

**Invasive Plants Council
Minutes
October 23, 2003**

Present: Dr. Anderson, Mr. Goodwin, Comm. Gresczyk, Mr. Larson, Comm. Leff, Mr. McGowan, Dr. Mehrhoff, Mr. Sutherland.

Absent: Dr. Musgrave.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM in Room 1A of the Legislative Office Building.

Mr. Sutherland, as chair of the nominating committee called the meeting to order and announced the two candidates for Chair of the Council: Dr. Anderson and Comm. Leff. There was discussion and the Council voted. Comm. Leff was election chairman by a 5-4 roll call vote. Dr. Anderson will be the vice chair of the Council.

Chairman Leff recognized Mr. Larson who had served as temporary secretary of the Council. Mr. Larson suggested that the Council would be better served with a non-member as the secretary as members should be focused on the discussions in the meetings. Emanuel Merisotis (clerk of the Environment Committee of the General Assembly) was nominated. There were no objections from the members.

Chairman Leff suggested that the council separate out all the issues that needed to be addressed and set future meeting dates to go over the specific issues. Mr. Sutherland suggested that looking into "future invasions" was not a charge of the council and therefore not something that the council should spend time on. Mr. McGowan questioned what the difference was between future and current invasions.

Mr. McGowan questioned whether insects or animals would be considered by the council. There was a consensus that the council could only concern itself with plants. Mr. McGowan also wondered whether the group would look at aquatics first and then the rest of plants or just lump them altogether. The council agreed that aquatics would not be separated out.

Chairman Leff suggested that there be subgroups that flesh out the issues separately and then bring their findings to the whole group. Dr. Mehrhoff suggested that this might be duplicating work since the whole council will want to discuss each issue.

Chairman Leff suggested future meeting dates and the following were agreed upon:

November 10, 2003 at 2:00 PM
November 25, 2003 at 10:00 AM
December 11, 2003 at 10:00 AM
December 23, 2003 at 10:00 AM
January 13, 2003 at 10:00 AM
January 29, 2003 at 10:00 AM

Chairman Leff suggested the first issue to be dealt with should be the List of Invasive Plants in CT. Mr. Goodwin wanted a clarification of what the list should be. Chairman Leff stated that this list would not necessarily be the ban list. That should be determined at a latter date.

Mr. McGowan brought up the question of pre-emption. Since there is a ban on pre-emption that will be sunsetted in the bill, should the council discuss this issue and make recommendations. The consensus of the group was that the council should make recommendations.

A subgroup was selected to start work on the List of Invasive Plants. Members are: Dr. Mehrhoff, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Larson and Mr. Sutherland. They will meet or conference call and report back to the full committee on their progress.

Chairman Leff suggested the Council approve the minutes of the previous meeting. There was a motion by Dr. Anderson to approve, seconded by Comm. Grescyk. There was a correction of the spelling of Lake Waramaug. The minutes were approved by a voice vote.

Dr. Anderson and Dr. Mehrhoff gave separate presentations on sample lists of invasive aquatics. There was a discussion about what the criteria will be for listing plants on the list of invasives. Dr. Mehrhoff expressed the opinion that economic factors should not influence the inclusion of plants on the list but economics could be taken into consideration for recommendations on methods of control or whether a plant is to be banned. Chairman Leff agreed that economics does not influence “invasiveness” this should be a scientific fact. Mr. Goodwin agreed that the cost of banning and the cost of control should be considered.

Mr. McGowan wanted to know if the Criteria outlined in section 3 of the legislation should be the criteria they use. Dr. Mehrhoff pointed out that this criteria are standard language and that a checklist should be used when developing the final list to see if criteria are met. Mr. Sutherland and Chairman Leff both expressed the opinion that it is not necessary nor is there time for the whole committee to go through criteria for every plant, they feel that they can rely on the experts for most plants. Comm. Grescyk felt that the criteria was important and needs to be met.

Mr. Larson questioned whether the council needed to hear from the public at some point. Chairman Leff said yes, he feels the council should hold a public hearing on the preliminary list before the final list is made.

There was a brief discussion about the “future invasive” plants and Dr. Mehrhoff gave a few examples of plants that might be included.

There was a motion by Comm. Grescyk to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Larson.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emanuel Merisotis
Clerk- Environment Committee