



## **KEEC Fall Board Meeting Minutes: October 27, 2011**

*Meeting Location:* Berry Hill Mansion, Frankfort, KY

*Meeting Time:* October 27, 10am EST

*Members in Attendance:* Elizabeth Schmitz, Merin Roseman, Horace Brown, Amelia Stenger, Marc Norton, Cheryl Messenger, Karen Reagor, Tom Fitzgerald, Greg Higdon (partial meeting).

*Absent Members:* Evelyn Morgan, Shannon Graves

*Special Guests:* Education Cabinet staff Ryan Green (budget office), Ann Hester (budget office), Jim Thompson (legislative affairs)

### 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 July 27, 2011 meeting minutes. E. Morgan seconded the motion, and it carried.

### Budget

Due to the agency's budget situation, special guests from the Education Cabinet attended this meeting to assist in presenting the biennium budget to the Council. An overview of historical and projected funding and spending levels was presented to members (PowerPoint slides were provided in all member binders). The agency has cut significant spending by retaining only two staff people; however, nearly all core funding is spent to cover the salary and fringe of KEEC staff, with no funding remaining to cover programming. KEEC can continue with current spending levels assuming a continuous depletion of carry-forward funds. Carry-forward funds will most likely be exhausted within 2 years, creating an unsustainable financial situation for the agency. This situation does not consider the legislative mandate to employ 3 staff at the agency. Without an increase in core funding, the agency will most likely be forced to cut staff to one employee or cut nearly all programming by 2014 (still leaving one employee). The new biennium budget also includes projected cuts from non-merit staff cost savings as well as at least a 1.5% cut (the exact amount of the across the board cut to state government budgets has yet to be released).

Various solutions to KEEC's funding were proposed, including G. Higdon offering to set up a meeting with Sec. Len Peters and Land Heritage Conservation Trust Fund staff to discuss the possibility of KEEC receiving a larger amount of funding (in addition to the \$150,000 core funding received each year). KEEC should hear from R. Green and J. Thompson on the likelihood of more funding being allocated to KEEC from the LHCT, although this is very unlikely to happen. R. Green also noted that the seriousness

of KEEC's situation is understood by Education Cabinet staff and the Governor's Office and that they would move forward in attempting to assist KEEC. R. Green pointed out that there will most likely be a short-term solution offered by the Governor's Office for the 2013 and 2014 fiscal years, but that in the meantime, KEEC and the Board should move forward in seeking robust, recurring funding from the state.

T. Fitzgerald pointed out that KEEC staff should be sending annual reports to not only the LHCTF, but also to the legislature in order to publicize the agency's valuable work.

M. Roseman stated that she would continue to track agency spending through the year in order to present a budget by program to the Council at the next meeting so that members can better understand the costs of each program offered by the agency. T. Fitzgerald asked how much additional funding would be needed to keep two staff at the agency and then also how much additional funding would be needed to continue to administer all current programs. E. Schmitz, M. Roseman and Ryan Green replied approximately \$50,000 and \$150,000 respectively.

T. Fitzgerald asked if E. Schmitz would be willing to set up a meeting to do a briefing for the ranking members of the House and Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee. E. Schmitz indicated that she would be glad to do this. R. Green noted that it would be good to have the briefing after the Capitol Education Center opens and use it as an example of the agency's work.

E. Schmitz also noted that the agency will move forward in seeking authority for KEEC to charge fees (for example: administrative fees on PRIDE funds and fees for courses such as Certification). At this point, KEEC does not have the authority as an administrative body to charge fees. This would be introduced in the 2013 short session, not the 2012 long session.

E. Schmitz requested authorization from the Council to not hold the 2012 Non-formal EE Certification Course in light of projected budget cuts and to also update/modernize the course materials.

⇒ K. Reagor motioned to cancel the 2012 certification course. A. Stenger seconded the motion and the motion carried.

#### Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan

E. Schmitz updated members that Felicia Smith Cummings will be presenting the KELP to the Kentucky Board of Education for implementation approval on December 7. We expect no barriers to approval of implementation of the plan.

#### Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools

M. Roseman updated members on the KGHS program. There are now approximately 220 schools participating in the program, the new online system is working well. M. Roseman will continue to identify a new task force and reach out to those individuals in the coming weeks. The program is well on track to spend all ARRA grant funding. M. Roseman will also continue to develop a sponsorship and partnership program for KGHS that will help fund projects at schools.

### Non-formal EE Certification

E. Schmitz will work on reconvening the certification task force. The 2012 course will be cancelled due to budget cuts, but this will be a good opportunity to revamp the course and work on gaining the authority to charge fees for the course to help offset its cost in future years.

### Capital Education Center

E. Schmitz is working on this as a special project at the behest of First Lady Jane Beshear. The working group has secured some funding for the building and educational displays. This project is taking a considerable amount of time to coordinate. A grand opening is slated for this spring.

### KUPEE & Center for EE at Murray State University

E. Schmitz plans to release an RFP in January for the Pride fund monies from this year and last. Proposals will be collected in February and reviewed in March. The goal is to have the funds disbursed within this fiscal year.

Joe Baust is concerned that after his retirement the Center for EE at Murray State University might be closed. J. Baust has requested that G. Higdon meet with university staff (Dean and President) to show support for the center. G. Higdon stated that he would speak with J. Baust to set up a meeting.

### Green Ribbon Schools

E. Schmitz explained the new Green Ribbon Schools Program to members. The program will work much in the same way as the federal Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

⇒ G. Higdon motioned that KEEC should be involved in the program by assisting KDE implement the program. K. Reager seconded the motion, the motion passed.

### Meeting Close

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