



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC)  
Spring Council Meeting Minutes  
April 26, 2017

**Meeting Location:** Frankfort Convention Center, 405 Mero St., Frankfort, KY

**Meeting Time:** 1:00 p.m. Eastern

**Council Members in Attendance:** Chair Horace Brown, Vice Chair Billie Hardin, Lona Brewer, Gordon Garner, Marcus Norton, and Karen Reagor

**Absent Members:** Karin Ceralde, and Greg Higdon

**Staff in Attendance:** Billy Bennett, Wesley Bullock, Tabitha Owens

**Others in Attendance:** Patrick Shirley, Staff Attorney, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Meeting Introduction

The meeting was called to order by H. Brown at 1:07 PM. A quorum was present. Introductions were made around the table.

Minutes Review

W. Bullock noted that the minutes should have stated that the minutes were from January 25, 2017. B. Hardin requested a change to reflect that a quorum was not present at the beginning of the meeting, but was achieved at a later time in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

⇒ At 1:10 PM, B. Hardin moved to approve the January minutes with the changes discussed. L. Brewer seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

Update on Council Vacancy

H. Brown noted that he has not heard from the Governor's office about the suggested appointment. B. Bennett noted that other councils also have unfilled seats.

Election of Officers

H. Brown noted that he does not plan to seek re-appointment at the end of his term in 2018. He also noted that the chairman also serves on the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund board.

⇒ At 1:13 PM, M. Norton moved to elect B. Hardin as Chair. K. Reagor seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

⇒ At 1:15 PM, M. Norton moved to name H. Brown as Chairman Emeritus. K. Reagor seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

⇒ At 1:16 PM, G. Garner moved to name M. Norton as Vice Chair. L. Brewer seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

B. Hardin, upon taking position as chair, spoke to recognize the contributions of H. Brown to the KEEC.

#### Introduction of EE Specialist and Report on Water Education Program

B. Bennett introduced T. Owens, KEEC's new Environmental Education Specialist. She explained that the EPA grant received by KEEC was for \$91,000, with exactly \$22,750 to be given away as sub-grants to schools. She has scheduled professional development workshops in Marshall, Powell, Campbell, Hardin, and Pulaski counties. The first Workshop will be in Pulaski County on May 31. It will involve water education and field study, and a trip to Liberty Nature Center. This is the model for the future workshops, which will involve lessons, field study, and field trips. She has made several contacts to get local interest in the workshops, including with ORSANCO for the Campbell County workshop. G. Garner told T. Owens that he was on the ORSANCO commission when it was originally funded and offered to help with the field trip if necessary. B. Bennett noted that T. Owens' research has greatly benefited KEEC in many ways, including the idea regional resource contacts throughout Kentucky. K. Reagor asked if all of the workshops will be in the summer. T. Owens said it depends on what is available at the chosen location. B. Hardin noted that KCTCS sites may be available, and could have a faculty member available to sit in on the training. K. Reagor asked if we need special permission to do things in the summer. B. Bennett explained that her interim position can be filled only for 8 months and 29 days at a time, but we are investigating hiring her as a temp in the summer in order to catch up on the workshops. B. Bennett noted that extending the grant is normally an easy process. L. Brewer cautioned that extensions that formerly were easily granted may not be given the current federal budget situation. H. Brown asked if we have a firm commitment from EPA for the funding. B. Bennett noted that the contract has been signed and the funding is firmly in place. M. Norton asked if the grant was renewable. B. Bennett noted that the office of education is targeted for funding cuts, but it is not the first time that has happened, and it has always been restored in the budget. L. Brewer asked what kinds of things the sub-grants will purchase for the schools. T. Owens noted that it will purchase supplies for water quality and conservation projects, like rain barrels, shovels, mulch, water testing kits, etc. She said that KEEC hopes to give grants to about 20 schools of about \$1000 per school. M. Norton asked if we will publicize the grants. B. Bennett said that we would seek press releases. K. Reagor asked if part of the grant will require schools to plan an activity that would also qualify as a KGHS water project. T. Owens confirmed that the application will require them to join KGHS and submit the project through the program. T. Owens said that she is working on strengthening the KGHS program's instructions about submitting data. B. Hardin noted Alice Jones at ECU has been doing water quality surveying, called the "Big Dip Redo", to re-test sites that were tested 10 years ago and compare the results. T. Owens said that the Division of Water has been very helpful. K. Reagor asked about schools that are participating in the Kentucky Water Watch program. T. Owens is going to a workshop on that program on Saturday.

#### Thank You Letter to Secretary Heiner for Office Space

B. Bennett noted that the EWDC has provided additional office space for T. Owens. He would like to write the letter of thanks on behalf of the council.

#### Budget

W. Bullock presented on the budget. Noted increase in revenue for PEEC fees and Pride fund interest. Noted savings from not having Exec. Director. Noted that projections for personnel costs should be

accurate for FY2018 now that we have full pay periods of full staff. Noted future savings for cancellation of EEin Kentucky.org and one instructor PEEC contract that was not fulfilled due to illness.

B. Hardin asked P. Shirley whether the Council should vote to approve the budget. P. Shirley recommended doing so.

⇒ At 1:49 PM, K. Reagor moved to approve the budget as presented. M. Norton seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

B. Hardin asked W. Bullock to make the budget report a part of the record of the meeting

#### Program Committee, and Events Update

B. Bennett noted the WKYT presented a story on the KGHS program and Kit Carson Elementary School.

B. Bennett said that the PEEC course has completed all workshops, but some assignments are yet to be graded and the course feedback has not yet been compiled. He noted that, for the first time we know of, all course participants are expected to graduate, for a total of 27 new CPEEs. He announced that Graduation ceremony will be on June 1 at the Capitol Rotunda at 2:00 PM. There will be a small reception afterward at the Capitol Education Center. M. Norton asked if that will go out as a press release. W. Bullock said that we would get an invitation out to Council Members shortly. K. Reagor asked if there were any K-12 teachers. B. Bennett said that there were four, and also a retired teacher. W. Bullock noted that it was very valuable to have them in the class for better interaction between formal and nonformal educators. B. Hardin asked if the new selection process for course instructors was beneficial. B. Bennett said that KEEC is thinking about going back to one contract for a single entity. L. Brewer noted that the single contract loses some money to administrative costs, so KEEC should be cautious in returning to the older method. M. Norton asked staff to keep the Council up to date about the decision. M. Norton asked how the contractor would find staff in a single contract situation. B. Bennett said that only a few entities would have the contacts to complete the project, but we would put requirements for instructors into the contract. K. Reagor asked if we are just asking them to be a fiscal agent, or asking them also to select instructors. B. Bennett noted that they would select the instructors within our parameters. W. Bullock said that we would bring a full evaluation of the course to the July retreat.

W. Bullock noted that nine schools received KGHS awards, and six will attend the Summit. With funding for transportation to the Summit in the EPA grant, we expect more attendance next year.

B. Bennett reported that KEEC helped coordinate, with Energy and Environment Cabinet, an Earth Day Celebration for state employees at the 300 Building on April 19. KEEC coordinated a LEED feature scavenger hunt and hosted an exhibit with T. Owens' ideas for no waste family games. There was good participation the hunt and the celebration itself. W. Bullock noted that Green Ribbon Schools awardees will be recognized at the KGHS and KY NEED Summit instead of the Earth Day celebration this year because it is a better fit with the increasing focus of Earth Day on state employees and the focus of the Summit on K-12 students. B. Hardin asked why there will be no higher education award for Green Ribbon Schools this year. She said that information was usually disseminated by CPE. B. Bennett will check on the announcement for next year.

### Pride Fund and Master Plan Annual Report

B. Bennett noted that there is progress at the national level to come up with a survey that can be used in all states, and KEEC would like to use the Pride Fund money to collect data instead of coming up with the survey itself. But KEEC would have to request a cap increase even for an unpaid intern, if it were housed at KEEC. Alternative is to go through KUPEE. L. Brewer explained that a contract through a university might be done through MOA instead of RFP. K. Reagor asked if we could participate early on in the survey development so that we could help guide the process, since we have been doing a survey for so long. B. Bennett was not sure if the survey would be similar because we focus on general population, and this survey focuses on EE organizations. L. Brewer wondered if we should move more quickly, and if the Council had established a quicker deadline. None was found in the minutes from the January meeting. B. Bennett mentioned that EKU requires Parks and Recreation students to do a 12-week unpaid internship, so the possibilities for this position are out there. L. Brewer asked B. Bennett to research what types of internships are offered at other universities. B. Hardin asked if the Council wants to wait for Rhode Island, at least a year. L. Brewer is concerned that it is too far out. B. Hardin asked what we would do with the report. L. Brewer mentioned legislators, teachers, stakeholders, and other opportunities for good PR and outreach. B. Hardin asked if it should initially just highlight what we have done to reach the Master Plan goals. G. Garner thinks that an annual report should link to performance metrics. B. Hardin said that we have yet to develop some of those. B. Hardin thought that the Council should use the July retreat to identify some priorities and performance metrics to judge progress. Council consensus was to use the July retreat to come up with this planning and measurement process. L. Brewer said that the report should highlight successes and show where we need to go.

### Council Retreat Planning

W. Bullock said that he had reserved Shaker Village as a backup, and it would cost \$1800 approximately. H. Brown recommended doing the retreat in one day at the 300 building in order to save money. G. Garner said we should be sensitive to travel. B. Hardin said it builds collegiality. K. Reagor said we have a lot of work to do and should stay after lunch, and we would avoid distractions. W. Bullock ran down the list of options that had been considered. L. Brewer asked for input on whether a full day or two-day meeting is preferable. K. Reagor said that she prefers two days. G. Garner suggested two days, as did M. Norton. B. Bennett said that it is the one park that Council Members get. G. Garner mentioned that the last retreat was focused on transitions, and we did not do a lot of planning. Consensus is to go forward with the two-day retreat at Shaker Village. B. Hardin would like the space to be reserved into the afternoon on the second day as well. G. Garner would like KEEC to find a facilitator for free to work on the planning process. K. Reagor asked KEEC staff to keep the Council apprised of retreat plans. It will be on July 25-26, 2017.

### Grant Update

B. Bennett reported that KEEC has applied for several grants, including:

- Georgia-Pacific, applied and rejected
- Steele-Reese Foundation, applied, consulted with grant coordinator, and have positive feedback
- Braitmeyer Foundation, KAEE applied, and KEEC would get some money for staff time to work on it
- Americorps, met with Kentucky Americorps staff, explained our ability to provide training to Americorps members, got positive feedback, sent Intent to Apply for planning grant

K. Reagor suggested asking Toyota for more. B. Hardin suggested Alltech. K. Reagor suggested Lexmark.

### October Council Meeting

B. Bennett asked the Council to move the October Council Meeting to November 1. The consensus of the Council was to move the date.

⇒ At 3:00 PM, G. Garner moved to approve the budget as presented. K. Reagor seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

### Other Announcements and Public Comments

B. Hardin asked B. Bennett to consider to the salary of W. Bullock, while noting that the Council does not hire staff, and those decisions are within his authority. B. Bennett explained that he has consulted with HR about the best mechanism to do so, but they are still working on whether it can be done with his current position or would require reclassifying his position.

K. Reagor asked for an update on university EE centers. B. Bennett said that the situation is complicated, but from what he knows, April Haight of Morehead University is the chair of KUPEE, Murray does not have a center but has a professor who is teaching some of the endorsement courses. Terry Wilson is completely retiring at the end of this year from WKU, and he thinks that the center will be run by Jeanine Huss. NKU had a center, then couldn't call it a center, then had Rosie Santos leading it, who graduated, now it is in CINSAM, with Denice Robertson as Center Director, but it may be run by Kim Yates. April is running Morehead's center. EKV's position was cut, but Melinda Wilder is continuing to perform as many of the functions as possible. KSU has a stable center with Jennifer Hubbard-Sanchez as its leader. There is a lot of interest and connections at UK, but we will have a lot of work to do, starting with meetings as soon as possible. G. Garner thought it was a good approach to try to pull people together and select a lead contact, because UK has resources, but they are in silos. U of L is in a worse situation because of leadership issues all the way to the board level, and because we have only tenuous contacts. B. Hardin suggested the sustainability coordinator at UK, Shane Tedder. And Justin Mog, assistant to the Provost for sustainability at U of L. G. Garner said that almost all of the EE activity in Louisville has shifted to the sustainability group.

### Confirmation of Public Notice

KEEC staff confirm that the meeting was publicized on the agency website and through a press release as required by Kentucky Open Meetings Law.

### Motion to Adjourn

⇒ At 3:17 PM, G. Garner moved to adjourn the meeting. K. Reagor seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.