



Personnel and Finance Committee

1:00 – 3:15 pm, Tuesday, October 4, 2022

<https://umn.zoom.us/j/97296399121>

Meeting ID: 972 9639 9121

Members present:

Pete Aube – Chair, Mike Kilgore, Rick Horton, Patty Thielen

Absent:

Jim Manolis, Kim Berns-Melhus

Staff present:

Eric Schenck, Sadie Mathison

Introductory Remarks and Roll Call—Pete Aube, Chair (5 minutes)

After the meeting was called to order, a member asked for an update on the status of Patty Theilen's application for membership on the Council as the DNR Rep sits on this committee. Eric stated that the Governor has not yet appointed Patty, nor Michael Stansberry.

Pete asked that Grants/Financial Support for MFRC Mission* be added to the agenda.

Manager's Financial Report—Eric Schenck (10 minutes)

Eric provided the budget expenditures and encumbrances for the fiscal year thus far. He then reviewed the salaries balance and what will be available out of salary savings roll over to be used for the climate change RFP and to support Anna as she manages the Climate Change Ad Hoc Committee. Once the open positions are full, there will no longer be large chunks of money from salary savings. Eric's recommendation is to get these extra funds encumbered. The committee approved that Eric move the salary savings funds into appropriate line items.

MFRC Budget Proposal for Landscape Program FY24-FY25—Eric Schenck (20 minutes)

Eric presented a proposed budget change document for an increase to the Landscape program budget. He reiterated that MFRC will not have as much money in the budget once fully staffed, therefore it is important to maintain a budget for the Landscape program.

During the discussion, several members asked questions and raised concerns regarding the budget amounts and proposed expenses. One member pointed out that an alternative approach might be to hire a second landscape coordinator to address the southeast and east central regions, thereby reducing travel time and workload. Eric will check in with the Landscape Advisory Committee Chair to determine if that committee has a recommendation. No further action will be taken on the proposal without clear direction from the Council.

MFRC Budget Proposal for Private Land Carbon Market Program—Eric Schenck (10 minutes)

Eric reminded the Committee of Representative Spencer Igo's proposal that MFRC develop a report on private land carbon markets. Eric then asked if the Council would want to bring forward a budget proposal to complete this work as a strategy to address this as one of the identified needs that came out of the MFRC Carbon Report. The alternative would be to wait to see if MFRC is approached by the legislature for such a study.

There was agreement that this is important and that additional funds will be needed. Time is running out to ask for the funds in a budget proposal. Eric was asked to closely review MFRC's FY23 budget to determine if there might yet be some funds available for a project like this.

The committee agreed that by the next Council meeting the committee will recommend a budget proposal requesting legislative dollars to accomplish this work.

Applied Forest Science Coordinator Interview—Eric Schenck (30 minutes)

Eric announced changes to the interview panel since Mike has a conflict. Eric is currently working to recruit a replacement on the interview panel.

Forest Policy Analyst and Coordinator PD—Eric Schenck (30 minutes)

Time did not permit discussion of this topic although a draft is in development.

Coordinated Family Forest Landowner Education Proposal—Eli Sagor (30 minutes)

Eric provided an overview of this proposal which had previously been presented at the last Council meeting. The committee agreed to move forward and in November to recommend approval by the full Council.

***Grants/Financial Support for MFRC Mission**

Pete asked the committee to review the strategic plan and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss whether it is appropriate for the Council to pursue Lessard-Sams funds or other state grants for projects.

Eric suggested that MFRC's role also could be a *catalyst* in securing such grant funds by strategically assisting regional committees and partners in writing and submitting grant proposals, but stop short of actually receiving the funds and administering grants.

Other Topics

There was discussion of moving the next Council meeting to the Twin Cities rather than the Southeast. If so, might this be a good opportunity to invite the Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner.

Adjourn