



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC)
Council Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2023

Meeting Location: Mayo-Underwood Building, Room 439, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY, and virtual

Meeting Time: 1:00 p.m. Eastern

Council Members in Attendance: Chair Ryan Green, Vice Chair Sarah Cummins, Ben Allen, Katie Dailinger, Tresine Logsdon, Brad Mitzelfelt, Ashley Wilmes

Absent Members: Dr. Hugh Henry

Staff in Attendance: Billy Bennett, Wesley Bullock, Ashley Mike

Others in Attendance: Beth Brinly, Ashley Hoffman, April Abshire

A. Introduction

1. The meeting was called to order by R. Green at 1:07 PM. W. Bullock confirmed that public notice of the council meeting was given, as required by open meetings law.
 - a. **Action: Swearing in of Council Members.** April Abshire, paralegal consultant for the Education and Labor Cabinet, and notary public, administered the oath of office to K. Dailinger. A. Abshire then left the meeting.
2. **Quorum.** Of the eight council members, seven were present. Council operating policies require greater than 50%, so the number of quorum was met.
3. **Welcome and introductions.** All members present introduced themselves.
4. **Travel forms.** W. Bullock said he would send travel forms to members in attendance with instructions
5. **Action. Motion to approve February 2023 Council Meeting Minutes:** ⇨ At 1:13 PM, T. Logsdon moved to approve the minutes of the February Council Meeting. S. Cummins seconded. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion passed.

B. Staff introductions

1. **Information:** B. Bennett reported on staff roles and responsibilities using slides. He displayed the agency org chart and slides showing each staff member's roles and responsibilities, starting with his own. S. Cummins asked how many grant submissions annually, and B. Bennett reported that he submits about 30-40. W. Bullock reported on his responsibilities being the only merit employee of the agency. A. Mike reported on her role as it will be once all member coordinators on board; in the interim, she is also performing many of the responsibilities of the member coordinator, which she also described. B. Bennett reported on the role of the Communications & Marketing Coordinator, which is currently Kate Patterson, though she plans to leave at the end of the summer. A. Wilmes asked if there is a

replacement lined up for the position, and B. Bennett said he is looking at placing another student intern from Great Crossing High School in Scott County, which is where Kate started.

C. Council General Updates

1. Update: Environmental Education Leadership Corps. A. Mike reported that Julia Gerwe departed as Member Coordinator for the program in the past month. Just before that time, Noah Schmiedeler joined as the other Member Coordinator, specific to working the members affiliated with the Cleaner World Project. The plan was for the program to have two member coordinators, but we will not bring on the replacement for Julia until near the end of the program year. There are still many members to enroll for the Cleaner World Project who will serve just for the summer. That leaves some member service years unfilled, but we will be close to meeting the revised target for this grant year, and there are a few members to bring on at other sites as well.
2. Update: Professional Environmental Educator Certification. W. Bullock reported that we completed the third and fourth workshops of the 2022-23 course and expect to have 15 graduates of the 16 that started. We are still working on plans for graduation for this cohort and previous cohorts that were not able to have a ceremony due to COVID.
3. Update: Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools and US Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools. W. Bullock reported that KEEC nominated two schools for US Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools recognition—Cardinal Valley Elementary in Fayette County and Mary G. Hogsett Primary in Danville—and both were recognized on Earth Day. They were also recognized in a tweet from Governor Beshear, and KET did a segment on Cardinal Valley Elementary in the news show Kentucky Edition.
4. Update: Kentucky Association for Environmental Education. A. Hoffman, Executive Director of KAEE, gave a presentation on her organization. They are the professional membership-based non-profit for Kentucky. They have a role similar to KEEC in serving as a backbone for EE in Kentucky. They are the state affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) and the Southeast Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA). They currently have a staff of five people based around the state. She presented the KAEE Strategic Plan. Some new initiatives include launching a Higher Education Network, and working on second round of data collection for the SEEA Landscape Analysis (which may be worked into a large project with NAAEE if other states come on board). One hope is that the analysis may help EE providers with things like understanding how to overcome transportation challenges for schools to use their services. It has also helped with fundraising, for instance by sharing data that shows how providers are getting funding for shorter programs despite research showing that longer programs are needed to make an impact. They also used the data for a report on equitable pay and hiring practices. R. Green asked A. Hoffman to share her background at KAEE. She has run the organization for 13 years, hired as the first staff member to transition from a volunteer-run organization. She has since gotten her Masters in Non-Profit Administration. She also discussed KAEE's work coordinating EE curriculum programs, and an eeCredential program with several different courses for ongoing professional development. They are also starting a Kentucky Green Schools program through Project Learning Tree which will pick up where KEEC's Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools program left off in encouraging students to do EE investigations and

projects. The program will be launched at the Outdoor Learning Symposium in June. KEEC will link to the program through our website, and S. Cummins offered agency help with things like providing lists of resources to help with each category. She asked about KAEE's grant application and success rate, which is about 19 applications per year, while receiving about a third. T. Logsdon asked if they are planning to launch a green career program, and A. Hoffman said it is planned for next year. She asked why there is not a health component, and A. Hoffman said it is incorporated in the investigations, but they wanted to make sure the name of the program was distinct. She also discussed possible awards and recognition, which are still in development. Finally, she gave a preview of upcoming events including workshops and KAEE and SEEA conferences.

5. Update: Professional development. B. Bennett reported that he went to the America's Service Commissions regional training event, which led to some ideas for the EELCorps program.
6. Update: Potential new opportunities. S. Cummins talked about the meeting that she and R. Green and B. Bennett had with Beth Brinly. They explored ways to interact with cabinet initiatives like Everybody Counts, which is a career program for high school students, and an early childhood apprenticeship program.

D. Budget

1. Update: Quarterly budget report and projections. W. Bullock asked council members to refer to the written budget report for updates on the current quarter. He instead reported on how expenses and revenue are allocated between EELCorps and all other agency programs.
2. Update: AmeriCorps grant budget. W. Bullock said that one-time conditions in this year's EELCorps budget will allow charging several expenses to the grant that are not normally charged, such as some of his and Billy's personnel costs, office space, and technology.

E. Council retreat logistics

1. Information: W. Bullock let council members know that the next meeting would be the retreat at Shaker Village August 8-9. Meals and lodging will be provided, and more information about the schedule will be provided to members before the retreat.

F. Council meeting adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: ⇨ At 3:02 PM, S. Cummins moved to adjourn. T. Logsdon seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed. The motion passed.