

Board of Directors

Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee

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| **Executive Leadership** | **Board Position** | **In Attendance** |
| Karen Zumach  | President | X |
| Steve Roos | Vice-President | X |
| **Long-Term Designated Position** |  |  |
| Gary Michael | MN DNR |  |
| Mark Abrahamson | MDA | X |
| Tina Markeson | MnDOT |  |
| VACANT | University of Minnesota |  |
| VACANT | Agriculture Extension Service |  |
| Gordon Hanson  | Tree Care Advisor | X |
| Erin Andrews | MSA | X |
| Kevin McDonald | MPCA | X |
| Josh Obermeyer | SAF (MN Chapter) | X |
| Mike McNamara | MNLA | X |
| Anne Oldakowski | MN SWCD | X |
| VACANT | MFA |  |
| Craig Johnson | League of MN Cities | X |
| **Short-Term Non-Designated Position** |  |  |
| Michael Bahe | Municipal Forester-Arborist 1 | X |
| Dustin Ellis | Municipal Forester-Arborist 2 | X |
| Steve Nicholson | Consulting Forester/Arborist | X |
| VACANT | Utility Forester |  |
| VACANT | Local Tree Board Member |  |
| Dana Slade | Non-profit | X |
| Gail Nozal | Minnesota Corporation | X |
| Sue Granger | At Large Region 1 |  |
| James Lemmerman | At Large Region 2 |  |
| Louise Levy | At Large Region 3 | X |
| VACANT | University of MN Student |  |
| **Ex-Officio** |  |  |
| Jill Johnson | U.S. Forest Service |  |
| Valerie McClannahan | MN DNR | X |
| Ken Simons | Parliamentarian |  |
| Ryan Murphy | University of Minnesota | X |
| Emma Schultz | MN DNR |  |
| Molly Codding | MN DNR | X |

 

Board of Directors

Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

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| **Date:** Thursday, June 30, 2022**Time**: 8:00 – 10:30 am **Location:** Tree Trust Redwood Room, 1419 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul/Zoom link**Dial In:** **Before meeting**: Review agenda and associated reports. For questions, contact Lisa Loots, DNR Forestry lisa.loots@state.mn.us **Contact**: Karen Zumach, President; 952-767-3886, karenz@treetrust.org  | **Meeting Purpose:** Governance ofMnSTAC including advising the president, organizing sub-committees, and approving reports, studies and position papers.**Our mission:** To be the leading advocate for Minnesota’s community forests and to empower and educate Minnesota’s citizens to maximize the coverage, health, quality, function, and future of our community forests.  |

1. Call to Order & Welcome and Roll Call: President Karen Zumach (5 minutes):

Meeting started at 8:07am.

1. Adopt Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions) (5 minutes):

No additions or changes. Mike McNamara made a motion to adopt the agenda. Craig Johnson seconded that motion. **Motion Approved.**

1. Consent Agenda:
	1. Approve minutes March meeting (5 minutes)

Valerie McClannahan made a motion to approve the minutes. Steve Roos seconded that motion.

**Motion approved.**

1. On-Going/New Business (60 minutes):
	1. DNR Report-Grants, staffing, U of MN Update

Valerie McClannahan provided the board with two agency update documents – one that outlined several DNR staff, grant, and legislative updates. The second handout provided a more in-depth look at the EAB grants that the DNR has been working on.

Valerie noted that Emma Schultz is still on parental leave until September 1st. Additionally, Molly Codding is the new Community Environmental Justice Coordinator. Her first day in her new role was on June 22, 2022. Molly provided a written introduction that reads:

“As the DNR’s pilot Environmental Justice (EJ) Coordinator, I will be working with Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) communities and the non-profits, municipalities and community groups that serve them to increase canopy equity for underserved communities, continue to diversify our forestry workforce and arboriculture programming participation, and proactively preparing for climate justice through sustainable and healthy relationships with the Department. We hope to begin in Minneapolis and St. Paul but plan to extend our impact to communities in Rochester, Austin, Bemidji and beyond. My background in community-oriented public health practice and community forestry research will help us to develop and document EJ engagement strategies that reflect community input and report our lessons learned to the Forest Service. I am committed to listening to community members about their priorities, and how state Urban and Community Forestry programs can help remove any roadblocks in the path to their environmental equity goals.”

Valerie also noted that Forestry staff are waiting to hear back from DNR Human Resources on an additional 3-year project specialist position. This position would assist with LCCMR Project Community Forests by managing ash for EAB.

Regarding grant work, Valerie said that they are in the middle of working on the LCCMR Protect Community Forests grant. Only one intern was hired to work on this project, so the University of Minnesota kindly offered to have their student workers assist in tree sampling throughout the state. She said that most of the contracts have gone out for the 2022 Preparing for EAB grant, though most of the contracts haven’t been executed yet.

A competitive grant was awarded to the DNR by the US Forest Service for $489,000 to assist in public and private tree planting, with a focus on underserved communities. The DNR doesn’t have a contract in place with the Forest Service yet.

The UCF team has been awarded funds from the Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Act, for environmental justice, urban wood utilization, and EAB assistance work. More details to come. Valerie added that the wood utilization piece of these funds would be used to partner with the city of Minnetonka to provide workshops on how to use a portable mill. The funds would also help develop educational materials around wood utilization, its benefits, carbon sequestration, etc.

Valerie didn’t have any UCF legislative updates at this time. Lastly, she noted that the iTree program has secured funds for the rest of the year. Karen Zumach wondered what the cost of iTree is, but Valerie wasn’t sure what that cost was.

Mike McNamara asked if Valerie could explain the reasoning behind the restrictions of the types of trees used in the EAB tree planning grants.. She said the reason behind the restrictions is to use those grant funds wisely, as well maximizing grant dollars. This led to a discussion about tree stock availability, restrictions on balled and burlap trees, and the workloads that come with the varieties of tree plantings (ex: workload comparisons between balled and burlaped vs. containerized trees vs. bare root, etc.). Karen wondered if there was a way to re-word the grant in the future to let applying communities know that there is some flexibility on tree plantings option in the future, and Valerie agreed that that would be a good thing to consider for the future.

* 1. EQB EAB Task Force Update: Agency representatives:

Valerie said that the UCF team at the DNR will be submitting a change level request for additional funding around EAB management.

Kevin McDonald said that the AmeriCorp effort for UCF is going strong. For the upcoming 2022-2023 year, there will be 47 AmeriCorp members working on UCF efforts, starting this fall.

* 1. US Climate Alliance Grant Update (EAB Carbon Credit Protocol):

Karen said the group (consisting of MNSTAC, MPCA, and City Forest Credits members) had their first meeting since the last MNSTAC Board meeting. She also said that there is a recording of that meeting, for anyone who would be interested in listening to it. The group’s next meeting will be on June 30, at 1pm.

* 1. Wood Waste:

There have been several discussions between Board members, MPCA, District Energy, and other stack holders around the topic of wood waste. MPCA is responsible for wood waste management. Karen said it was an interesting meeting.

District Energy currently has more fuel than they can process, with a cap on the amount of energy they can produce. It was also noted that generating electricity through wood waste is expensive. There was also some discussion about tipping fees.

How can MNSTAC help? Valerie was invited to provide feedback on the Metro Policy Plan that the MPCA is developing around wood waste. She said that if anyone is interested in providing feedback, she can pass that along to the MPCA. She encouraged anyone interested to pass along their feedback within the week. Valerie also said that there is a possibility for future feedback sessions from MPCA in the future.

This led to a lengthy conversation about wood waste and how some cities are having a really hard time dealing with their wood waste. This pivoted to talking about the idea of portable mills. Dustin asked if there could ever be funding from the state to municipalities to buy a portable mill. Portable mills might be out of budget for many cities and counties – especially the cities that already have a hard time matching grant funding. Valerie said that there have been discussions around the topic of portable mills, how to development wood waste plans, trainings on how to use the mills, etc. Often, equipment needed can cost over $5,000, which then becomes a capital investment – and that comes with its own set of stipulations. She would like to be able to promote more conversations around this in the future, but nothing has taken hold yet. Gail suggested that maybe a county could buy a portable mill and then make that available to other counties or cities.

* 1. MSA/MNSTAC Fiscal Agency:

The Executive Committee continues to discuss the possibility of becoming a non-profit organization. Currently MNSTAC is trying to determine what the maximum dollar amount is that MSA is willing to be a fiscal agent for. The Executive Committee’s main focus right now is to focus on the US Climate Alliance Grant, though the group will continue to have conversations around this topic.

1. Committee Report Out and Discussion (45 minutes):
	1. Education
		1. Green Corps update (Dustin Ellis):

Dustin said that this year’s cohort has had their last training and will be wrapping up their service terms in August. A new cohort will be starting again this fall. Dustin also said that he has agreed to help GreenCorp again next year.

* 1. Outreach/Networking working group (Gail Nozal):

The Outreach group has only met once this year. Primary discussion has been around the topic of how to best communicate with community volunteers. Gail said that the group is still working to flesh this out.

She also mentioned that the city of Mankato has expressed some interest in hosting a MNSTAC forum, perhaps this fall. Gail will reach out to Ryan to solidify more details.

* + - * 1. Arbor Day Events-\*Vote required for tree expense\*

MNSTAC provided a tree for an Arbor Day event. The tree cost was $120. There was a motion made by Steve Roos to approve the $120 expense. Kevin McDonald seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

* + - * 1. UFOR Field Day Financial/Operational Support-\*Vote required\*

University of Minnesota UFOR will host a field day on Thursday, August 18th. The day will start with light refreshments and concurrent educational sessions in the Plant Growth Facilities classrooms. After morning sessions, attendees will proceed to the UFOR nursery for self-exploration, mingling, and lunch. Those wishing to participate in a tree walk in the afternoon will be invited to do so around the UMN St. Paul Campus.

The Board discussed the cost of U of MN field day, including how much this event would cost, and how much the Board would like to financially contribute to this event. Steve Roos made a motion for MNSTAC to contribute up to $500 to the event, suggesting that any cost beyond $500 would need to be re-addressed with the Board. Mike McNamara seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

* + - * 1. MPR ad buy proposal:

Prior to the Board meeting, a document as sent out outlining an opportunity to promote MNSTAC on Minnesota Public Radio (MPR). Karen said that the ad would be featured with the live weather reporting segment, and would be a 15 second ad. The ad would be aired 24 times, for an approximate cost of $5,000.

Valerie said that if the Board went ahead with this, it would be a good idea for MNSTAC to have all the links ready to go on the MNSTAC website, in preparation of higher website traffic (due to the interest generated from the radio ad).

Dustin said that he liked the idea but wasn’t necessarily comfortable spending $5,000. He wondered if there were other radio stations the Board could consider, and also if the fees varied between various radio stations.

Mike McNamara also liked the concept, but wondered if there were any matching funds available for this endeavor. He also was a bit concerned about spending $5,000.

Gordon suggested providing options and costs associated with those options for treating ash trees would be a great addition to the MNSTAC website, especially if the Board was only limited to only a 15 second radio ad.

The consensus from this discussion was that this was the beginning of this conversation, and that Karen would continue to consider looking into this opportunity further.

* 1. Finance (Steve Roos):

At the last meeting, the Board discussed looking into the opportunity to become a 501c3 non-profit. The Board approved moving forward with stage one of the process. Steve is currently in the middle of completing the documentation for stage 1 to Propel Non-Profits. He said that he would bring the draft documentation to the Executive Committee for approval before submitting it. He is hoping to have more of an update at the next Board meeting.

* 1. Legislative (Craig Johnson):

Craig said there wasn’t much of a legislative update. He reminded the Board that there was some money from LCCMR to the DNR to work on the Mississippi River Recreation Area, which includes some EAB work. There was also $5 million drought funding, that will help replace nursery stock on tribal, county, and private forest lands. He also reminded the Board that it is an election year for all the members of the legislature.

* 1. Executive (Karen Zumach):

Karen reminded everyone that the Executive Committee meets on Thursdays, at 8:30am. Board members who are interested in joining are welcome to attend the weekly meetings. The next Executive Committee meeting will be during the first full week of July.

1. Old Business (30 minutes):
	1. Board member comments/updates *(Please come prepared to provide insight, information and/or guidance on how MNSTAC can work with your representative organization to advance our mutual missions).*

Dustin said that Hennepin County has a forestry position open. He encouraged Board members to share that with anyone who would be interested.

Ryan said that the dates are set for the 2023 Shade Tree Short Course. The dates are March 14 & 15 at Bethel University. He also mentioned that Sonja Tosteson is now managing the MNTAC newsletters. Also, UCF Professor position will be posted mid-late August, with a target start date of either January or August 2023.

The DNR Forestry Director, Forrest Boe, will be retiring on July 8th.

* 1. Open board positions
1. Adjourn:

Meeting concluded at 10:33am.