



Board of Directors
Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee

Executive Leadership	Board Position	In Attendance
Karen Zumach	President	X
Steve Roos	Vice-President	X
Long-Term Designated Position		
Valerie McClannahan	MN DNR	X
Mark Abrahamson	MDA	X
Tina Markeson	MnDOT	
VACANT	University of Minnesota	
VACANT	Agriculture Extension Service	
Gordon Hanson	Tree Care Advisor	
Erin Andrews	MSA	X
Kevin McDonald	MPCA	X
Josh Obermeyer	SAF (MN Chapter)	
Mike McNamara	MNLA	X
Anne Oldakowski	MN SWCD	
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	
VACANT	Non-profit	
Gail Nozal	Minnesota Corporation	X
Sue Granger	At Large Region 1	X
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	
Ken Simons	Parliamentarian	
Ryan Murphy	University of Minnesota	X
Emma Schultz	MN DNR	X
Molly Coddling	MN DNR	X
Sonja Tosteson	U of MN	X

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Meeting Agenda

<p>Date: Thursday, October 27, 2022 Time: 8:00 – 10:30 am Location: MN DNR HQ, 500 Lafayette Road, Saint Paul, Lower Level Conference Room; St. Paul/Teams 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</p>	<p>Meeting Purpose: Governance of MnSTAC including advising the president, organizing sub-committees, and approving reports, studies and position papers.</p> <p>Our mission: <i>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.</i></p>
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1. Call to Order & Welcome and Roll Call: President Karen Zumach (5 minutes)
Meeting called to order at: 8:12am. Sonja Tosteson attended the meeting on behalf of the University of Minnesota.
2. Adopt Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions) (5 minutes)
Louise Levy requested adding a procedural question to the new business section of the agenda. Motion to adopt the agenda with Louise's additions made by Dustin Ellis. Steve Nicholson seconded that motion. **Motion Approved.**
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approve minutes June meeting (5 minutes)
Louise proposed a grammatical correction regarding Molly Coddling's introduction, surrounding the BIPOC definition. The suggestion was made to insert commas in the definition, so it reads: "... I will be working with Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) communities...."

Motion made to approve the updated June meeting minutes made by Dustin Ellis and seconded by Sue Granger. **Motion Approved.**
4. On-Going/New Business (60 minutes)
 - a. Louise asked what the procedure was for sending out board meeting invitations. Karen said that there was a bit of miscommunication regarding the October meeting date since the original meeting date didn't take into account MEA school break. Additionally, the agenda for this meeting wasn't available for distribution until the day before this meeting.

There was a brief discussion about the 2023 board meeting dates being available on the website, as well as the final version of the meeting minutes, prevalent attachments, etc. being available on the website also. Ryan, Karen, and Louise said that they would work to identify what should be available on the website and get it updated.

b. DNR Report-Grants, staffing, U of MN Update, next budget request:

Valerie McClannahan quickly highlighted DNR UCF staffing updates, which includes:

- Emma Schultz returned from parental leave on September 1st.
- DNR is waiting for Human Resources review of a 3-year project specialist position, which would assist in LCCMR Protect Community Forests by Managing Ash for EAB.
- Gary Michael has stepped back from his role on the MnSTAC Board, and Valerie has stepped up in his stead.

Valerie also provided a short update on the U of MN faculty search. She said that the search committee has selected five candidates that they will interview via Zoom. From there, they hope to do final interviews in-person. More details to come at the next board meeting.

Valerie also provided the board with an agency update document that included grant, legislative, and program updates. She noted a change in the DNR's EAB Grants Management Program budget, saying that the budget is being reduced from \$1.7 million (which the DNR has had for the last two fiscal years), down to \$400,000 starting on July 1, 2023. Despite the reduction in the budget, there currently is a change level request that is moving forward.

This led to a deeper discussion of what a change level request is and what its purpose is. Valerie clarified that a change level request, in its simplest form, is a request to ask the Governor for more money than the DNR already has in the budget. This request would specifically pertain to the 2024 budget. Valerie also explained the process of how a change level request moves onto the legislature, and how it may possibly be incorporated into broader budget discussions at the legislative level. The board was then reminded that 2022 is an election year, with the elections happening in early November, so that plays into how things layout for the future.

Mike McNamara asked if there was anything that the Nursery Landscape Association or MNLA could to support the DNR grant work. The consensus from the group was that anything anyone could do would be appreciated. Craig Johnson also added that lobbying for the change level request could be a great way to help. He also said that this would be a great opportunity to establish good working relationships with the anticipated newly elected officials in the legislature.

The conversation pivoted and Dustin Ellis asked Valerie if she had heard anything about pass-through for Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds from the US Forest Service. Valerie said she hadn't heard anything concrete from the Forest Service. She is hoping to have more concrete details in Mid-November at the 50 States Meeting. She said that she would communicate out more details when she becomes aware of them.

Dustin asked Valerie about the DNR UCF grant programs. Given the amount of funds that the DNR has for grant, he wondered if it would be allowable for the amount per community to be reduced, so that the grants could better be distributed. Emma said that the grant maximum would be reduced to \$50,000 per community. Emma also said that she would be modifying the grant to have a few more priority points outside of the metro area. Dustin then asked when the next round of grants would be released. Emma

said that she is aiming to have the next round ready in the beginning of 2023 but will certainly be sending out more information when everything is ready.

c. EQB EAB Task Force Update: Agency representatives:

Valerie shared that there hasn't been any new updates beyond agencies sharing with and coordinating their Change Level Requests.

Kevin McDonald said that he was under the impression that most Executive Branches of state agencies have already started engaging with the Governor's Office. Kevin emphasized Craig's point of building rapport with newly elected officials, and reminded the board that MnSTAC is an advisory committee, to advise decision makers of projects, grants, areas of need, etc.

The conversation then shifted to IRA and the concept of "shovel-ready" projects and initiatives. The group discussed what "shovel-ready" meant in relation to UCF, and how the interpretation of that concept can vary. It was noted that being "shovel-ready" could look very different from a state agency viewpoint versus a county or municipality. That said, it was acknowledged that if a county, municipality, or state agency were "shovel-ready" by the federal government definition, they would most likely be ready by any other definitions. The discussion around this concept led the group to suggest having a "how to become shovel-ready / get ready for before needing to be ready" topic for a future 2023 forum meeting. Dustin suggested that a "shovel-readiness" forum could possibly coincide with the release of a DNR grant.

Karen asked if there would ever be an official handoff of EAB work from MDA to DNR. Valerie responded that there is no plans for that to happen. She said that MDA will continue to do what they do best. The EAB quarantine is still in place, which maintains MDA's role being that they are the regulatory agency. Karen's concern was that she didn't want to repeat the way EAB was handled with the next invasive species. Craig added that the creation of the EQB EAB Task Force was part of the answer to the EAB problem. Steve Nicholson used a health care analogy to reflect the partnership with MDA, Department of Agriculture, and other agencies. He likened the Dept. of Ag. as the first responder, and DNR and other agencies are like the hospital (there to support). The discussion around this topic is ongoing.

Finally, the group thought it would be a good idea that the new State Forester, Patty Thielen (DNR Forestry Director), be invited to the January board meeting.

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

Kevin briefly reminded the board of the proposal that MPCA and MnSTAC have in working with a Seattle-based company called City Forest Credits to create a carbon credit program for trees that are at risk of dying from EAB. It was noted that this has been an exploratory project and explained that the carbon credits market is currently unregulated. The update is that this project is in the drafting phase. Karen said that she would be happy to share the draft protocol with anyone who was interested in reading it.

There was an extended conversation about this opportunity, but also issues that have been noted while exploring this carbon credit world. Economics in the current carbon market are tough - financially speaking the value is lower than initially anticipated - there are some challenges, and there seems to be some limitations to what treatments can translate into carbon credits, etc. More details to come.

e. Arbor Day 2023:

Gail Nozal said that Outreach Committee has had some discussions about expanding upon the normal Arbor Day celebrations. The city of Buffalo has been selected to host the 2023 Arbor Day celebration which coincides with the Festival of Trees and the Tree Climbing Championship (approximate dates are May 19-21, 2023). More details to come. Mike McNamara as offered to donate an Arbor Day tree from Hoffman and McNamara.

f. MNSTAC Fiscal Agency:

Karen said that there wasn't much of an update at the moment. Options are still being considered. She assured Erin Andrews that MSA will be notified of a decision by the end of the year.

g. MN Shade Tree Short Course sponsorship ****Vote Required****:

At the previous STSC meeting, there had been a discussion around speakers for the Shade Tree Short Course. The STSC planning committee thought about bringing in a big-name speaker. The proposed speaker is Mark Chisholm. Dustin proposed the idea of MnSTAC paying \$1,000 as a partial payment of Mark Chisholm's honorarium. Mike McNamara made a motion to vote on this decision. Craig Johnson seconded that motion. **Motion Approved.**

5. Committee Report Out and Discussion (45 minutes):

a. Education

i. Green Corps update (Dustin Ellis):

Dustin said that the latest cohort has started. The next training will be in February, and that training will be virtual. In May, the cohort will be touring the nursery at Hoffman and McNamara.

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

a. Arbor Day Event: Previously talked about.

b. Finance (Steve Roos):

Steve said that Propel Nonprofits is only willing to be a short-term fiscal agent, while organizations determine how they are going to move forward (most become 501c3 organizations). More to come.

c. Legislative (Craig Johnson):

Craig reminded the board of the upcoming elections. He said that there are 201 legislators, who are all up for election. Logistically speaking, 54 (or more than 1/3 of the legislator) of all the legislators will be new. Now is the time to influence the budget process. Craig also noted that while there will likely be a 12-billion-dollar surplus, the elections still have a huge impact on that. He ominously said that state agencies may still be looking at a 10% budget cut.

d. Executive (Karen Zumach)

6. Old Business (30 minutes)

a. 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 asked Valerie if the DNR was still funding the same amount for the UFOR Lab. Valerie said that the funding amount is staying the same.

Steve Nicholson asked Ryan about the current staffing at the U of MN. Ryan said that the department is currently Monica, Nick, Sonja, and Ryan. Steve asked who was doing the most teaching and Ryan said that the U has brought back Gary Johnson on a temporary basis, and he will be continuing through the next year. There is no Department Head currently, but things will look different in six months.

b. Open board positions

7. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 10:23am.