

DRAFT MINUTES

Invasive Plants Council
Thursday November 6, 2008
2PM, Valley Laboratory
Windsor, CT

Council members present: Lou Magnarelli, Bill Hyatt, Dave Goodwin, Philip Prelli, Tom McGowan, Mary Musgrave

Others present: Donna Ellis, Nancy Murray, Rose Hiskes

1. Musgrave called the meeting to order at 2:07 pm.
2. The Minutes for the 10/7/08 Council Meeting were moved for approval (as distributed) by Prelli. Magnarelli seconded. The vote approving the minutes was unanimous.
3. Hyatt introduced Murray to give the update on the DEP Invasive Plants Coordinator Position. A cooperative agreement is in place with Ellis at UConn and the job opening has been posted in several places. Applications are due by November 15, with a proposed start date of December 1. Equipment (computer, etc.) has been ordered to support the new hire and office space has been found at DEP and at UConn.
4. Murray continued with an update on the Grants to Municipalities RFP. This has been distributed by DEP and Bill Foreman has received lots of phone calls. Murray gave a short radio interview due to interest in Danbury. The Metropolitan District Commission (water utility) wondered if they qualified as a "municipality." Hyatt consulted the legal department and determined that the broader definition of municipality would include water districts, sewer districts, etc., but seeks Council input. Prelli moved and Goodwin seconded that the broader definition of municipality should apply with regard to eligibility to participate in the RFP. The motion passed unanimously. Discussion turned to the letter received by Bill Foreman (from Tony Bedini, a member of the Washington, CT, Inland Wetland Commission, circulated to the Council at the request of Bill Hyatt) which had urged DEP to retract the RFP due to the state's dire economic situation. Council members noted that the funds for this program were set aside by the state 2 years ago for this specific purpose and will serve an important need in the state. Since the letter was not sent on behalf of the Inland Wetland Commission, the group felt that the best approach for response was at a personal level. Tom McGowan agreed to call Tony Bedini and talk to him about the long process with regard to funding for invasive plant control; they are from the same town.
5. Hyatt provided a report on the accomplishments to date with Invasive Plant Funding to DEP. The edited report will become part of the Council's annual report for the year. Hyatt explained that \$142K of funding remains for FY09 and suggested two options to the Council for its use. It could be (1) added to the grants program or (2) used for continued support of the Invasive Plant

Coordinator beyond the current end-date of June 30, 2009. Magnarelli asked how these options fit with the legislative language that accompanied the funding, and Hyatt said that DEP's financial people have confirmed that it is in accordance. McGowan stated that continuing the Coordinator should be the priority, as well as continued funding for the inspectors. Hyatt summarized that the Council is favorably inclined to the carry forward idea. Prelli noted that it would be important to look at the proposal as well, in case a meritorious project could be funded with the allocation of some additional funding to the grant program. The plan of action can be determined at the January council meeting when more is known about the proposals. McGowan then raised a question about the intent of the RFP, noting that the language suggests that prevention is not allowed – he feels prevention is part of control. Murray and Hyatt noted that this was discussed but decided against for the initial RFP. Prelli agreed and said the next phase can be prevention. For the first couple of years it is important to do some clean-ups of existing problems. McGowan reminded the group of the need for rapid response. Hyatt explained that this is one of the tasks for the TBD Invasive Plants Coordinator. It is a complex process because of legal procedures and setting up a cadre of applicators to respond. Once this is in place DEP will need to set aside a pool of funding to carry out the rapid response.

6. The group discussed the annual review of the list of banned invasive plants and potentially invasive plants. Musgrave noted that some species had been nominated for further discussion and input from the nursery industry. These included chocolate vine (*Akebia quinata*), moneywort (*Lysimachia nummularia*), Amur cork tree (*Phellodendron amurense*); Amur silvergrass (*Miscanthus sacchariflorus*). The status of porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*) had gone through the Council's procedure of being opened for public comment and then discussed at length by the Council. Musgrave reminded the group that this had resulted in the Nursery Industry deciding to self-regulate the production and sales of this plant. The other plants are only beginning this process in that input is requested from the Nursery Industry.
7. Goodwin reported that the verbal request from Newtown Garden Club regarding the status of coltsfoot had not yet been followed by a formal request. When the formal request is received, the Council can consider the status.
8. Musgrave reported on editorial comments she had received on the draft Annual Report. Magnarelli agreed that it was important to include the letter from the Attorney General in the report and agreed to send it to Musgrave. The group also cautioned against having the cover letter include the names of the plants that are "in process" with regard to consideration of their status and asked that this paragraph be rewritten in more general terms.
9. Other old or new business. Discussion of the timing of the January meeting to optimize consideration of proposals coming in to the RFP resulted in setting Jan. 15 as the date, and continuing the standard meeting time of 2-4 pm. Other dates for 2009 are: Feb. 10, Mar. 10, Apr. 14, Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 12, Dec. 8. Musgrave will confirm the availability of the Valley Lab for these meetings. Magnarelli and Prelli noted that the minutes of the meeting must be posted on the DEP website within one week of the meeting date and the agenda in the week

- prior to the meeting. Hyatt will look into establishing a site within DEP's website for the Invasive Plant Council. In the meantime, the group is grateful for the continued regular posting of its agenda and minutes on the CIPWG website.
10. Next meeting: scheduled for (Tuesday) December 9, 2008, 2PM Valley Lab. Mark Brand (UConn) will give an update on the research regarding different barberry and euonymus cultivars' invasiveness, and progress toward development of sterile cultivars and native alternatives. Goodwin noted that he would not be able to attend and requested that the Council not consider any motion regarding cultivars at the December meeting. Musgrave said she would request Mark Brand's presentation materials for Goodwin.
 11. Prelli moved adjournment at 3:48 pm and Goodwin seconded. Unanimous approval followed.