



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC) Fall Council Meeting
October 30, 2013

Meeting Location: KAM Conference Room, 609 Chamberlin Ave., Frankfort, KY 40601

Meeting Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Eastern Time

Council Members in Attendance: Chair Horace Brown, Vice-Chair Karen Quinn, Cheryl Messenger, Marc Norton, Sr. Amelia Stenger, Greg Higdon

Absent Members: Lona Brewer, Shannon S. Graves, Karen Reagor

Staff in Attendance: Elizabeth Schmitz, Michelle Shane

Others in Attendance: Ashley Hoffman, KAEE

Meeting Introduction

The meeting was called to order by H. Brown at 1:02 PM Eastern Time.

Minutes

Minutes from the previous Council meeting were presented for review and approval.

⇒ At 1:04 PM, A. Stenger moved that the Minutes be approved as presented; C. Messenger seconded the motion. None were opposed. The motion passed.

Networking Activity

The Council conducted a networking activity by splitting into groups of two and sharing a favorite environmental education (EE) story and why EE was important to them. After coming back together, individuals shared some responses with the whole group. A second breakout occurred where participants shared their thoughts on the three most important goals for the next year and the next five years. Again, the group reconvened and shared some of their responses.

KAEE Presentation

A. Hoffman, Executive Director of the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE), presented to the KEEC about her organization's current endeavors, grant work, and goals. A. Hoffman provided a hand out about KAEE, a statewide non-profit which began in 1976. KAEE is run by a 15 member volunteer Board of Directors. A. Hoffman was hired in 2010 as a part-time position; the position was moved to fulltime in 2012.

Also in 2012, KAEE became the State Coordinator for the Project Learning Tree (PLT) Curriculum in Kentucky. Soon after they received a \$10,000 grant, allowing KAEE to host a multi-day Facilitator Training for PLT and a State Planning Meeting. A. Hoffman handed out an additional brochure about offerings from PLT. She highlighted the PLT GreenSchools! program and the Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) currently being drafted between KAEE, PLT and KEEC about GreenSchools! and the Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools Program.

KAEE recently became the State Coordinator for Project Underground in Kentucky. Project Underground curriculum focuses on teaching about caves and karst. In addition to holding a Facilitator training in April of this year for Project Underground, KAEE received a \$1500 grant from the National Speleological Society. The funds were used to purchase a groundwater model which KAEE plans rent or loan out.

The Leopold Education Project (LEP) is another curriculum project that KAEE is working to become the State Coordinator for. The Aldo Leopold Foundation just took the project over from Pheasants Forever. The LEP focuses on Aldo Leopold's land ethic, and focuses more on conservation than some of the other projects do. KAEE hopes to finalize an agreement about LEP in the next year.

KAEE's biggest focus during 2013 has been the State Consortium for Environmental Education, an endeavor funded by a \$28,000 grant from the EE Capacity Partnership. That partnership, consisting of Cornell University, NAAEE, and the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education received a 5-year from EPA in the amount of approximately \$10 million. Their goal is to start numerous State Consortia to broaden the field of Environmental Education. In year one of their grant, they began with programs in California, Colorado and Maryland. Kentucky is part of the year two programs, along with Utah, Oregon, New England Regional, and one more. In Kentucky, KAEE partnered with Americana Louisville to build the State Consortium. The mission of the project was to reach out and bring in nontraditional partners from across the Commonwealth to create a stronger, more diverse leadership and increase cooperation in the environmental education field. Six meetings for the group were held. The first meeting held was about Asset Mapping, with over 40 organizations representing "nontraditional" environmental education fields. This meeting shaped the topics for the following meetings. Follow-up meetings included a Focus Group with the Community EE Guidelines. KAEE brought in Akima Price from the NAAEE national office. A great thing that came out of this meeting was KAEE's influence in shaping how the term "underserved areas" was viewed. Nationally, they were looking at this as only urban areas and audiences. The new term is "Stressed Communities" which covers rural areas like Appalachian communities. Other meeting included Diversity Inclusiveness Training and a Networking Training (Members indicated this was one of the most favorite meetings). The final meeting was a two-day retreat at Pine Mountain Settlement School, including an open house at AppalShop (Appalachian Media Institute in Whitesburg, KY), a hike at Lilly Cornett Woods, and professors from ECU conducting an evaluation focus group meeting covering the last year. KAEE hopes to continue the work of reaching out to new audiences in 2014 and beyond. KEEC participated in all Consortium meetings to date.

KAEE partnered with KEEC to receive a \$3000 EE Capacity Grant that is supporting KEEC in our Professional Environmental Educator Certification course and helping the agency move the program towards being ready to accredit with NAAEE. KAEE received \$1000 from the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education to train five leaders in Kentucky to be NAAEE Guidelines trainers. Those trainers are now: Ashley Hoffman (KAEE), Billy Bennett (EKU), David Allen (Murray), Elizabeth Schmitz (KEEC), and Terry Wilson (WKU); all are listed on the NAAEE website as contacts.

KAEE also received an EPA subgrant in the amount of \$150,000. The organization partnered with the Southeast States to offer EE grants in the amount of \$5,000 or less, and to provide funding to EE organizations in the Southeast states. EPA also awarded KAEE an additional \$60,000 in September to

provide more grants; these grants were provided to the next highest ranking applicants in the various states. KEEC received one of these grants to support the work of the Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan Implementation Advisory Team.

The EPA grant helped to build partnerships within the Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA). KAEE held the first Regional SEEA Conference in 2012 at the KAEE Conference at Lake Cumberland. In 2013, that meeting was in South Carolina in June with their state conference. In 2014, the Regional SEEA Conference will be held in North Carolina (Sept 18-21, 2014) during their state conference. Additionally, the grant has helped pay for regional meetings, at least twice a year. In 2012, SEEA became an official affiliate of NAAEE, only the second regional affiliate. At the NAAEE Conference in 2013, SEEA ratified bylaws for the organization to operate under, and elected officers.

As the Kentucky Affiliate of NAAEE, KAEE works closely with NAAEE on many topics, including work on a Steering Committee. A. Hoffman serves as the Communications Committee Chair. At the annual NAAEE conference, KAEE helps host a networking dinner, a reception, and a workshop.

KAEE's two major events are the Sustainability Symposium, in its second year, and the annual KAEE Conference. The next Sustainability Symposium may be held in Bowling Green in 2014, with a focus on Climate Change. This year's KAEE Conference was held at Lake Barkley, and the largest event ever held, with over 180 attendees. The 2014 Conference will be held in Lexington, an urban area. KAEE plans to be more intentional about moving their events around the state to they can expand membership and extend coverage about EE across the Commonwealth.

Sr. Amelia inquired about how KAEE handles their grants. A. Hoffman replied that she is the only KAEE staff person, but that she receives support on the grant work from her partner organizations and the "working" KAEE Board.

Sr. Amelia asked if KAEE has any connections to a state agency. A. Hoffman replied that KAEE is a nonprofit. However, KEEC is the overarching state agency. Also, the Kentucky University Partnership for Environmental Education (KUPEE) covers the state. These three organizations coordinate most of the EE coverage in Kentucky. This is why the Master Plan is important, to provide guidance to the three organizations so they don't overlap their work and can all expand their reach. KAEE's major role is to connect Environmental Educators across the state, and provide networking and training opportunities for them. M. Shane adds that KAEE has helped raise Kentucky's profile nationally with her work with NAAEE and SEEA. E. Schmitz adds that KAEE has also done a great job locally connecting GreenSchools! and KGHS, formalizing an MOU with KUPEE, and beginning broader work on an MOU with KEEC.

M. Norton asked what A. Hoffman's top goals were in the next year. A. Hoffman replied that the upcoming revised Master Plan has huge potential in leveraging collaboration between KAEE, KEEC, KUPEE, and the other EE groups in the state. The three statewide organizations need to do a much better job of telling our story and promoting EE.

K. Quinn speaks about her work with the Kentucky Housing Corporation, helping low and middle income families into affordable mortgages. How would A. Hoffman propose engaging home owners in being better stewards of their property and the environment... something like a one page flyer of suggestions? Everyone present thought this was a good idea and would be very helpful. C. Messenger recommended tying the suggestions to the new home owner's bottom line, where cost savings can be realized for

implementation of suggested practices. K. Quinn suggests that we work with KHC to investigate the possibility of developing a flyer. KEEC could hold a press release to announce the flyer. M. Norton suggests adding links to internet sites that can provide the how-to details for the different ideas. Also, suggests the flyer be mailed out to home owners; or made a part of the closing paper work. M. Shane recommends contacting local watershed groups and neighborhood associations to also distribute the flyer. Everyone agrees that this is a concept deserving further attention.

E. Schmitz thanks A. Hoffman for coming. M. Shane asks A. Hoffman to stay for an overview of the PLT MOU.

Project Learning Tree GreenSchools! MOU with KEEC and KGHS

M. Shane provides an overview of the current PLT MOU draft, just received from PLT at the NAAEE Conference. M. Shane seeks more detail and clarification in the MOU on which KGHS categories match which GreenSchools! categories. E. Schmitz clarifies that KGHS is not an organization and that KEEC should be listed as the partnership organization throughout the MOU document. E. Schmitz also requests that PLT's mission be included in the document, that Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools be correctly stated (not "Kentucky Green Schools") throughout; and inquires about the removal of privacy policy at the end of the document. M. Shane replies that the privacy policy was split into different sections and incorporated into earlier sections.

M. Shane continues by describing the alignment of the KGHS categories to the GreenSchools! categories: Energy to Energy, Green Spaces to School Site, Solid Waste to Waste and Recycling, Water to Water. The last PLT category, Environmental Quality, is a little different, as it overlaps multiple KGHS categories (Hazardous Chemicals, Indoor Air Quality, and Transportation). Are there any recommendations for how to handle the reconciling of these categories, in fairness to participants of KGHS who do not use the GreenSchools! program? One of their categories cannot count for three of ours. E. Schmitz suggests that we might restructure KGHS to more closely align with GreenSchools!, reducing the number of categories. However, this would also necessitate a change in the award structure. M. Shane indicates that the KGHS inventories are more robust because there are more questions.

M. Norton asks what the purpose is of aligning the two programs. M. Shane responds with multiple reasons: 1) GreenSchools! offers consistent grant money to schools; 2) both programs connect to STEM fields; 3) both programs expose students to possible career path opportunities; and 4) both programs help teachers employ the new NGSS standards. A. Hoffman adds that joining the programs reduces competition between programs: KGHS is a well-known state program; PLT GreenSchools! is a well-known national program. M. Shane adds that the aligning of the programs will be similar to KEEC's partnership with KY NEED.

M. Norton asks if the joining of these programs would help KEEC seek more funding. A. Hoffman responds that yes, the joining of the programs extends the reach and impact of both programs. As a non-profit, KAEE has more flexibility to apply for funding than KEEC as a state agency. E. Schmitz adds that a partnership with KAEE also allows KEEC to spend monies in ways that are not typically allowable for state agencies, such as the purchase of food at events.

A. Hoffman leaves meeting.

General Program Updates

Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools (KGHS) Update: M. Shane has reconvened the KGHS Advisory Committee. The committee is working to update the science of the questions, as well as make the questions more grade level appropriate. A survey has been issued to teachers and school energy managers to get feedback about the program, its ease of use, and any challenges that it presents. Also, the KGHS websites are undergoing transition to SharePoint; we hope that the new layout and formatting will be more user friendly for teachers and students alike.

E. Schmitz provides program updates:

Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan (KELP)/ Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Update: E. Schmitz will be presenting at the Instructional Support Leadership Network (ISLN), a network funded by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). After this presentation on November 8, KEEC will begin to distribute the KELP to administrators. All the correlations between the NAAEE Guidelines for Learners and the NGSS have been completed. The next step is to merge the correlations into a single document and redistribute to the committee for final comment. E. Schmitz had two SEEA grant applications: one as a partner with KAEE for the EE Certification program, and a second application with Bluegrass Greensource (BGGGS). Only the Bluegrass GreenSource grant was awarded. The \$5,000 funding received with BGGGS allowed E. Schmitz to travel to the Kentucky Association of School Administrators Conference, and allowed KEEC to bring teachers to present at the Kentucky Science Teachers Association Conference this week. Of note, KEEC's primary science consultant liaison with KDE has changed from Sean Elkins to Christine Duke, Elementary Science Coordinator.

Professional Environmental Educator Certification Course ("EE Certification"): The NAAEE grant that KAEE and KEEC partnered to apply for has not been formally awarded, but KAEE was informally notified of the award and NAAEE advised KAEE to begin work. KEEC only has until Dec 31, 2013 to spend the funds. Expenditures under this grant include an EE Certification Reunion, tentatively scheduled for Dec 13 at a location to be determined (possibly Bowling Green or Mammoth Cave). E. Schmitz asks the Council their opinion on if the Certification Reunion should be open only to graduates of the Certification program, or also open to other interested parties. A. Stenger recommends opening the reunion to the public to recruit new students. C. Messenger hesitates about drumming up more business for the course at this time of year because the current course is already underway and enrollment will not occur again until Fall 2014. She asks if the reunion could be held at the same time at the new class's graduation ceremony. E. Schmitz reminds the Council that the money for this event must be spent by Dec 31, 2013; graduation will not occur until Spring 2014. E. Schmitz estimates the reunion might draw 25 people. M. Shane feels that the reunion should be limited to graduates only for several reasons: 1) Free P.D. is a benefit for graduates and can incentivize others to take the course if the Free PD is an exclusive right to graduates, and 2) with an open reunion, graduates may feel that they have to work to promote the program to new faces instead of catching up on news and programming with colleagues. K. Quinn indicates that the Council will support whatever choice is made.

The current class enrollment is at 23 people (the cap is 25). The dates for the workshops are as follows: November 14-16, 2013; December 5-7, 2013; February 27 – March 1, 2014; and March 27-29, 2014. The course has been compressed from 14 months to 6 months. This compression will hopefully reduce the attrition rate.

Certification Advisory Committee (CAC) Update: Continues to meet, but the committee work has become more of a hindrance than a benefit to moving forward. E. Schmitz would like to form another committee with the same individuals for the NAAEE Accreditation process, although people will have the option to step down. NAAEE has approved Georgia's accreditation application; Utah and Colorado are currently preparing their applications. E. Schmitz is targeting Feb 2015 for the submission of KEEC's NAAEE Accreditation Application. This process was not included in the budget, because the amount of the application depends on the number of graduates who complete their continuing education requirements, and KEEC's deadline for reporting is not until January 2014. E. Schmitz plans to seek outside funding to support this application effort.

EE Certification Continuing Education (C.E.) Requirements: KEEC is receiving positive feedback from individuals who are using the new forms.

2014 Environmental Literacy Survey and Master Plan: E. Schmitz previously spoke with A. Hoffman about ideas to kick start the planning process. A. Hoffman likes the idea of town hall style meetings to get in person feedback, but recommends that there be a smaller group of people that go on a retreat and actually complete the writing of the plan. E. Schmitz points out that the statute, KRS 157.915, says KEEC should be reviewing and updating the Master Plan annually. C. Messenger notes that KEEC does review the Master Plan in Council meetings on an annual basis. E. Schmitz wants to include the Master Plan Review on the agenda for the Council Retreat.

C. Messenger notes that in the past, the Council has invited many different kinds of people to come to Frankfort and provide comments on the Master Plan, because there may be some limitations in small, regional group feedback. E. Schmitz notes that KEEC has traditionally spent about \$20,000 on the survey portion with UK Research Center. However, it may be possible to save money and reach a broader audience by using an outside firm. If KEEC does this, the \$20,000 would be split to fund the survey, and also to fund a facilitator and the Master Plan retreat. K. Quinn says it can't hurt to put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) and see what kind of bids come in. E. Schmitz indicates that she would like to get the RFP out next week.

Pride Fund Update: The contract went live on Oct. 9, 2013. The funds must be spent by June 30, 2014. The process has been frustrating for both KEEC and the KUPEE. E. Schmitz learned recently that it may be possible to suspend the statute requiring KEEC to distribute the Pride Funds to KUPEE. However, if that statute is suspended, it may be possible that KEEC does not get the money at all and the funds are placed in the General Fund. E. Schmitz would rather KUPEE get the funds than they go into the General Fund; however if KEEC can keep the funds, it would be a boon to the agency's budget. E. Schmitz requests that the Council Members contact their networks and legislators about KEEC's budget situation, and the need to help.

M. Norton asks why KEEC does not refer to KRS 157.915 and ask the legislature for more money so we can fulfill the mandate of the statute. E. Schmitz indicates that the legislators may just cut out the Master Plan in response to the request. K. Quinn asks if the KEEC has ever been audited. E. Schmitz does not know when the last audit occurred. K. Quinn indicates that audits are one process by which unfunded mandates are highlighted.

E. Schmitz met with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary prior to the Council Meeting. Secretary Zawacki indicated that he would do his best to help KEEC and the funding situation.

Networking and Partnership Development: The KAAE Consortium has been excellent in extending connections between new and existing groups that do environmental education. E. Schmitz plans to attend all future KAAE Board Meetings, whether or not the Cabinet legal team allows her to participate as an Advisor or Member of the KAAE Board. K. Quinn asks why the Cabinet legal counsel advised that the KEEC Director could not serve on the KAAE Board. E. Schmitz says she was provided an ethics opinion. K. Quinn requests the opinion be sent to her for review. There have been several opportunities that have arisen from the KAAE Consortium meetings:

- **Capitol Education Center (CEC).** Another project with the CEC is developing a short series of films for students on exploring different career paths. AppalShop, a member of the KAAE Consortium, is going to be sending a quote to KEEC for this film series, as well as highlighting the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) programs for sustainability and energy. Another option would be to work with Fayette Co. Public Schools who has a video production class. KET is also a willing partner who has offered student filmmakers a tour of the KET facilities, media lab, etc.
- **Adult Education Initiative:** On the way to a KAAE Consortium Meeting, E. Schmitz spoke with Billie Hardin of KCTCS. B. Hardin offered to host some of the Adult Education Workshops, offering free space at KCTCS locations. B. Hardin also indicated that they may have some professors who would be interested in teaching at the workshops. Some of the colleges also have culinary schools that would be able to provide excellent food options at a low cost.
- **Pine Mountain Settlement School.** E. Schmitz was able to visit Pine Mountain Settlement School during the final 2013 Consortium Meeting. She suggests that the 2015 Council Retreat be held at this location. The new Pine Mountain Settlement School Director, Penne Lane, has asked KEEC to help with evaluation and revamping of their environmental education programs. P. Lane would like to form a teacher focus group and hold a two or three day meeting to look through and revise Pine Mountain Settlement School materials. E. Schmitz would like to set up an NAAEE Guidelines training in Eastern Kentucky to facilitate program improvements in the Eastern Kentucky Area.

Other Networking, Partnership Development, and Outreach:

- **Toyota.** KEEC met with Toyota and took a tour of their outdoor classrooms. A follow-up item is to present Toyota with tiered cost training options to help train their staff on environmental education. Secretary Zawacki suggested that we offer to staff the Toyota Environmental Education Visitors Center for a fee. However, this would require KEEC to hire additional staff. A. Stenger and K. Quinn suggest offering \$75,000 to staff the program and then hiring a contract employee at KEEC.
- **Fantasy Forest.** This green space (a micro forest and community garden) is located on 2nd Street near the Capitol in Frankfort. Partnering with Fantasy Forest may be an opportunity to expand KGHS's reach further into Franklin Co., where it is underrepresented. E. Schmitz suggest she may be able to locate grant money to make Frankfort a pilot for how the KERP could be implemented, using Fantasy Forest.
- **General Outreach.** KEEC Staff has provided outreach through presentations, workshops, and exhibiting. During the first quarter of F.Y. 2014, E. Schmitz traveled to the Kentucky Association of School Administrators (travel made possible by the SEEA Grant) and presented "Environmental Education: Greening STEM". At the Kentucky School Board Association

Meeting, E. Schmitz presented with Greg Guess on the Energy in Education Collaborative effort. E. Schmitz presented at the KAEE Conference on the KERP and NGSS, and a plenary Policy Update; M. Shane and A. Hoffman co-presented about green schools in Kentucky. KEEC had a booth at the Governor's Conference on Energy and the Environment and the Kentucky Association of School Councils Conference.

KEEC launched the KEEC Legacy Newsletter. KEEC transitioned the KEEC website to the new SharePoint format. E. Schmitz met with Kim Baily of Georgia who runs the EEinKentucky website and has some suggestions for improvements.

At NAAEE, E. Schmitz participated in the Accreditation Planning Meeting and a focus group. A. Hoffman assisted KEEC at NAAEE by sitting in on a round table about EE Certification in Kentucky. E. Schmitz presented at the Innovation and Education Conference. At the KSTA Conference this week, E. Schmitz is scheduled to give three presentations: one on Environmental Education Resources in Kentucky, one on Greening STEM, and one on the Correlations. Also at KSTA, KEEC will also have a booth, and Michelle Shane will be co-presenting on green schools again with A. Hoffman, and co-facilitating an all-day PLT workshop.

Council Budget Review

E. Schmitz notes that she has cancelled her business cell phone to save money in the budget. KEEC Council members should now reach her personal cell if they wish to contact her outside the office.

In the Council packets are pie charts and spread sheets showing actual spending for the Agency for F.Y. 2013 and F.Y. 2014 to date. Staff Costs and Fringe consume 83% of the budget. Of the remaining 17% of expenditures, the next highest category is Travel. For the total 17%, the breakdown is as follows: 44% is Travel (of which, 36% is In-State Travel, 37% is Out-of-State Travel, 26% is Non-KEEC/Non-State Employee Travel, and 2% is Motor Pool), 12% is Personal Service Contracts, 9% is Postage and Printing, 7% is Office and Classroom Supplies, etc. There is more detail in the spreadsheets, including Travel by Traveler. K. Quinn looked at the travel spreadsheets in detail prior to this meeting and feels the travel costs are within reason. E. Schmitz notes that the Non-State Employee travel cost include teacher substitute reimbursements, so that KEEC can entice teachers to attend various committee meetings and presentations.

In F.Y. 2014, E. Schmitz notes the pie slice for the Pride Fund contract to KUPPEE makes the projections appear less percentage wise on KEEC staff salaries and fringe. However, this is only because the RFP distribution is \$112,000. M. Shane notes on the projections spread sheet that the columns in red are revised estimates from the last Council Meeting, based off meetings with the Cabinet Budget folks, so these numbers should be more accurate.

On the pie chart showing F.Y. 2014 projections, sans Salary, Fringe and the Pride Fund, E. Schmitz notes that the Professional Service Contract category includes the EE Certification RFP and the EE Survey.

M. Shane notes that projections extended through the next biennium, assuming that all Pride funds are distributed, will leave the Agency with \$0 carry forward at the end of F.Y. 2016. E. Schmitz indicates that this is in part due to the request KEEC sent up with the biennium budget: that the interim position be turned back into a fulltime position. Also, E. Schmitz requested that the General Fund cover the

actuarially recommended contribution (ARC) monies (those funds that agencies are now required to supply to cover staff retirements), fringe increases for current and future employees, and to offset the costs of some agency operations.

E. Schmitz notes that she was out of the office when notifications were sent about the deadline for the Additional Budget Request (ABR); consequently the ABR was submitted late, so the agency's needs got a lower priority ranking than it should have within the Cabinet (36th out of 37). K. Quinn asks E. Schmitz to develop a process by which she can ensure important email notifications are not missed, or to regularly check her emails on her phone while she is out of the office. E. Schmitz confirmed that the email was received on Aug 28th, the ABR was due Sept 9th, and that she was out of the office in meetings on most days between the email receipt and due date. E. Schmitz says that the Agency is simply understaffed and has more work to do than we can keep up with. M. Shane suggests that we block out time on the calendar now for budget planning next year to ensure that deadlines are not missed. E. Schmitz can ask Secretary Zawacki about the possibility of adjusting the rankings so KEEC be moved up.

E. Schmitz requests formal approval from the Council to hire and train an interim employee to help with Agency workloads. This expense is budgeted.

⇒ At 3:55 PM, A. Stenger moved that the Council authorize the hiring of an interim employee; M. Norton seconded the motion. None were opposed. The motion passed.

K. Quinn exits the meeting. Greg Higdon joins the meeting.

E. Schmitz is also going to lobby for an intern to help staff KEEC.

A. Stenger asks if there is any provision under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to cover an essential employee's functions while they are out of the office, such as will be the case with M. Shane when she is out on maternity leave. M. Shane suggests that we check with the Secretary's office to bring in a temp or provide someone from the Department of Education who can help support KEEC while she is out on leave.

A. Stenger stresses that solving the Agency's budget crisis must become the top priority and focus for E. Schmitz and the Agency.

M. Norton asks about focusing on grants and foundation monies, coming up with a focused strategy to access these funds. M. Shane recommends focusing on foundation monies and private sponsorships and donations so that KEEC is not obligated for match funds. A. Stenger recommends doing more research into grant opportunities to ensure that those KEEC applies for are more likely to be awarded.

G. Higdon asks how we go about applying for grants. E. Schmitz replies that she looks closely at those opportunities that come through her inbox. When KEEC can meet the match requirements, or if there are no match requirements, then she submits an application. The largest limiting factor to E. Schmitz applying for grants is the time it takes to complete the applications.

To attract money from corporate and private industries, G. Higdon recommends tying KEEC's efforts to economic and workforce development. For instance, the Green Schools Initiative can be a vital

component to training teachers to teach the workforce of the future. He also recommends talking to our contacts in Kentucky who receive lots of grant money and learning from them. A. Stenger notes that you often have to know people at an organization to get money; cold calling doesn't work. G. Higdon offers his resources to make introductions. E. Schmitz recommends a separate call with G. Higdon next week to learn about some possible contacts for funding.

M. Norton asks if the KDE or the Cabinet has a designated grant person or group that we might tap to help us write more grants.

Office Move

E. Schmitz notes that the Agency will be moving offices from the 21st Floor of the Capital Plaza Tower to the 19th Floor sometime in November or December.

Focus Area Work Groups

E. Schmitz requests that all Council Members review the Focus Areas agreed upon at the last Council Meeting. She would like someone to volunteer to be the lead on each work group.

Future Council Meetings: The Winter meeting will be held on January 22 from 1-4 p.m. in Frankfort, KY. The spring meeting will not serve as the retreat; the Spring meeting will be held on April 30 at Mammoth Cave National Parks. The Summer meeting will be a retreat and held on July 28-29, 2014 at Ursuline Sisterhood, Maple Mount, KY.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned by H. Brown at 4:18 PM.