

Steering Committee Call February 4, 2013

Participating: Jim Skiera, Don Winsett, , Alice Ewen, Dan Lambe, Carrie Gallagher, Rebecca Turner, Steve Sinclair, Jen Hinrichs, Shannon Lawrence, Larry Wiseman

- **1. Funder Engagement:** SUFC is tasked with convening potential funders on behalf of the SUFC members and the larger urban forestry community as per the terms of the grant proposal to the Forest Service (under Vibrant Cities funding). To advance this effort, SUFC contractors (Jennifer, Larry, Shannon) drafted a memo that outlines the initial questions and decisions SUFC (as a entity) must fully address before moving towards specific action to convene funders. While SUFC *could* ultimately benefit from this convening effort – the goal is to raise awareness of the breadth and depth of the work within the sector, opening more funding doors/opportunities for individual SUFC members and/or collaborations among members.
- The upcoming Partners in Community Forestry Conf. in Pittsburg was endorsed by Steering Cmte members as one opportunity to host a funders event (format TBD). Prior roundtables/outreach efforts by SUFC should be discussed by SUFC Steering Cmte and SUFC membership should be informed and provided an opportunity for input moving forward.
- Cmte noted difference of approach and content needed for corporate vs. foundation funding audiences.
- NOTE: Per call discussion, a FS grant extension is not needed – the last FS grant modification extended the current SUFC operational/Vibrant Cities grant through **December 2014**.

ACTION ITEM: Please review the attached memo and direct questions to Jennifer or the full committee for further discussion. This issue will also be addressed at the SUFC Annual Meeting later this month.

ACTION ITEM: SUFC Steering Cmte will need to re-group prior to the SUFC Annual Meeting to review the agenda, provide further feedback on the issues raised in the convening funders memo, and discuss SUFC fiscal issues (including raising additional unrestricted funds for SUFC operations and organizational growth/sustainability. Please respond to Mtg Wizard request.

- **2. SUFC Budget Projections:** The attached budget projections (drafted by subcmte of Jim, Jennifer, Don and Carrie) reflect a proposed budget scenario for SUFC that sustains SUFC at its current level of activity (little to no growth) in 2014. Cmte members acknowledged it is hypothetical, but there was general agreement that it was realistic (many line items could be tweaked/toyed but overall, the outcome would be similar) and critical to implement to move further from FS funding.
- **NOTE:** 2013 is a transition year without a more aggressive fundraising plan in place. Jennifer estimates the current FS grant will cover appropriate SUFC expenses through March (SUFC operations with current Convener/JJH) and Vibrant Cities grant activities through May. (Jen/Shannon recommend approx. \$10,000 of remaining VC grant funds be put aside to cover website maintenance and minimal operations of VC until absorbed by SUFC member/other.)

- Therefore, SUFC is dependent upon new FS grant funding (pending/unknown until March+), current non-restricted funds (approx. \$12,000), and additional funds TO BE raised in 2013 to keep SUFC afloat – and begin implementation of proposed budget/fundraising efforts.
- SUFC cannot search or extend offer to a new convener until the funding base is stabilized. Jennifer will remain with SUFC through March 2013. She is willing to work with SUFC through the transition period, acting as an interim convener (reduced hours) until SUFC infrastructure is re-established.

ACTION ITEM: Jennifer is drafting and submitting formal SUFC operations proposal to the FS by next week. A placeholder \$ request has already been submitted to the FS.

NASF volunteered to draft a letter of support indicating the “extreme economic value” of the Coalition.

ACTION ITEM: SUFC Steering Cmte. Needs to revisit SUFC future 2-3 years out. If SUFC is in a SUFC 1.5 version now, what does SUFC 2.0 look like and what is needed and sustainable?

NOTE: “DC meeting in December 2012 was an excellent opportunity to re-group and re-establish priorities/interests and where the Coalition currently is, but we didn’t have the time to explore what we are looking towards in the next three years. What are SUFC aspirational goals?”

- **3. Policy Working Group Lead:** Gerry Gray would like to remain as the WG Lead – as an ex-officio member of SUFC. Gerry is NOT currently affiliated with any organization, therefore no organizational conflicts are relevant. American Forests has representation on the WG through Rebecca Turner and American Forests will assign another representative to the Steering Committee.

NOTE: Jen followed up with Gerry Grey re: his current attachment with any specific organization and he is NOT affiliated with any group that would pose a potential conflict to his continued role as SUFC Policy Lead. As stated, he is in transition and expects to be evaluating multiple options over the next several months, allowing him to continue serving in this role as an ex-officio member – if approved by the Steering Committee. Rebecca Turner is willing to step into his role if/when he is in a position of potential conflict.

ACTION ITEM: Please send me your vote YES or NO to approve Gerry’s interim role as Policy Chair offline.

NOTE: For additional reference, below are the WG and Lead descriptions.

Policy Working Group^[1]:

The working group develops the Coalition’s annual federal policy platform. Members of the working group bring proposed federal legislation, federal agency rulemaking opportunities or other policy-related issues to the group for vet, discuss and potentially to recommend to the larger Coalition. The working group may recommend endorsing a wide variety of legislation that positively impacts urban forestry (from green infrastructure to energy conservation) or

^[1] Direct advocacy is undertaken by individual members of the SUFC; no Forest Service funds are used to support these activities. The SUFC has separate funds to support any costs associated with its limited advocacy activities. (Resources spent on behalf of SUFC advocacy are not counted against the match hours for the FS grant.)

pro-actively address an identified need within the urban forestry/green infrastructure sector. The working group meets approximately once a month or more often depending on the need.

Policy Working Group Lead:

The policy lead is the point-person for the working group and larger coalition. The lead provides guidance to the convener and other working group members as needed. The lead also initiates meetings, identifies opportunities for the coalition around policy education and outreach, and spearheads strategic activities of interest to the working group. The lead participates in Steering Committee meetings as available to facilitate effective communication and provide input to larger coalition management and planning.