

URBAN FORESTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2011

Present: Mike Ahern, Danny Bagwell, Dan Kenny, Tom Spring, Kevin Thompson, and Drew Todd

The meeting began at 10:00 AM with a brief Division of Forestry update by Drew Todd. Longtime district forester Bob Boyles is the Division's new chief, while Dan Balsler is the acting assistant chief, according to Drew. To address some staffing shortfalls, Drew is supervising the Division's Communications Section as well as the Urban Forestry Program.

Drew spent a little time reviewing and updating the Committee on the various Urban Forestry grants. Most are proceeding as anticipated.

An Urban Wood Utilization idea was presented for feedback. With the projected increase in dying ash trees, the Division is trying come up with a process that would take advantage of a city's unskilled labor to assemble products that could be made from urban wood fiber. Danny Bagwell stated that he appreciated the challenge, as he constantly deals with this issue. Dan Kenny reminded the group that it would be nice if potential products were bark free. Kevin Thompson suggested that Cub and Boy Scout groups were always looking for projects, and that maybe urban trees could be used for things like bird houses. Tom Spring mentioned Columbus Wood Products as a possible resource or partner, while Dan offered IKEA as another example. Mike Ahern suggested that whatever product or products are created they be branded a la Ohio Proud. Mike also wondered if the

really poor quality logs could be used for stream erosion efforts. Tom also suggested that the wood products, such as benches and signs, could be used in Ohio's state and county parks. Drew thanked the group for their suggestions and told them if urban wood utilization was easy, it would have already been done.

Drew discussed a possible Great Lakes Restoration Initiative project he was thinking of submitting for the next GLRI RFA round. These applications are due on April 11, 2011.

Drew also sought the Committee's feedback on a few new non-GRF funding ideas he gathered from other state Urban Forestry counterparts. The most interesting idea was the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act. Basically, it involved using a utility surcharged to purchase and plant trees in communities for energy savings. Mike suggested that PUCO and Craig Butler with OEPA might be good resources for this effort. Kevin thought Jim Chatfield with OSUE could help with verification using i-Tree suites. The Homeowners Association was also mentioned as interested partners.

After discussing the Green Bay Packers' "First Downs for Trees" program, Tom wondered if a similar request for funds from Ohio's new casinos would be possible (Gambling on Ginkgos?).

During Open Comments, Kevin mentioned ONLA's Advocacy Day with the legislature and SB 5 protestors.

Mike shared that the new OEPA Director is doing a little reorganizing. Mike also asked if DOF would be interested in making a presentation to a few OEPA folks about how we've used tree planting SEP funds over the years. Drew enthusiastically agreed to the offer.

Danny stated that the next ISA OH Chapter Utility Arborist Committee will be held in Hudson, Ohio.

Tom said the Ohio Township Association Summer Meetings may be good speaking opportunity for the state's Urban Forestry Program. Drew concurred.

Dan said that Matt Beal is the new Division Chief for Plant Industries. The Division of Forestry has worked successfully with Matt for many years. Dan also said that ODA is looking into Thousand Cankers Disease regulations.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM. The next meeting was scheduled for the Ohio Division of Forestry conference room on **Friday, June 17, 2011.**

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Todd