



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC)
Summer Council Meeting Minutes
July 25, 2017

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

Meeting Time: July 25, 1:00 p.m. Eastern

Council Members in Attendance: Chair Billie Hardin, Vice Chair Marc Norton, Lona Brewer, Karin Ceralde, Karen Reagor

Absent Members: Horace Brown, Gordon Garner, Greg Higdon

Staff in Attendance: Billy Bennett, Wesley Bullock

Others in Attendance: Kevin Osborne, Staff Attorney, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet; Dr. H. M. Snodgrass, Kentucky House Leadership

Council Meeting Introduction

The meeting was called to order by B. Hardin at 1:14 PM.

Confirmation of Public Notice

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

Roll Call

W. Bullock called roll. A quorum of five Council Members was present.

Welcome and Introductions

Council Members and guests introduced themselves to the group. The Council Members expressed condolences to G. Garner on the death of his son.

Motion to Approve Agenda

⇒ At 1:23 PM, K. Reagor moved to approve the agenda for the Council Meeting. L. Brewer seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

Motion to Approve Minutes of April 2018 Council Meeting

⇒ At 1:27 PM, M. Norton moved to approve the minutes of the April 2018 Council Meeting, with the addition that Patrick Shirley be designated as a staff attorney from the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. K. Reagor seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

Program Updates

B. Bennett updated the Council on the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course. He noted that 26 Of 27 participants in the 2016-17 program graduated in May, and that there are now 102 Certified Professional Environmental Educators in Kentucky. He briefly discussed potential changes to the 2018-19 version of the course, including more flexibility in instruction to deal with the variety of educational settings represented by participants. Council Members discussed the reasons for the high graduation rate, including changes in workload distribution, connection to STEM education, and personal circumstance. Members also discussed how to connect better with school administrators, including through educational cooperatives, to encourage the participation of K-12 teachers.

B. Bennett updated the Council on the Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools program, which had nine active participants in 2016-17, with seven attending the KGHS Summit and Awards Luncheon. He expects more participation in the next school year because of funding from the grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency. The Summit and Awards Luncheon will move to the Lexington Convention Center in 2018 because of the closing of the Frankfort Convention Center. B. Bennett also noted that there is a potential to further expand KGHS participation if the Council receives a grant from the Steele-Reese Foundation, which is expected to make announcements in August.

Grant Updates

B. Bennett discussed the progress of the grant project funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency. KEEC Interim Environmental Education Specialist Tabitha Owens conducted three teacher professional development workshops so far in Pulaski, Hardin, and Campbell counties, with a total of 50 participants. Two more workshops are scheduled for Marshall and Powell counties. Tabitha Owens has accepted a position with the Kentucky Division of Water, but will conduct the remaining workshops under a time sharing agreement. The next Interim Environmental Education Specialist will focus on administering the sub-grants that are part of the program, and will be hired as soon as possible. The goal of the sub-grants is to distribute the funding to 20 schools who are participating in the KGHS program.

B. Bennett announced that KEEC has received a planning grant from Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service to plan an AmeriCorps program for environmental educators. The initial plan is for all of the AmeriCorps members to participate in the PEEC course, which may require KEEC to operate the course every year instead of every other year. Another challenge is that the grant is set up as a reimbursement, so KEEC will be required to pay out of pocket, and must have enough cash on hand to do so. The bulk of the grant will be funding to hire a Program Director for the program. This will be a federally-funded full-time position with benefits, and the person hired will be expected to lead the program if it is fully funded in the next grant cycle. The funding is for three year cycles which can be renewed.

Policies and Procedures

B. Bennett noted that the Council Policies and Procedures were last updated in 1997. KEEC staff will work with Education and Workforce Development Cabinet staff attorney K. Osborne to discuss a framework for new Policies and Procedures that can be provided to Council Members before the next quarterly meeting.

Break from 2:30-2:40 p.m.

Budget

W. Bullock reported on the actual revenue and expenditures for Fiscal Year 2017, and projected revenue and expenditure for FY 2018. He noted the increase in carry-forward amounts each of last two years. For Fiscal Year 2017, the improvement over projections was due to an increase in revenue from interest on the Pride Fund, and savings in personnel costs from the time in which KEEC was without an Executive Director. In Fiscal Year 2018, both revenue and expenditures are projected to increase by about \$100,000 due to grant activities. KEEC staff have made conservative projections that can hopefully be met or beaten.

Motion to Approve Budget Report

⇒ At 3:16 PM, K. Ceralde moved to approve the budget report. K. Reagor seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.

Budget Continued

B. Bennett reported that the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet has a new budget director, Greg Rush, who started in July. KEEC staff will meet with Stephanie Belt of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet to begin drafting the biennial budget, including the requested dollar amounts and the agency description. If Council Members are interested, they could contact the cabinet to support the request for additional funding for agency priorities.

Conferences

B. Bennett reported on the Outdoor Learning Symposium for the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education, where he was the keynote speaker. The KAEE Conference will be held September 7-9 at Kentucky Dam Village State Park. B. Bennett recommended sponsoring scholarships for \$500 this year, which includes exhibit space and a conference registration for the agency. B. Bennett and W. Bullock will attend the AmeriCorps launch in Louisville Sept. 11-12. Both will also attend the North American Association for Environmental Education Conference in San Jose, Puerto Rico, on October 18-21. B. Bennett will attend pre-conference session on university accreditation and do a panel session on state agencies. He will separately attend a revision of the Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning (K-12) in West Virginia in August. KEEC staff will also exhibit at the Kentucky Science Teachers Association in Lexington, November 9-11.

Upcoming Council Meeting Schedule

B. Bennett asked the Council Members if they would like to reschedule Council Meetings one or two weeks later in 2018 to avoid conflict with the Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools and KY NEED Summit and Awards Luncheon, which is now in Lexington, and to give more time for analysis of financial information for the prior quarter. K. Osborne noted that the Policies and Procedures state that the Council will set meeting times annually for the upcoming year. KEEC staff will send proposed dates to Council Members by email.

B. Hardin reported on her first meeting with the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board, of which she is a member in her capacity as Chair of KEEC. The meeting approved several land purchases.

Motion to Adjourn Council Meeting

⇒ At 3:50 PM, K. Reagor moved to adjourn the Council Meeting. L. Brewer seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.