated he spoke with Alec Given, former state forester in Maine. Alec explained CATF has decided to narrow its mission and focus; it will be all about climate change for them. Alec stated CATF could not work with SUFC unless the Coalition is willing to change its mission and focus to align with CATF.

One organization, Keep America Beautiful (KAB), has not made a final decision to pay its membership dues. There have been recent organization and leadership changes. It was noted that KAB has been a key sponsor of our reception in the past. Dana has a contact at KAB and she will reach out.

Heather to follow up w/ Dan and Dana to develop a strategy for approach.

It was stated that American Public Works Association (APWA) is having internal discussions about continued participation with SUFC. Gerry Gray and Heather will reach out.

Action Item: SUFC at ISA Meeting (Paul Ries)

Paul provided background: The suggestion was to hold a day-long Steering Committee meeting during the upcoming ISA Conference (end of July/beginning of August), as the conference will be held in Washington, DC, where many of our Steering Committee members live and work. Also, many out-of-town members will be coming in town for the Conference. An initial Doodle poll was sent to the Committee. Fifteen responses were received. Of those, seven indicated August 2 would be the best date to meet.

Discussion: The challenge for many members is to commit to a day-long meeting. The suggestion was to send a new poll asking about a half-day meeting on August 2, with options

for a meeting in the morning, mid-day, or afternoon. Also, a call-in option for those who can't attend in person was suggested.

Other Business

Jen Hinrichs is currently housing SUFC documents and banners. Jan offered to store them at the Forest Service building, as they have storage space for urban items. The only challenge would be that a non-Forest Service employee would need to get clearance to get items into and out of the building. Heather and Jan will coordinate this effort.

Adjourned at 12:14pm