

# ND Urban and Community Forestry Association

## Member's Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2014 Ramada Plaza Suites

Members Present: Yvette Gehrke, Sharon Bartels, Dave Janssen, Wayne Beyer, Gerri McKay, Rebecca Haag, Larry Kotchman, Jerry Heinke, Joel Nichols, AJ Wallevand, Jeff Haberman, Sam Demarais, Beth Peske, Mike Miller, Eric Gabbert, Scott Liudahl, Bob Underwood, Joe Zeleznik, Jeff Smette, John Bach, Gary Klimle, LaDonna Klimple, Allen Lee, Amanda Hartmann, Jackson Bird, Koduah Owusa Ansah, Scott Gagne, Colette Arneson, Brian Johnson

Welcome

Yvette Gehrke welcomed everyone and introduced the new board members:

Sam Demarais- President

Jeff Haberman- Vice President

Amanda Hartmann- Secretary

AJ Wallevand- Treasurer

Minutes

Sam Demarais asked Amanda Hartmann to read the minutes of the last meeting. Motion by Wayne Beyer to approve minutes. Jeff Haberman seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurers Report

AJ Wallevand passed out the report and informed the group that all tax forms have been submitted. Audit Committee met prior to the meeting to go over last year and all appears to be in order. Jackson Bird moved to approve the report and Joe Zeleznik seconded. Motion passed.

Strategic Plan

Jackson Bird spoke about the five year Strategic Plan currently being developed. What is it, where does it need improvement, what can be clarified. Bird asked who would like to help get out and spread the word about NDUCEFA. This led to the idea of the promotional committee that would develop talking points, marketing schemes, etc. Haberman pleaded to the group for more members to get involved to ease the pressure of the few who volunteer. Bird requested that all modifications or improvements to the Strategic Plan should be sent to him by February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

It was also suggested to post the Plan on the members only portion of the website and possibly the Facebook page. Haberman is looking for a chair for Species Rating Committee.

### Executive Director

Jeff Haberman provided a brief description of Clearwater Communications and what they are all about in reference to the possibility of hiring an Executive Director. Increasing membership is one benefit, as well as streamlining our identity as an association and making the conference sustainable on its own. Wayne Beyer shared his positive experience with them and pointed out that the contracts can be renewed or revised yearly. Bird concurs and is supportive of this plan. NDNGA also used this method and saw a benefit. Bird moved to move forward with pursuing more information and specific budget/cost details. Motion was seconded and passed. Additional thoughts included writing a grant to fine tune the Strategic Plan (this grant may include the Executive Director fee). Demarais concurred.

### Website Update

Beth Peske asked about the group's experience with PayPal. The only issue addressed was increasing the number of people allowed to be registered at one time. Beth proposed that the website is outdated and in need of an upgrade for the price of \$750.00. Group is to see if MOU will help with this upgrade. Group agrees that a new and modern website is vital to the group moving forward. Sharon Bartels motioned to continue exploring this option and Haberman seconded. Larry Kotchman expressed interest in helping the group do this and the motion was passed.

### 2014 Conference Update

Scott Liudahl thanked the planning committee for organizing the conference this year. The Engineering/Admin. Tuesday session brought in around 24 extra people. We had around 130 attendees including 65-70 EHAT participants plus 20 speakers. There was no ISA test this year because no one had registered for it. The total cost of the conference was around \$10,500 (\$6,000 in speaker fees). NDFS grants helped with around \$7,500 and \$3,200 for speakers.

Some ideas regarding increasing the fees to attend this conference include taking the number of conference money made divided by the attendees to get an approximate per person cost; small jumps in price over a few years to avoid 'sticker shock'; simply charge a rate comparable to similar conferences. Other ideas to bring in money are offering a scholarship or adding a silent auction.

### ISA Study Sessions

Scott Liudahl continues to speak about the upcoming study sessions. The next session is scheduled for Mark 10<sup>th</sup> and March 17<sup>th</sup>. The price will be \$40 without a study guide or \$125 with a study guide. The question was raised about online testing opportunities overriding the need for in person testing and what to do with future sessions. Should NDUCFA purchase study guides for future

testers, offer reimbursement, offer a scholarship opportunity, or simply a free book? No final decision was made.

#### Workshops 2014

Jeff Haberman mentioned an idea for a workshop in Absaraka removing trees. Is anyone interested in participating? Are there any other ideas? Joe Zeleznek mentioned a possible idea in Washburn and would return to the group with details. Bob Underwood also mentioned possibilities near Minot as well. Please contact Jeff with ideas.

#### Member Recruitment

Gerri stressed personal contact and specific invitations to help gain new membership. It was mentioned to try to partner with local colleges, since we have relationships with them anyway.

#### Future Conference

Scott Liudahl called for brainstorming about the next conference. What does an arborist need at the conference? More working ideas? Should we shorten it to one day? Possibly change it to an afternoon and morning event. Left for continued discussion.

#### TRAQ

Joe Zeleznek wondered who was interested in attending this program? It is believed to have enough interest to move forward. Midwest ISA is interested in hosting with NDUCFA, possibly in September. It would be \$575.00 for a member and \$675.00 for non-members. Midwest ISA would handle the insurance responsibility and NDUCFA would handle local setup and location.

Sam Demarais thanked everyone for coming and we adjourned.