



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC) Summer Council Meeting  
July 28-29, 2014

**Meeting Location:** Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, Maple Mount, KY

**Meeting Time:** July 28, 2014: 1 PM – 8 PM and July 29, 2014: 9:30 AM – 11:20 AM (Central Time Zone)

**Council Members in Attendance:** Chair Horace Brown, Sr. Amelia Stenger, Cheryl Messenger, Marc Norton, Karen Reagor

**Absent Members:** Vice-Chair Karen Quinn, Lona Brewer, Shannon S. Graves, Greg Higdon

**Staff in Attendance:** Elizabeth Schmitz, Michelle Shane, Wesley Bullock

**Others in Attendance:** David Allen, Murray State University; Billy Bennett, Eastern Kentucky University; Ashley Hoffman, Kentucky Association for Environmental Education; Terry Wilson, Western Kentucky University

#### Meeting Introduction

The meeting was called to order by H. Brown. Introductions were made by all present.

#### Minutes

Minutes from the April 2014 Council meeting were presented for review and approval.

⇒ At 1:10 PM, K. Reagor moved that the Minutes from the April 2014 Council meeting be approved as presented; A. Stenger seconded the motion. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

#### Budget FY14 Closeout and Year in Review

E. Schmitz reported on the closeout for contracts expiring at the end of the fiscal year. M. Shane presented a detailed analysis of income and expenditures. E. Schmitz broke down the spending chart, pointing out that current personnel expenses are greater than income.

#### FY15-16 Biennium Budget Projections

M. Shane explained the agency budget outlook for the biennium. E. Schmitz discussed the interim legislative session, and potential proposals for legislative changes.

#### Program Update on Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools (KGHS)

M. Shane presented newly-formatted inventories/investigations that will launch sometime in the middle of the next school year.

#### Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE)

E. Schmitz explained that the pending MOU may require a ruling from the Ethics Commission to resolve the issue of whether it impermissibly promotes another organization. The Council discussed the purpose of the MOU and recommended that the agency continue to pursue it.

#### Letters of Support/Commitment for Grants

E. Schmitz discussed the issue of KEEC writing letters of commitment to assist other organizations with grant applications. She said that she has received differing informal opinions on the legality of this practice and suggested getting an Ethics Commission opinion to resolve it.

#### Kentucky University Partnership for Environmental Education (KUPEE) PRIDE Funding

KUPEE members T. Wilson, B. Bennett, and D. Allen reported on KUPEE activities supported by the PRIDE Fund grants from KEEC. E. Schmitz reported on activities at universities that did not have a representative present. M. Shane noted that the RFP for the small amount of remaining PRIDE funds will require that bids be written individually. The remaining funds consist of amounts that came in Fiscal Year 2014 after the first funds were bid on, and funds that were not expended on the last bid.

#### Mission of KUPEE and Priorities for University Environmental Education Centers

The Council and guests discussed the mission of KUPEE and how it may change going forward.

#### Update on Expansion of KUPEE/Master Plan Language

The Council and guests discussed potential updates to the language of the Master Plan, including expanding a teacher certification program for environmental education and expanding KUPEE to include private institutions. E. Schmitz noted that there may be issues with giving public money to private institutions.

#### Master Plan Meetings

E. Schmitz and KUPEE members reported updates to the schedule of public meetings. The Council discussed the participant evaluations of the July 23 kickoff meeting for the Master Plan and recommended that E. Schmitz attend as many meetings as possible. E. Schmitz outlined the purpose and logistics of the Master Plan retreat and the schedule for drafting and publishing the Master Plan. The Council discussed changing the publication year of the Master Plan from 2014 to 2015 in order to place it on “even” years.

⇒ At 6:30 PM, K. Reagor moved that the publication year of the Master Plan officially be changed to 2015, and to 2020 and every 5 years thereafter; A. Stenger seconded the motion. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

The Council and guests concluded the discussion with KUPEE by reviewing the history of Environmental Education Centers at the University of Kentucky and University of Louisville.

#### KAEE Update

A. Hoffman presented on the background of KAEE, recent activities, and projects. The Council, staff, and guests discussed collaboration with KAEE, including attending the KAEE Conference and scheduling a reunion of the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course to coincide with the KAEE Sustainability Symposium.

### Future Opportunities

The Council and staff discussed upcoming RFPs and pending grants, including potential collaborators for the National Science Foundation grant opportunity. E. Schmitz reported on past and upcoming meetings of the Interagency Subcommittee on Environmental Education (ISEE).

### Green Ribbon Schools Program

E. Schmitz reported on the purpose of the Green Ribbon Schools program and the upcoming tour of Green Ribbon Schools in central Kentucky in cooperation with the US Department of Education.

### Accreditation for the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course

W. Bullock reported completion of the application for NAAEE accreditation of the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course and discussed the expected timeline for a decision.

The meeting was suspended at 8:00 PM July 28 and resumed at 9:30 AM July 29

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**Staff in Attendance:** Elizabeth Schmitz, Wesley Bullock

### Council Input on the Master Plan

The Council discussed feedback from the kickoff meeting for the Master Plan. The Council suggested printing a list of those who attended the meetings, and the organizations they represented, in the published version of the Master Plan just inside the front cover. The Council also suggested adding a goal of having teachers use environmental education projects to complete Kentucky Teacher Internship Program requirements. The Council discussed presenting the Master Plan through Kentucky Educational Television and featuring KGHS in the Capitol Education Center. Council members who will attend regional Master Plan meetings were asked to serve as facilitators rather than providing input. K. Reagor and C. Messenger offered to attend the Master Plan writing retreat to help draft the plan.

### Direction of the Agency

The Council suggested discussing the agency budget situation with the First Lady and using the survey results to advocate to legislators for more funding. The Council also advised turning down third parties who propose projects that the agency cannot afford to do and emphasizing the lack of funding.

### Legislative Initiatives

The Council discussed looking into setting up a trust fund for donations. E. Schmitz described the process and potential costs. She noted that the agency should avoid competing with KAEE for funds, since it relies entirely on private funding. The Council offered suggestions for private funding.

⇒ At 10:30 AM, K. Reagor moved that KEEC Executive Director take the necessary steps to create a trust fund; M. Norton seconded the motion. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

The Council also discussed whether to request a revision of the statute that funds KEEC. The Council suggested requesting the change this year, and withdrawing the request if it is not feasible.

### Council Participation

The Council and staff discussed the agency newsletter, "KEEC Legacy." A. Stenger, H. Brown, and M. Norton offered to submit articles. The Council recommended reviving the newsletter as an email-only quarterly publication timed to avoid conflicting with the KAEE newsletter schedule.

### KAEE Conference

The Council discussed sponsorship of the KAEE Conference and staff and Council attendance.

⇒ At 11:15 AM, A. Stenger moved to sponsor the KAEE Conference at \$250; H. Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.