



KEEC Spring Board Meeting: July 27, 2011

Meeting Location: Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, Harrodsburg, KY

Meeting Time: July 27, 5:00pm EST . July 28, 9:00am.

Members in Attendance: Elizabeth Schmitz, Merin Roseman, Horace Brown, Evelyn Morgan, Amelia Stenger, Mar Norton, Cheryl Messenger, Shannon Graves, Tom Fitzgerald (partial meeting on conference call).

Absent Members: Greg Higdon, Karen Reagor

Meeting Introduction

The meeting was called to order by H. Brown.

April 2011 Minutes

⇒ H. Brown moved that the board accept the minutes from the April, 2011 meeting minutes. E. Morgan seconded the motion, and it carried.

Budget

E. Schmitz presented the current agency budget to members. E. Schmitz stated that the Pride fund monies are recurring but variable (these funds must be disbursed to the KUPEE universities), and expected to continue to decrease over time, the Heritage Land Conservation Trust monies are recurring in the amount of \$150,000 per year, and the ARRA grant reimbursements will continue until April of 2012. Other receipts vary depending on KEEC programming. The FY 2011-2012 carry forward is approximately \$327,000. E. Schmitz informed the board of a \$33,000 budget cut that included agency savings from furloughs, a 1.5% statewide budget cut, and savings created by the difference in E. Schmitz's salary and J. Eller's salary.

The continued decrease in the agency's cash balance (due to the spend down of carry forward funds) was discussed, and board members acknowledged the need for new sources of agency revenue if the agency wishes to continue to employ two staff people. The agency receives \$150,000 a year for operating funds, and this is most likely not enough to cover the cost of two staff people indefinitely. M. Roseman explained to board members that the agency most likely needs \$50,000- \$75,000 more per year in operating funds to continue to afford current programs, an Executive Director and an Internal Policy Analyst 3. E. Schmitz stated that she would look into approaching the Land Heritage Conservation Trust Board to be allocated more funding each year. A. Stenger stated that she would research environmental foundations to seek possible donations and grants. The agency budget was included in board members' binders. A separate version of the budget describing how agency funds are allocated

to different KEEC programs was also included.

Staffing

E. Schmitz explained the current staffing situation. The agency has 3 cap positions- 2 full time merit positions and one full time/time limited federally funded position. M. Roseman (whose position is grant funded and therefore most likely time-limited) and E. Schmitz have worked to take on the administrative burden created by the vacant administrative assistant position. Even though the agency has 3 full-time merit cap positions, the agency really only has the budget to employ 2 full-time merit positions for approximately 2 years. E. Schmitz reiterated her desire to hire higher qualified (and therefore, higher paid) staff who could assist with programming, grant writing, etc, as opposed to a lower paid staff person that would only be qualified to do administrative work. E. Schmitz has opened the state hiring register to list an Internal Policy Analyst 3 position. She has received approximately 88 applications and plans to begin the interview process as soon as possible. H. Brown and E. Schmitz will be conducting the interviews in the coming weeks.

⇒ E. Morgan motioned that E. Schmitz pull the Internal Policy Analyst 3 register list as soon as possible, choose interviewees, set up interviews, and hire as soon as possible. H. Brown seconded the motion, and it carried.

Pride Fund Monies, Fees, and Administrative Regulations

Board members were informed that all Pride fund monies disbursed to KEEC must then be disbursed to each of the eight state universities that serve as members of KUPEE. A competitive granting process will be developed to allow the eight universities to apply for funds (approximately \$40,000 from last year, and approximately \$20,000 this year, for a total of approximately \$60,000) to execute goals of KEEC's Master Plan (published every five years by KEEC). Currently, it is the Education cabinet legal advisor's opinion that KEEC cannot charge an overhead cost for administering the Pride funds. T. Fitzgerald has pointed to specific legislation that he believes applies to KEEC, and would also allow KEEC to charge fees/overhead costs. T. Fitzgerald also offered to draft a letter explaining his reasoning to deliver to legal staff, and meet with Education Cabinet legal staff and E. Schmitz to discuss this issue. E. Schmitz will also look into promulgating regulations to allow KEEC to charge fees for KEEC programs and administrative work (for example, charging fees for the certification program so that certification will pay for itself, or charging an overhead fee on Pride funds). The board members suggested charging an overhead fee on Pride funds of between 10%-25%, assuming T. Fitzgerald and the Education Cabinet legal staff can come to an agreement on KEEC's legal authority to charge fees and overhead costs.

Certification

E. Schmitz explained the current status for the Nonformal Environmental Education Certification Program. Due to potential budget cuts/costs of accreditation with NAAEE/the possible inability of KEEC to charge fees to cover the cost of the program, the 2012 certification course may be cancelled. The board stated that whether or not the 2012 class was held or not, they recommended that KEEC not pursue accreditation with NAAEE. E. Schmitz also stated that she would re-establish the certification task force to get further guidance on how to proceed with the certification program in August. Cheryl

Messenger volunteered to serve as the champion of the certification committee and assist with the re-establishment of the task force.

ARRA/Green & Healthy Schools Report

The annual report on ARRA activities, including the Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan (KELP) and Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools (KGHS) programming, was included in each board members' binder. E. Schmitz reported on the status of the KELP. Barring any major surprises, E. Schmitz expects the Kentucky Department of Education to officially adopt the KELP in the coming months after a period of public comment. M. Roseman described KGHS activities for the last year. The longevity of the KGHS program, and how many schools can reasonably be supported by one staff person (other than the executive director) was also discussed.

Project WET

A brief description of Project WET workshops that were conducted across the state was provided by M. Roseman. E. Schmitz explained the current status of KEEC's host agreement with Project WET USA. Education Cabinet legal staff expressed concerns about signing the agreement due to the state not being able to indemnify Project WET. Project WET USA is unable to change the host agreement for an individual host for either removing indemnification or charging an administrative fee for hosting the program. T. Fitzgerald stated he would look into this issue as well. E. Schmitz stated that she would contact Project WET again to make certain that there is no way that Project WET USA can change their host agreement wording to address the indemnification and fee issues. Otherwise, KEEC may not be able to sign the agreement due to the Education Cabinet's legal opinion.

KEEC Master Plan

E. Schmitz described the current status of the interagency task force for environmental education and noted that she would work to re-establish it. E. Schmitz also described the current status of the Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan and integrating EE into KY's state standards.

Video Conferencing for Board Meetings

The board members decided that due to costs and technology requirements, video conferencing for board meetings is not feasible at this time.

Meeting Close

⇒ H. Brown made a motion to close the meeting. E. Morgan seconded the motion and it carried.