

Tree Commission
August 2020 Minutes

Date: August 26, 2020

Time: 5:00PM – 7:00PM

Location: Remotely via Zoom meeting

Attending: Paul Josey, Emily Cone-Miller, Jeff Jennings, Brian Menard, Anson Parker, Tim Padalino, Mark Zollinhofer, Mark Rylander, Lynn Rush, Peggy Van Yahres, Jeff Pacelli, Jody Lahendro,

Staff: Mike Ronayne, Todd Brown, Missy Creasy

Guests: Roxanne White

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m.

March Minutes Corrections –

Paul motions to approve the minutes without correction, and Anson seconds. None opposed.

New Member introductions:

The Tree Commission welcomes its newest appointed members, Emily Cone-Miller, Jeff Jennings, Jeff Pacelli, and Mark Zollinhofer, CATS representative. The newest members shared interests included learning more about government, wanting to give back to the community, and appreciation of trees and forests.

Report on Tree Commission activities for the past 6 months – Brian M.

Brian reviews the items outlined in the document distributed before the meeting. The Tree Commission items worked on since the last meeting in March has helped to preserve some of the momentum been lost due to the pandemic. He thanked Commissioners for their continued efforts in working on items independently and in pairs. Moving forward committee meetings will be able to precede directly before Tree Commission meetings if needed. The next Tree Commission meeting will likely be towards the end of September.

Member Reports

Education and Advocacy – Peggy

Peggy reviews some areas the group wished to explore further with emphasis on educating the community on the value of trees, helping plan with government officials and engage with low canopy neighborhoods. The group also wanted more collaboration with other relevant organizations and

departments in community. The group also will advocate for tree funding and data performance measures.

Annual State of the Forest Draft– Paul

Paul reviews the role of the Tree Commission, the issues surrounding environmental justice and social justice. The presentation then goes on to identify some areas for improvement regarding trees in the community and proposed solutions to achieve these goals. Proposed options to help the Tree Commission meet their goals were to hire an Urban Forester in NDS to facilitate site plans and to staff Tree Commission meetings with someone from Public Works.

Comp. Plan and Zoning Ordinance update – Tim

Tim has participated on steering committees regarding the Comp. Plan update which began in March. The effort is to strengthen language in Comp. Plan and then have that mirrored with the Zoning Ordinance update. The subcommittee has had discussions to make sure they are prepared to identify deficiencies and provide recommendations.

Arborist Report – Mike

Revised Operating Budget and CIP

Mike begins by review the CIP spent from FY2020 and what was allocated for FY2021. As a result of the pandemic the Parks Dept. was not allocated money for tree planting this FY but will be able to utilize \$7,650.00 left over from FY2020. The comment is made to include the Mall Tree Study funds in the expenditures column for clarity.

Mike reviews what was spent in the Operating budget for FY2020 and what these funds are used for. The question is raised about how much money went towards ash tree removal since it was a budget request that was declined previously. The other question was how much money goes towards proactive tree pruning versus other activities. Mike will look into these items and return to the commission.

Annual Report Dashboard Update

Mike has six more trees to locate with GPS before graphs and analysis can be made. Mike and Brian Ray will complete dashboard and provide to the Education and Advocacy as soon as possible.

Tree Planting Prioritization Draft

As a result of limited tree planting funds in the current FY not all tree replacements will be able to be made and there is a need to replace trees in a fair and equitable manner. Prior to the meeting the group was presented with a ranking system based on different criteria for selecting tree planting locations. The group was supportive of the proposed ranking system but also wanted to prioritize CBDG along with low canopy neighborhoods and put emphasis on streets that were devoid of trees. Mike will return with planting locations for the September meeting.

Annual Work Plan

Mike begins by reviewing his role for the City and how he supports other departments. Some of the items along with the day-to-day tree maintenance Mike proposed for FY2021 is the 2020 canopy study, create a protocol for tree work prioritization, create an outdoor café heater use policy, incorporate protected tree into inventory spatially, create a ranking system for tree planting locations and develop a tree donation policy.

Public Comment

Roxanne White wanted to bring attention to the commission about how major redevelopment is being proposed for CRHA property and how important it is for the commission to be involved and make sure that trees are also held a priority.

Meeting Action Items:

- Mike will separate the FY2020 operating budget into categories
- Mike will determine how much was spent in FY2020 on ash tree removal
- Mike will update CIP budget sheet per comment
- Mike will update Tree Planting Prioritization draft per comments
- Mike will provide the Annual Dashboard

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.