

UFC Committee Meeting - August 12, 2020 at 2pm  
Via Zoom

In attendance:

Amy McEuen  
Jeff Reim  
Jan Von Qualen  
Nate Bottom  
Rianne Hawkins  
Ernestine Lawrence  
Randy Bellville

From the Public

Mary Frances  
Polly Poskin  
Sue Rempfer

Notes from the meeting:

Meeting was called to order at 2:07pm. Attendance was taken.

Approval of the minutes from the June 10th minutes. No corrections. A motion was made by Ernestine Lawrence. The motion was seconded by Amy McEuen. The motion carried without objection.

Next on the agenda was the approval of the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure. There were no updates or objections to the Bylaws. A motion was made by Ernestine Lawrence to approve the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure. The motion was seconded by Jan Von Qualen. The motion carried unanimously.

Next the commission moved to approval of the Tree Plan. Additions were suggested from the Commission members. There will be additions to the Plan to include downtown. Various edits were discussed to the wording of various sections of the Tree Plan. A motion was made to approve the Tree Plan with the suggested revisions by Amy McEuen. Ernestine Lawrence seconded the motion.

A question came from Sue Rempfer. She asked if there is a definition of what a hazardous tree is. Jeff and Randy both pointed out that the definition is in the ASM manual.

The motion to adopt the Tree Plan carried unanimously.

The next item for discussion was the Arboricultural Specifications Manual (ASM). A discussion ensued around various edits to the ASM. Jan asked for clarification of the City Tree Care account. Fine and settlements resulting in damage to city owned trees. There was some discussion around where the money would come from for this account. Randy expressed some

concern about how this revenue stream would be handled and the potential for future City Councils to cut that program. Public Works Director Nate Bottom tried to answer the questions from the Commission. Jan stated that she does like the idea to have the fines go into a specific account for tree replacement. Jeff and Nate will look into the fund and how it can be administered.

There was some additional discussion around the planting of trees and the size of the trees and how the City can maximize the dollars that are spent for trees. Jeff said that he would re-examine that there should be an all around minimum standards or tree planting. Jeff committed to working on some revised language to allow for some flexibility in the policy for tree replacement. He also committed to doing revised language around the tree removal permits.

Randy also asked questions about replacement of the sidewalks and if that could be altered to allow for the planting of more trees. Director Bottom stated that Public Works has been working to add space for trees whenever they are able. Polly Poskin pointed out a few locations where additional trees would be a benefit along South Grand Avenue. A discussion issued about how the planting of trees will intersect with zoning policies, too. Jan stated that the issues will be included in the next meeting's agenda.

Randy asked if amendments could still be made to the ASM. Jeff stated that it would be his intention to revisit it each year. He went on to state that after the ASM is approved by the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC), it will move to be posted publicly and then to the City Council for approval. Jeff said that it would be his intention to revisit the ASM annually.

Jan pointed out that there needs to be an addition with regards to stump removal. Amy and Randy pointed out that the trees should be replanted in the same place, but not necessarily in the same spot. Discussion ensued about the policy around replanting after trees are removed. There was also discussion around a strategy to replant trees in the downtown area. Jan stated that she would add this to the agenda for the next meeting as well.

A motion was made to approve the ASM with the changes suggested incorporated. Randy seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

The next item on the agenda was the budget update and the application from the Morton Arboretum grant funds. Jan stated that she has gotten additional information about the grant program with a matching requirement. There would be additional grant requirements that would include many of the things that are already included in our tree ordinance. Jan walked through several of the requirements that would need to be met before grant funds are awarded through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Jan stated that she believes that we should apply for the grant program. Amy asked what the timeline is for the application. Jan stated that it will be go out for application very shortly. Rianne had questions surrounding the potential matching funds from the City. Because the way that the grant is written, Director Bottom didn't think that it would be an issue to match the funds. The consensus from the UFC was to apply for the grant funds. A motion was made by Randy to work to submit the grant to the Illinois Department of

Natural Resources. The motion was seconded by Jan. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Director Bottom gave an overview of the budget situation and potential cuts that could be made to the tree planting program. Randy suggested putting together a subcommittee to discuss the tree budget for the coming fiscal year. Randy, Ernestine, and Jan stated that he would be willing to help with a subcommittee, but do not want to head up a subcommittee.

Next, the UFC moved to discuss replacement trees and where the City needs trees to be replaced for the trees that have come down. The consensus from the UFC is to prioritize Wards 2 and 6. Randy encouraged the City to prioritize Wards 2 and 6 and the Downtown area. Discussion ensued about the downtown landscaping plans that are being put together by Masse and Masse.

Next, the UFC moved on to the watering policies for the fall. Jan suggested enlisting the homeowners to help keep newly planted trees watered. A discussion ensued about how to go about caring for the new trees.

The next item on the agenda is the webpage for the UFC. Director Bottom didn't have an update, but they will work with the Communications Director to make those arrangements.

Sue Rempfer addressed the UFC. She suggested to include something in the Mayor's reminders to water their trees.

Mary Frances asked for the tree work applications and permits on the website so that it is easier for people to make those applications. She also suggested making those forms to be able to be filled out online. Randy also suggested keeping a list of licensed tree service providers. A discussion ensued about how to handle the permitting process and getting that information online.

The next meeting is set for September 9th at 5pm in the City Council Chambers

There was a discussion around the fall tree replacement program and the impending request for proposal.

A motion for adjournment was made by Randy. The motion was seconded by Amy. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.