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2 **Washington Community Forestry Council Meeting**
3 **February 7, 2024**
4 **Conference Call- Teams**
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6 **Members Attending:** Ben Thompson, Jess Stone, Margaret Brost, Joanna Martin, Lynn Suksorf, Ian Gray,
7 Tim Kohlhauff, David Bayard, Jessi Bloom, Zandria Michaud, Megan Dunn, Joanna Martin.

8 **Members Absent:** Juli Hartwig, John Bornsworth, Kathleen Wolf.

9 **Guests:** Julia Kast (DNR), Zeima Kassahun (DNR), Alicia Hamilton (DNR), Em Roberts, Alyssa Chen (OR FS),
10 Andy Tate (DNR),

11 **Meeting Convened:** 10:36 am

12 **Welcome:** Call to order. Roll was taken. Chair welcomed members and guests, round of introductions.

13 **Agenda Approved:** Motion to approve agenda. Lynn Suksdorf moved and Tim K. seconded the motion.
14 Unanimous approval.

15 **Meeting Minutes:** Motion to approve meeting minutes. Lynn Suksdorf moved and Margaret B.
16 seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.

17 **Introduction to new DNR UCF staff** Zeima Kassahun (UCF Specialist) and Alicia Hamilton (Tree Equity
18 Collaborative Project Manager)

19 **Council Elections and Committee Assignments**

20 Nominations were recapped from previous meeting as Jessica Stone for Chair and Ian Gray for Vice
21 Chair. The process to vote was discussed. Lynn C. moved to have a vote of acclimation; Tim K seconded.
22 Unanimously approved.

23 Voting Results were as followed.

24 Jess Stone as Chair.

25 Ian Gray as Vice Chair.

26 *Side Note: Alyssa Chen is on roster as voting member in place of Stephan Baker.*

27 Lynn prompts discussion on alignment of names with the Council and program name. Ben shared
28 background on program and the development of the term “Urban and Community Forestry”. If the
29 council was interested in the expansion/language of the name, it would need 30 days with council and

1 to go through DNR channels of approval. Margaret shared concerns and awareness around the costs and
2 time associated with the potential name change.

3 **BREAK (6 minutes- reconvene at 11:10 am)**

4 **Articles of Association**

5 Margaret B. prompted a question about Article 4 and outline of appointments language, Tim K.
6 responded with his thoughts on where Margaret fits within current structure. Ben shared background of
7 bringing Margaret onto council in “at large” position rather than non-profit position unless the non-
8 profit has interest to back her. Ben proposes moving forward with the articles as they currently have
9 been drafted for appointments as they have the ability to amend them in the future.

10 Future Agenda Items to Consider for Further Discussion:

11 Title Name and History

12 Rechecking of position appointment titles to account for broadness of field.

13 Meeting Times: should they be during or outside business hours?

14 Make-up of Positions/is the current council working

15 The idea was proposed to create more space to bring on council members from impacted communities.

16 David Bayard prompted question about the “shalls” and “may”. Ben shared additional background.

17 Jessi prompted question about having the meeting during non-business hour. Ben shared history and
18 additional details. The council is open to discussing this topic further.

19 Lynn S. moved to accept the articles of association as accepted, Zandria seconded, unanimously
20 accepted. Andy mentioned changes in grammar and administration changed that need to be updated.

21 Lynn S. moved to amend the prior motion to accept the articles of association with the understanding
22 administrative errors will be corrected in a timely manner and presented in April 2024 meeting with
23 support and second from Zandria. Unanimously approved.

24 **Committees Discussion (continued.)**

25 Active Committees (2): Equity committee to help with article revisions and Nominations Committee.

26 Ben provided previous committee roster and noted it needs an update and new members to join the
27 committees. Members no longer on the council were identified as openings.

28 The question was raised of: Should the Equity Committee be more involved in grants, investments and
29 working projects?

30 David B. prompted question about structure of committees. Discussion continued on having “standing”
31 committees versus “Ad Hoc” committees. Ben suggested having this as a more formal agenda item so
32 members

1 Margaret shared an interest in being apart of a committee.

2 Tim shared willingness to be apart of a committee and grant review.

3 Alicia H. suggested extending the length of time to apply for grants to make grant applications more equitable. Conversation moved to apply that idea to the nominations application.

4

5 Committee Interest List

6 Equity Committee:

7 - David Bayard

8 - Tim Kohlhauff

9 Nomination Committee:

10 - Lynn Suskdorf

11 - Margaret Brost

12 Jessica Stone and Ian Gray will “moonlight” both committees and check in on both.

13 No objections for committee members volunteering for committees.

14 **LUNCH** (Return at 12:30 pm)

15 **USFS Update/Federal IRA Funding**

16 Alyssa Chen will be standing in for Stephan Baker as the representative. Alyssa provided staffing updated on their 3 person “small but mighty team!”

17

18 There is still a shutdown threat looming, the FS will know more about state funding later this spring.

19 March 8th is the next target for a government shutdown to watch out for.

20 Alyssa opened the floor for suggestions on future FS updates.

21 Eight direct grantees working with USFS team, and seven awardees that are considered passthrough.

22 Communities and organizations throughout WA State received a total of 36 million dollars between the

23 15 projects.

24 [Urban and Community Forestry Grants - 2023 Grant Awards | US Forest Service \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/land-stewardship/programs/urban-and-community-forestry-grants)

25 **Program Update**

26 Ben provided an update on new to UCF program staff. UCF Technicians are facing higher demand for

27 technical assistance than time and resources available.

28 Ben spoke about the Tree Equity Collaborative and Alicia H. role within the project.

29 <https://www.americanforests.org/project/washtec/>

30 [https://www.dnr.wa.gov/news/dnr-and-american-forests-announce-statewide-partnership-advance-](https://www.dnr.wa.gov/news/dnr-and-american-forests-announce-statewide-partnership-advance-tree-equity)

31 [tree-equity](https://www.dnr.wa.gov/news/dnr-and-american-forests-announce-statewide-partnership-advance-tree-equity)

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2 The UCF program currently has a RFQQ to find a contractor to assist with UFIA out for solicitation. Data
3 collector technician is currently out for recruitment.

4 Evergreen Communities Steering Committee has been working with Julia Kast to develop marketing
5 materials, application language, and identify pilot communities for Fall of 2024.

6 UCF team and volunteers reviewed the grant applications. Ben T. and Scott Chambers will continue the
7 process into the future. UCF Program expects to have around 70 to 80 agreements out this spring with
8 additional agreements in existence. Scott Chambers will continue to be hard at work.

9 Jessica S. initiated conversation on the UCF grant program and how to best move forward with how
10 information is presented to the council. Lynn shared his experience with the grant review process and
11 the amount of information and understanding he gained from joining the process. Lynn also suggested
12 an informational format to be able to share all the grant projects.

13 Based on feedback, the council is interested in team updates from UCF staff and grant updates of
14 successful stories. An item for future discussion- Jess and Ben hope to work together to develop
15 language for staff report updates and/or grant updates.

16 **BREAK** (5 minute break- returned at 1:14pm)

17 **Legislative Briefing (Bills of Interest TBD)**

18 [HB 1078](#)

19 Similar aspects of the bill were part of the 2023 legislative session. The biggest change from 2023 is to
20 develop a grant program to support the creation of tree banks.

21 A piece was added in that the tree bank criteria must include cost estimates for maintenance, etc.

22 [SB 6120](#) (continuation of [6109 from 2017-2018](#)). Wildland Interface Code.

23 [Initiative 2117](#) concerning carbon tax credit trading. A lot of uncertainty surrounding this initiative, so
24 there is not a lot of information around initiative 2117 at this time.

25 **Equity in Procurement**

26 Guest: John Elsner, Unit Supervisor from DNR in the Office of Legal Affairs and Business Practices to talk
27 about contracts and solicitations, minimum standards DNR has to hit & then potential future goals.

28 Procurement of goods and services: 18 people within the group, and 12 of those have been on the team
29 less than one year.

30 John spoke about the structure of the team and that the State's default is competitive procurement.
31 John's team is there to support through the process of solicitation, contracts and more.

32 **Next Meeting:** April 24, 2024. Via Zoom.

33 **Meeting schedule for 2024:**

- 1 February 7- completed today.
- 2 April 24 (to avoid spring break scheduling issues)
- 3 June 12 (in-person, location tbd)
- 4 September 11
- 5 November 13
- 6
- 7 **Adjourn: 2:04 PM**