

TREE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 5, 2024 – 6:30 pm

Chairwoman Lisa Haderlein called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm. Committee members present: Janet Hugg, Shawn Kingzette, Joel Kriete, Shannon Kingzette and Jay Wolf. Also present were Mayor Kelly, City Administrator Lou Leone and Supt. Public Works Rob Lamz.

Election of Officers

Alderwoman Haderlein said she was willing to be the chair, at least for the first year. Shawn Kingzette volunteered to serve as vice-chairman. A motion was made by Alderwoman Haderlein, seconded by Shannon Kingzette to elect Shawn Kingzette as Vice-Chairman of the Tree Board. All ayes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Shawn Kingzette, seconded by Janet Hugg to elect Alderwoman Haderlein as Chairwoman of the Tree Board. All ayes. Motion carried.

Penalty Language

Supt. Lamz reviewed penalty language from various communities that was included in the packet. Areas of discussion:

- Penalties would only pertain to trees in the City's right of way/easements. Janet inquired how to address dead or dying trees that pose a hazard on private property. The Tree Board Ordinance is in Chapter 5.06, Boards and Commissions; Section 8 of the ordinance addresses the issue of trees on private property. The Board discussed adding the language in a different section of the City's code, or at least referred to in Chapter 11, Nuisances.
- Establish proactive measures for tree protection zones for new construction during the development process. Mayor Kelly recommended designating areas in the City as conservation zones that require special consideration for development that would include a tree plan. The McHenry plan outlines such requirements.
- Currently, the greatest risk to trees is due to age, disease and storm damage.
- Include language on where, how and what types of trees get replaced.
- Penalty for removing a tree on public property – Shawn said it doesn't need to be punitive in the case of an accident, but should cover the cost of removal and replacement. In cases of intent, it would be the cost of removal and replacement, plus a penalty of \$500 per occurrence, subject to Tree Board review. Penalty funds collected could be earmarked by the City Council during the budget process.
- Add language for trees planted in the right of way without a permit or not on the approved list of trees. There is an acceptable list of tree species in Section 6.11 of the City Code; said list should be reviewed by the Tree Board with recommended revisions going before the City Council. Planting of nuisance trees on public property would be subject to removal, or in the case of planting trees without a permit, would be double the permit. The consensus was to establish a permit fee of \$25, with the permit generated as a function of the City Hall front office. A pamphlet will be made available with the permit application outlining planting instructions along with a list of approved trees. Online permitting may be a viable option in the future.

Tree Selection

This will be on next month's agenda; should also identify categories for trees in the right of way over a water main, underneath power lines, sight obstruction and in the downtown zone. Down the line, establish the footage necessary between the right of way and the curb.

Schedule October (Oaktober) Event

Several locations were suggested for a tree planting community event: area adjacent to the library near the old driveway, the dog park and Mary's Park. After discussion, the consensus was to have the event at Mary's Park on Saturday, October 5th. Other groups will be asked to participate. Janet will bring it up at the next Garden Club meeting. Local nurseries will be contacted to see if they are interested in donating. The goal would be up to a dozen trees with a variety of species (i.e. Burr Oak, Hybrid Elms, Persimmon). Suggested having a food truck(s) during the event.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Kelly thanked the members for volunteering and being part of the Tree Board.

Rob indicated that the installation of the Tree City USA signs is subject to state rules; the signs have been submitted to the IDOT Sign Department for approval. Mayor Kelly recommended that this would be a good opportunity for a photo opportunity to promote on the City's website.

At Chairwoman Haderlein's inquiry, City Administrator Leone reported that the application for the Trees Forever grant for tree inventory funding was successfully submitted.

New Business

- Shawn reported that he checked on the Urban Forest Basic Training program offered by the Arboretum. They have already determined the location for the fall course. He will get Rob the event info.
- Mayor Kelly suggested the Tree Board partner with the Parks & Rec Dept. to offer a class that would promote programming on how to plant/prune trees; Shannon said she would be interested in doing this.
- City Administrator Leone stated that the OSLAD Grant includes a more extensive walking path; he envisions lining the path with a variety of trees with identification signs. Shannon said that could become an arboretum which would make the City eligible for more money.
- Mayor Kelly related that the City recently acquired property along Mokeler Creek which could be included in an overall biking/walking path that would come across Route 173 and Shadow Creek and then connect to Eastman St. This is a very densely wooded area where a meandering walking area could be created to connect these area subdivisions to the downtown. Shawn suggested long term for liability reasons to do it more as a natural area verses an arboretum which gives a different set of maintenance requirements.

The Board discussed either cancelling the July 3rd meeting or moving it to a different date. The consensus was to schedule the meeting for July 10, 2024, at 6:30 pm.

A motion was made by Shawn Kingzette, seconded by Jay Wolf to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Submitted by:
Chairwoman Lisa Haderlein