

CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

The Urban Forestry Commission met on September 11, 2019 at 5:00pm in the Public Works Conference Room in the Municipal Center West Building.

(x) Commissioner Amy McEuen
() Commissioner Michael Pierce
(x) Commissioner Jan Von Quaten
(x) Commissioner Rianne Hawkins
(x) Commissioner Ernestine Lawrence

(x) Commissioner Susan Allen
(x) Commissioner Randy Belville
(x) Commissioner (Non-Voting) Nate Bottom
() Commissioner (Non-Voting) Doug Brown
(x) Commissioner (Non-Voting) Jeff Reim

STAFF PRESENT:

Jim Langfelder, Mayor of Springfield
Mary Hansen

Commissioner Nate Bottom called the meeting to order.

Nate Bottom: First item on the agenda, approval meeting minutes. First meeting so we don't have meeting minutes to approve so we'll go ahead and do introductions. I'm Nate Bottom, Director of Public Works.

Rianne Hawkins: Rianne Hawkins

Susan Allen: Susan Allen

Jan Von Qualen: Jan Von Qualen

Randy Belville: Randy Belville

Mayor Langfelder: Jim Langfelder, Mayor of Springfield

Mary Hansen: Mary Hansen

Jeff Reim: Jeffrey Reim, City Arborist

Amy McEuen: Amy McEuen

Nate Bottom: Alright, thank you.

Mayor Langfelder: If you wouldn't mind saying what interest you in the urban forestry, cause I think each one might've submitted their names at one point in time so I think that would be neat.

Rianne Hawkins: So I'm the Vice President of the Springfield Parks Foundation so getting involved with urban forestry is a natural fit with that work.

Susan Allen: I just love trees, I don't have a lot of natural resource background but I am taking a class at the Extension Service. So my Uncle had a forestry degree and he interest all of us in trees.

Jan Von Qualen: And similar to Susan, I don't have a big background in forestry. I live in an old part of town, near Whittier. The best part of my neighborhood is the trees, I've always paid a lot of attention to them. I've taken a Master Naturalist Program, I took that last year so that got me an interest too.

Randy Belville: I'm a Botanist by training and small business owner in landscape, design and installation as well as retail.

Amy McEuen: I'm a Forestry Ecologist by training, got my Ph.D. at the University of Michigan and I've always loved trees. Now I actually do more Prairie Ecology since coming to UIS in

Illinois. I'm happy to get more into Urban Forestry. I haven't dealt with forest in the urban context.

Ernestine Lawrence: My name is Ernestine Lawrence and I really enjoy working with flowers and plants. Look forward to see what I can learn and what I can give to the organization.

Nate Bottom: We thank all of you for taking the time out of your evening, it's very appreciative. So the next thing on the agenda is the city code Chapter 102, the composition of the commission. We have seven members that are appointed by the city council, which you members are as well as the city arborist, Jeff Reim, the public works director and CWLP will also have a representative that will attend meetings too. So there will be ten people on the commission. So the duties and responsibilities of the commission are to basically evaluate our arbor cultural specifications, update policies, providing selection to ensure we have a diverse population basically for planting maintenance as well as removal of tree shrubs and other plants that are owned on city property. Also, help with allocation of the funding for these types of projects as well as grants and gifts intended for these types of items. As well as establishment in presentation providing horticultural educational programs and materials so that the city of Springfield will publish and provide to the public. As well as develop policies and procedures for the arborist and also review and provide oversight for the permitting and issuance per city code and develop new procedures. So that's that, any questions? Any discussion?

Rianne Hawkins: I have a question. Is this a new commission or has there been this commission in the past?

Nate Bottom: There was a tree commission in the past, however it has not been active for quite some time.

Jeff Reim: 14 years it hasn't been active.

Nate Bottom: So it was the priority of the Mayor to reactivate it and regenerate it and as well as take a holistic approach from not just trees but the entire urban forestry area as well as beautification too.

Mayor Langfelder: What we think happened was under Mayor Davlin, Springfield Green started up and that was a public private partnership and they had plans where they motivated the community to beautify whether it was in a neighborhood or a business. At that point in time Springfield Green kind of replaced urban forestry and after Mayor Davlin's administration that kind of went by the wayside. So when we came in kind of revamped Springfield Green and then Susan and some others said "Well what about Urban Forestry Commission"? and so that's really how we got to this point to blend the two together.

Rianne Hawkins: Can I ask a question about that? I know Springfield Green is also kind of up and going as well. How will we work with them?

Mayor Langfelder: I think it will be more in unison, they will be hopefully helping raise money and doing those initiatives. Working together in that regards, reaching out to the business community. I think there's so much work to be done. I mean it's just there's a lot of work. Its volunteer based so right now we've been done a lot of work with Public Works and we'd like to get with the private sector. And what we've been doing is some of the initiatives that have been done, like last year UIS cross country team came up. Tyler Pence contacted me, the coach there, and they helped pick up Capitol Avenue. So we need to try and get that community engaged and things of that nature. And then the other thing is we approached Carrollton Bank, now with their median on Wabash and so we asked them to do the full median as much as possible so they are in the process of doing that. Springfield Clinic, we asked them through some type of negotiation, we'll call it that, they needed some right-of-way that we had. We said well how about you take charge of the median on Wabash so they are doing that as well. So that's what we're looking for, that type of partnership and previously that had been done on certain entryway points. That's what we need to determine, I think the next one's urban forestry plan is what do we want Springfield to look like? The other piece of it is downtown, we do have some planters that we are looking at possibly getting but we'll probably ask for your feedback on that, similar to what Capitol Avenue has so you can imagine Capitol Avenue and how that would be throughout downtown Springfield. Those are some of the initiatives but what I wanted to talk about real quickly since we're on this. Do you have any questions on that?

Rianne Hawkins: No that answered my question.

Jan Von Qualen: I do. Are we going to interact then with Springfield Green? Is there going to be any kind of...

Nate Bottom: Yes, we actually, Jeff and I help with Springfield Green so we'll be your direct contact.

Susan Allen: Question I had is if we wanted to start some kind of tree buying program for individuals like the Park District has and if the City couldn't accept the money could Springfield Green accept the money and then a tree could be planted?

Mayor Langfelder: And that's what we want to structure is how does that all fit together.

Mayor Langfelder: Any other questions on that? Do you have a comment about that Nate?

Nate Bottom: No, that just rolls in to the next point, the Urban Forestry Plan that we do need to develop. It's a five year capital improvement plan that we don't necessarily have at this time. So it's obviously going to be a very important item. We are going to be rolling into our budget cycle here shortly so that's one thing we definitely want to attack. I would encourage you too to look at various other communities. I know Urbana has a pretty good plan, it's extremely detailed but it's a good example for whenever we are evaluating our plan. And those are some of the things we need to consider obviously, the downtown planters we need to take into consideration,

utilities versus planting new trees in that area. So a goal of ours is to tackle that and to start thinking about how we should develop that, how much funding we need to be setting aside for the various types of projects for beautifying our entryways or maintaining the downtown area, how many trees we should be planting based on how many we are removing and take a holistic approach.

Jan Von Qualen: Has there ever been a plan?

Nate Bottom: Not a master plan that we were able to find.

Mayor Langfelder: And on that point, a couple items. Number one is with the trees, we are going to budget to plant at least 500 trees a year for the next four years. There's been identified 3,000 ash trees that probably need to come down so how do you replace those? It makes since to do 500 a year for the next six years or so. In doing that's what we asked you to help on. Personally I think it would be more dramatic if we could do Clearlake, we annex that in. But really it's been wanted to for so long we should make a dramatic impact with tree canopy one way. The challenge is the, well previously with jurisdiction boundaries but now that it's all the in the city there're more leeway. But I guess that's where we ask your feedback. Do you want to sprinkle a few here? But I think the dramatic impact people can actually physically see if we are planting along corridors, things of that nature. But it has to make since, and that's why we looked at the landscape piece that Springfield Green was doing because it has to all fit together and someone brought up the downtown trees being removed and that's the other piece of. If we can't do landscaping, what about the arts? This summer they did one of the tree grates. The Springfield Art Association worked with high school students, they did a mosaic in rock, a flower. So that's what we want to do, beautify Springfield. You know, how it makes sense. One of the initiatives we will probably try to pursue is U of I because they have a landscape urban planning, partner with them where they can help us develop the plan and then what we would have is an ongoing partner in changing the plan or what have there will be different people coming into the program maybe tweaking it but that would add consistency to that type of plan moving forward and U of I would be a strong partnership, those are some ideas.

Nate Bottom: I agree. We don't have a tree inventory either and that's a major priority that we would need to accomplish and figure out how to collect that data and how intense and what attributes we basically we provide when we developed that plan. Which will help us program and figure out how much money we need as well as know our diversity so we can modify the selection and ensure we have a diverse population and not concentrated on one tree.

Mayor Langfelder: From Jeff's standpoint and from mine, is how does the city structure the entities that trim trees? We have Public Works, CWLP and then Nelson's Tree Service. If you want to look at the travesty of trimming trees just go down 9th street and really look. On 11th street, just go a block North of South Grand Ave on the west side of the street and it's like they just shear off half of the tree. I've had people call me and say "They're going to cut down my tree because it has a disease". I had one where, and she probably won't mind me using her name, Victoria Ramer, by Blessed Sacrament. They wanted to cut her tree down so they

trimmed it but I understand where that comes into play. Where our challenge is if it comes to infestation we want the public to be safe but the other side of it is what makes sense? In Naperville, they have a tree trimming for power lines so there's an art to it so that what we'll probably ask this group to look at to see if that makes sense. What that does is play a tug-of-war between entities, you know you have this group which is unbiased saying this is the right way to go in regards to tree trimming and everyone should be following this policy.

Rianne Hawkins: Is there anything written down?

Nate Bottom: (*Points to Manual*)

Rianne Hawkins: It's in there, got it. Thank you.

Nate Bottom: I'm referring to the Arbor Cultural Specifications Manual, we want to go ahead and update it. This is obviously dated, it was adopted in 91'. So we want to update that so it's one of the most critical things. We would expect that to be in the Arbor Cultural Specifications Manual.

Susan Allen: There's an organization called the Tree Line USA that has standards for tree cutting and they say one thing you should do is every year have training for people like Nelson's.

Mayor Langfelder: Yeah, there's not a lot of consistency. That's what we need, especially with Nelson's I think that's what we need to take a look at, what's the consistent way of doing it.

Mayor Langfelder: Their philosophy quite honestly is let's cut it down so we don't have to re-cut it and save money.

Rianne Hawkins: Since they are a private business, should they be at this table?

Mayor: Well that's something we're going to work through. That's something we'll have to decide, what makes financial sense. Does it make sense for us to be doing trimming?

Nate Bottom: CWLP contracts with Nelson's so CWLP is at the table.

Rianne Hawkins: Do they put standards on Nelson?

Nate Bottom: That's why we want to help guide that and make sure it's done correctly.

Susan Allen: Nate, what would be the deadlines on some of these things you mention? I know you said sooner rather than later.

Nate Bottom: Well I would like to have year one, Capital Improvement Plan, have a pretty good idea by the next meeting. Which we will get to on item number 7, tentatively proposing November 13th for the next meeting.

Mayor Langfelder: We start preparing the City's budget in October so November would be presented in December so we have a few months to work with and take a look at what we really want to do that first year.

Jan Von Qualen: So in between meetings are we going to be assigned to do certain things or is everybody supposed to come up with their ideas? Do you have a plan how we're going to operate?

Nate Bottom: It's a work in motion, that's why we want your input and guidance.

Mayor Langfelder: Yeah we don't want to dictate. We would like your feedback.

Susan Allen: Well it sounds like the money part of it is important to determine sooner rather than later.

Nate Bottom: We estimate, generally speaking, for an inch and three quarter tree is \$300 a tree, right?

Jeff Reim: Yes

Mayor Langfelder: If I was going to prioritize what needs to happen is... One is the tree policy that goes hand in hand with what we're going to do with the budget. And of course budget but the other thing is maybe a tree replacement program. So say it's determined that we need to take down a tree then you have a tree replacement. And then the other one is if we want to do anything with the...at one point we offered a Sweet Gum Ball replacement. That was one of the priority items but. Think about the Capital Plan where does that impact where that can probably come to play later.

Susan Allen: Tree City USA says a standard they have is \$2 dollars per person in the city. So it's like if you have a 100,000 people its \$200,000 dollars and I know that...

Mayor Langfelder: They're generous.

Nate Bottom: We spend over that definitely just in our tree personnel, maintenance and trimming.

Mayor Langfelder: So that's their entire tree budget?

Susan Allen: That's what they say a city should do. \$2 dollars per person.

Mayor Langfelder: Yeah we do quite a bit.

Nate Bottom: We do. However, we do the maintenance and the taking down we just need to do the replacement portion. Because the other items, this year we have \$20,000 allocated for fall tree planting which will allow us to plant 70 trees and Jeff has a list of ten trees that we are planning on planting so we'll try to plant seven of each that are on our recommended list.

Jeff Reim: Please take a look at the list. If you have any suggestions you are more than welcome to write it down.

Randy Belville: How many replacements was that?

Nate Bottom: It's approximately 70 trees.

Jan Von Qualen: Does that come anywhere close to the number that came down this year?

Nate Bottom: No, it is not. On average we are taking down 500 trees a year due to the Ash Borer.

Randy Belville: A number of the trees are on City owned property. What happens to the individual homeowner when they have these trees that are hazardous and need to come down? Is there anything that compels them to remove them from a city standpoint?

Mayor Langfelder: Just if they're interfering with the wires.

Nate Bottom: It's a code violation and will would cite them otherwise we can get a court order and then remove it and put a lien on their property.

Randy Belville: So of those 500 that you removed this year, those were all on city owned property?

Jeff: Yes they were on city property.

Randy Belville: I was a ride my bike around town and I notice the dead trees as much as I notice the living trees, at some point I begin to wonder are we going to start asking these folks to remove these dead Ash trees and what if they can't afford to do so?

Mayor Langfelder: There would probably have to be some type of a systems program that we would have to look into.

Randy Belville: Have you heard of anything of where there would be grant funds? I know the City of Champaign was offering some type of incentive for residents to remove dead trees.

Mayor Langfelder: We could take a look at what they were offering?

Randy Belville: I just wondered because at some point five to ten years down the road we're going to have some dead standing trees.

Mayor Langfelder: Yes let's try to be proactive. So that's another thing we can take a look at.

Randy Belville: If at some point you guys bring a removal service back within your own area of responsibility. Would there ever be an opportunity to remove a tree at cost for residents?

Mayor Langfelder: Are biggest issue on that would be liability.

Nate Bottom: As well as man power. We have plenty to remove on public right of way at this time.

Jan Von Qualen: As you say it's pretty expensive?

Randy Belville: It is. Some of these places are charging upwards of \$1,000 to remove.

Jeff Reim: The average is \$1,200.

Mayor Langfelder: That's where another issue is, is getting in competition with private contractors. That could be an issue. So if you know what other communities are doing and we can look into that.

Randy Belville: I'm going to look at that because it was three years ago when they announced that Champaign/Urbana had their program.

Mayor Langfelder: They probably had private companies doing that.

Randy Belville: But where did they come up with the money to do it. At the time I remember the figures where something like, 3,000 trees that they had to get out in the next couple years. I'm thinking that's a lot of trees. Somewhere they either set aside funds or received funds to help homeowners. But they identified those trees that needed to come out as problematic.

Susan Allen: And then if you spend the money on that it takes away from the tree budget of replacing trees.

Mayor Langfelder: It would be helpful to see what they did.

Randy Belville: One more question. An inch and three quarter, is that jus the standard that you came up with or is that the standard in that guide? Back in the 60's when the Sweetgum program was initiated some kids took these home. They lined State St with them as a second grade project. I don't know who had introduced them but an inch and three quarter seems large but is an inch and three quarter park grade?

Jeff Reim: It's street grade. The bigger caliber you go the more expensive.

Randy Belville: Exactly. So who adopted an inch and three quarters? Why are we not doing one inch whips so we could spread the money out?

Jan Von Qualen: Or a variety. When I replaced the tree in my parkway they told me the smaller the tree the quicker it will grow. So there's kind of a balance, it's bigger to start but it takes a while to recoup the root system so it doesn't grow very quickly. But if we did have a program where some had to be an inch and three quarters but then they could be done in school projects that could save a lot of money.

Randy Belville: We were doing \$35 to \$50 trees that were in 5 gallon versus a \$300 inch and three quarter. We could really move along.

Jeff Reim: I worry about with them going in the parkway, which is where we want them to overhang the street and create that canopy. With them being so small I worry about when they push snow you know it can get quite high on the parkways.

Randy Belville: Well if they are installed correctly to stake those in a way...

Jan Von Qualen: I grew up on a farm, the way you stop the guys from mowing down the trees is you put a big steel stake because they don't want to hurt their equipment. Stops them every time.

Randy Belville: Jeff and I have talked about a couple of projects. There was one where they just finished the U of I extension there on 11th street and they went in put all those beautiful trees in there and then I went through and counted them one night and talked to Jeff privately. Out of the 50 trees that are there, 25 of them were eaten up by deer within the first two weeks because they didn't have anything around them to guard them. The deer just racked them. The bucks want to go in there and mark their territory and they just rub their rack on them to set their scent on them, they rubbed half of the tree bark off on half of the trees. They did put three stakes around each one of them but that doesn't stop a buck. That's a lot of money down the tubes because half of those trees are ruined now and while they don't look like they will succumb to it today, trust me in five years they are going to be problematic diseased dead trees. It's just unfortunate.

Mayor Langfelder: Those are good points.

Nate Bottom: That was part of Federal Grant that we put those 277 trees along there.

Randy Belville: So I wasn't harping on you there Jeff on the inch and three quarter.

Nate Bottom: We can modify it, we haven't put it out to bid quite yet. Or blend it.

Jeff Reim: For the fall tree replacement, I'm looking at Stratford Place. Only because they have over 100 Ash trees coming out of the parkway. Even more so on private out there, it's just all full of ash. So that's where I would like to concentrate for the fall tree replacement.

Randy Belville: Where's Stratford Place?

Jeff: Off of Taylor Avenue.

Jan Von Qualen: Do we have Ash trees that we are trying to protect because they are so big beautiful?

Jeff Reim: There's a handful of residents that have paid money to treat and I have a list of those. But there's not many. We decided about four years ago when I came in that the tree preventative measure was too late. It's about a year and half treatment and it would've been costly versus trying to replace them.

Randy Belville: I would suggest removing that Ginkgo off of there.

Randy Belville: I love the tree, I have a Ginkgo in my own front yard. My problem is the weight and the timing of the leaves. The leaves are very dense, they hold a ton of water, they senesce completely in one night so they drop all at one time, there's not a gradual so there's no blowing away of them so then they become problematic for the sewers.

Jeff Reim: You guys are more than welcome to write on here your suggestions.

Susan Allen: You know it's one of the trees that recommended here and we put one in too and we like the leaves coming down on one day. It's a beautiful sight, you see it in Washington Park.

Randy Belville: There's a trade-off to the beauty thing but the practicality of it is that it becomes a problem with the weight, it lays there and when the first rain comes along then how do you get them off the streets because then they will not blow, they will not translocate, they will not go anywhere. Then we're stuck with them and they gather causing sewer problems. I think sometimes practicality outweighs beauty when it comes to spending someone else's money. Though I think there's a place for a few of them in town.

Jan Von Qualen: That's what I would say. I would think we would want to put a very big diversity of trees. I saw you have a couple of Maples. I've been told that we have way too many Maples in the City because when the disease comes for the Maples, we'll be wiped out.

Jeff Reim: Let's hope not.

Jan Von Qualen: Well you know it may not come in our lifetime but you don't want to set yourself up for it.

Jeff Reim: That's a possibility. (Inaudible) beetle. It's been in Ohio and New York. It's contained in Ohio right now.

Susan Allen: Did you put in those bald cypress trees across from the Governor's Mansion? Or who put those there? Those are pretty.

Nate Bottom: We did.

Jan Von Qualen: Those are nice.

Jeff Reim: If you guys take a look in here too, they have some really good ideas for trees as well.

Rianne Hawkins: Yeah Jennifer Fishburn said that everyone can have one of these and she has cases. So if people want that pamphlet.

Jeff Reim: I have some too. You can look through the trees in there.

Jan Von Qualen: I know they suggested the Kentucky coffee tree but male only.

Jeff Reim: Yes.

Susan Allen: But maybe some Ginkgo's, doesn't have to be all Ginkgo's.

Randy Belville: I love Ginkgo's, I have one in my front yard.

Nate Bottom: I appreciate you thinking about the road maintenance and the sewers. We definitely want to keep that into consideration as well as utilities underneath the ground too, we need to consider those as well as sidewalks.

Rianne Hawkins: I would also suggest the more native trees we can put in the better because that will support more of our insect populations. Whether it's native caterpillars or whatever.

Mayor Langfelder: Thank you all very much, we really appreciate it.

Susan Allen: Mayor, what would you think of about an Arbor Day program where the Mayor gives out a tree to a school? Goes out and plants the tree and they have an essay contest or a slogan contest, just something with school kids. That always gets people interested.

Mayor Langfelder: I was interested in getting kids to plant their own trees. I remember when I was young our dad had us plant our own trees, mine didn't do so well but my brother's did. But I think that's important to get the children involved.

Jan Von Qualen: It is and then they watch it their entire life. They all tell their kids "I planted that tree".

Mayor Langfelder: So if you want to see what other cities are doing or I can look at US Conference of Mayors, probably have an Arbor Day program I would think.

Mayor Langfelder: Well thank you very much.

Nate Bottom: Are there any other items that you would like to cover or discuss?

Susan Allen: Is it a role for this commission when there's a permit request for a private non-profit organization to take down a tree on city property can we have some input on whether or not that would be approved?

Jeff Reim: Absolutely. I will say this. Any permit that comes to me that people actually fill out without going ahead and doing it without my permission, I can say that and not approve it until I bring it to the commission so we can talk about it.

Nate Bottom: We will try to do that. Sometimes there will be times where we need to get it down a little quicker. But what I would really like to do is develop some policies and procedures for guidance for that. I think that would be the best bet and still provide you with an update at the meetings.

Susan Allen: It would be good to have some input. It sounded recently from what we heard that there were some instances of mature trees coming down in a couple of different places that were on city property.

Randy Belville: I don't know how but somebody already knew that my name was on this list before the meeting and emailed me something about Edwards and Walnut and they took all of the trees out at that church. There has to have been some purpose, I know most of them were Sweetgums.

Susan Allen: They looked healthy.

Jeff Reim: They were all Sweetgums, yes.

Randy Belville: They were on city property, yes?

Jeff Reim: Yes, they were on city property. They were re-doing the entire outside of the church and re-landscaping.

Randy Belville: So it was the church that made the request and not the city?

Jeff Reim: The church did.

Randy Bellville: Were you asked about that (Jan Von Qualen)?

Jan Von Qualen: No but I've heard a lot of complaining.

Randy Belville: I have too. I had a few emails and a few things on social media.

Jeff Reim: I will say that they are adding in more trees than were taken down.

Jan Von Qualen: I would've been nice if they had taken one down, planted one. You know so that it isn't just nude all of a sudden.

Randy Belville: That has a lot of folks in that neighborhood upset right now. That's because they don't know why and what's happening.

Randy Belville: Will the replacements be put back on their property or between the curb and sidewalk?

Jeff Reim: I told them the boulevard and their property.

Jan Von Qualen: Then will they ask what type of tree to plant.

Jeff Reim: They already have. I gave him a list.

Jan Von Qualen: I just hope they aren't all small ones because the ornamental ones aren't as helpful for shade at all.

Jan Von Qualen: A lot of what I hope we do is increase awareness and the value of trees. The gumballs, I pick up mine and my neighbors and it's fine because of the shade. My neighbor took one of his down and all of a sudden my house was completely covered in sun and on a summer afternoon it makes a huge difference. I think a lot of what we can do is interface with the public and remind them of the positive things and for people that have a lot of trees maybe we can think of something where they can be helped instead of cutting them down.

Susan Allen: How about a newsletter that you put on the city's website and there could be questions about trees.

Nate Bottom: Definitely think we can do something with that, we can work with the Communications Director on that as well to develop something.

Susan Allen: Like "Ask the Arborist" and you could respond.

Nate Bottom: We do have the "Report a Problem" right now but we could modify it so we can develop something in regards to "Ask the Arborist".

Randy Belville: When does your budget have to be in?

Nate Bottom: Our initial budget has to be in in early October. So we'll put in a larger placeholder in at that time but then we'll have to refine it and develop our program. We'll actually do our presentation at City Council in January but I think actual budget numbers are due in December though. And then we'll do our actual presentation in January with the actual programs we plan on offering.

Randy Belville: How many trees did you think you'll put in for next year?

Nate Bottom: 500 is our goal for next year. And we also we would like to do some landscaping of the medians on the way into the city. That's a goal of ours as well we would want to build into the budget so please consider that as well.

Susan Allen: Can the city apply for the Tree City USA status?

Jeff Reim: Absolutely. As a matter of fact, I talked to Mike Brunk and he's wanting by the end of October so I'll make sure to get that into him.

Rianne Hawkins: So it seems like we have two things on tap right now. One is tree inventory and then an Urban Forestry Plan. So how can we help with the tree inventory?

Nate Bottom: I think the tree inventory is actually going to be a lot longer process. We need to figure out what attributes we are going to want and how detailed we are going to get. There are different ways to approach the inventory. How many trees we have, the DBH, the type of tree and break it down quite a bit, the condition of the tree? It just depends. We can do it a lot cheaper and quicker, however it can be more expensive if we hire somebody like what Urbana did.

Jeff Reim: The Davey Resource Group. They are fantastic.

Nate Bottom: But that gives you a lot better knowledge of what you actually have that.

Susan Allen: Useful knowledge.

Nate Bottom: Which I think is critical and would be nice to have just need to have the money.

Rianne Hawkins: Let's put it in the budget.

Nate Bottom: I think we would want that in the budget.

Susan Allen: They had something in NPR that there's fewer trees in the poorer parts of town and more trees in the higher income parts of town and there could be like a 20 degree difference just because of the shade.

Jan Von Qualen: I would say maybe in Springfield there's fewer on the Eastside, most in the Center and the Westside not much. They have trees but they aren't very big. There's a huge difference in (inaudible) tree.

Nate Bottom: There is and I think getting that out there, showing how much cheaper your utility bill is with a large shade tree.

Susan Allen: Any how much storm water the tree will draw up too. If you take down a big tree and then there's more storm water in your yard or basement.

Jan Von Qualen: Okay so back to our tree inventory. That's aspirational.

Rianne Hawkins: Yeah, it sounds like our task at hand is to help develop the Urban Forestry Plan and the first step in that is the tree inventory then I think that putting the platinum standard in the budget is the first step, right? So is a proper role in this commission to advocate for that with Bill McCarty, the Council? How do we make sure that money makes it all the way through the process?

Nate Bottom: Well obviously recommending it at this meeting helps and then we will go ahead and put it into our budget proposal. What you guys want and think we should have. Obviously, the 500 trees we plan on putting that into the budget this year as well as building in some of those beautifying those corridors leading into the city.

Randy Belville: Any idea of a roundabout of what they paid the Davey Resource Group?

Nate Bottom: I believe they paid \$60,000 for 14,000 trees, \$4 dollars a tree basically. But I don't know how many trees we have to tell you the truth. I guess \$100,000 rough.

Rianne Hawkins: That's just for the study?

Nate Bottom: That's for the tree inventory, evaluating it.

Jeff Reim: The software program they come up with. It's fantastic. Urbana set aside tax funds for ten years to have that done.

Jan Von Qualen: Even if we bring it forward to the council and it didn't go forth this year, once we start pushing for it. It will be in the back of their minds. That's how you do things, incrementally. Let them know if we are not doing it this year then the next position is how much money do we put away this year for next year and the year after.

Nate Bottom: They could also possibly do it as a phased approach.

Jeff Reim: That's what I was just going to mention. A quadrant approach.

Rianne Hawkins: Well maybe that's a good compromise. Start out at \$100,000 and then go down to the phase.

Randy Belville: I'm trying to do some math here really quickly. Pardon me, I don't mean to step on your toes. If you're spending \$20,000 for 70 trees this fall and you're replacing 500 trees next year that's in the neighborhood of \$142,000 that you're setting aside for replacements for next year. Is that correct?

Nate Bottom: That's what we would be shooting for. That's obviously going to be hard to get that much so it sounds like a good approach is planting smaller trees.

Jeff Reim: That's what is fantastic about you guys is getting your input on this.

Randy Belville: I'm just thinking maybe you can do both. Could you use some of this money to help with the tree inventory? Which is really, I think, the very first step in setting the plan, informing the public and doing what we need to do. Cutting the size of the trees back allows us to plant that goal because I don't think they report and say "Oh well they only planted an inch and three quarter or they planted two and a half inch trees". I mean right now people are just crying for trees but they didn't say they had to be anything larger than a one inch whip which would cost you a third.

Nate Bottom: Personally I don't care what size we plant but I want it to make it. I don't want to waste our money.

Rianne Hawkins: With a one inch whip do we have to have additional materials to protect it?

Randy Belville: No, you plant it all the same way. If you were to go to Lowe's today and bought a tree in a 5 gallon pot, that's what they call a one inch whip. It's just a small tree that's no larger than 6 to 8 foot tall. Depending on the trees, some Oaks are not as immune able as like a Maple or things that are fibrously rooted versus a tap root system. I think there's some places where you can still do that Jeff and maybe knock both balls out of the park.

Susan Allen: But to have both. Some of the larger and some of the smaller and like Rianne said go for the larger budget, you know if you have to retreat a little bit but the tree inventory is important.

Jeff Reim: We want to try and get this tree inventory going.

Randy Belville: Personally, if I was a citizen living in my block and advocating for trees, I would want to know what the healthy condition is of the trees we already have so we would make really good informed decisions with the money that we get. You're blindly fighting a fire without really knowing where the fire is if you don't have any information on your side. I don't think it's really wise to keep spending a \$142,000 to replace trees if you don't really know what you need. You're approaching it with your eyes closed because you don't really have all the

information you need to do that. If I had to advocate and fight and challenge my neighbors to do the same thing I would say we really need information before we need additional trees because we don't know what kinds of trees we need, we don't know the healthy condition of the trees we already have is in and maybe we're going about this thing completely wrong. When it comes to something scientific like this you really want to make the best decisions. We don't know what the next Emerald Ash Borer is down the road, we don't know what's happening. Are the Pines next, or the Spruce's?

Jan Von Qualen: Diversity.

Randy Belville: Right. We really need to fight that fire with as much information as we can.

Susan Allen: You need information but we want to get this started. They say the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago and second best time is today. If you don't start planting the trees, the information is very important but let's do both.

Rianne Hawkins: Get the smaller trees at the cheaper cost.

Nate Bottom: It sounds like we already have a small assessment. We know that Stratford Place is bad, we know that all the Ash trees are gone. We know that area needs it bad, they need trees planted there. I agree we need to diversify. It sounds like we have a lot of Maple's, maybe? It would be best if we had the tree inventory, I agree. The tree inventory is critical, I believe you can do a lot better assessment on your assets and what you need, the type of preventative maintenance needed so I think that is critical. But I guess we do know that area is bad right now so do we want to go that route?

Rianne Hawkins: The tree inventory is not going to be done overnight and we're talking about the next budget year so you already have a plan for Stratford Place. I think continue on that plan but when you submit your budget for the next fiscal year re-look at how you're spending your money. Block off the \$100,000 for the tree study estimated and the other \$42,000 that you've been spending, do the smaller trees.

Randy Belville: If the RFP has not gone out yet for the fall, wouldn't it be better to put that RFP at a little smaller? Because the RFP hasn't gone out yet, he still has to do the RFP.

Jeff Reim: Right.

Randy Belville: So why not put that out at one inch caliber and get more trees?

Rianne Hawkins: That makes sense.

Nate Bottom: I agree. I agree with that.

Randy Belville: That takes a little pressure off the 500 for next year, then allows us...

Susan Allen: Would the difference between the trees with the one inch and the other one you're talking about, in ten years what would the difference be in size of the trees you're planting?

Randy Belville: Three to five years. That would be in the perfect environment where it's in a nursery. But sometimes when you plant a smaller tree, the smaller tree will out compete a larger tree just because it's had a chance to establish itself faster. There's not nearly as much stress on the root to canopy ratio so therefore it's going to catch up and go. It just depends on three things; weather, did we have a nice wet season to sustain it, two is how much care and was it properly planted and three is what was the condition of the tree when you put it in. Those are the three major factors.

Susan Allen: You've had some reason for going with the larger ones?

Randy Belville: No, that's just been the industry standard for too long.

Jeff Reim: It has and that was even what the former Arborist had in the bid sheet years ago.

Randy Belville: I think that's great for curb cuts, where you want something that looks instantaneous but if it's going in a boulevard or down a curve that's not necessarily the most logical thing.

Nate Bottom: I think that's great, we can get a lot more trees planted. In three years probably, especially with...

Randy Belville: Well and the cost of plant might be even a lot less because right now when you're planting those they can drill a one inch hole in five minutes with just a tractor arguer versus a bobcat. The bulb sizes are huge.

Susan Allen: But how about do some of the different sizes? You know if people look at all of these tiny little trees.

Nate Bottom: We need to educate them and why we're doing it.

Randy Belville: The size isn't as much as you think it is. Between three quarters of an inch coming down, that's a ten to twelve foot tree versus an eight to ten foot tree. So the size difference, the only place it's going to look different is in the size of the trunk not the size of the canopy or height of the tree.

Susan Allen: I'm just thinking there's some reason that's the industry's standard.

Randy Belville: There's different grades of trees too. Did you say they are park grade or tree grade?

Jeff Reim: Street grade.

Randy Belville: So there's different grades of trees too. Some of them are weird shaped or misshaped and not perfectly shaped for a homeowner but they're fine to place in a park. That's a lot cheaper grade of tree than a homeowner grade and then there's what we call whip grade which is even smaller. There's a lot of ways to cut some costs and still get trees going that I think would be beautiful trees.

Nate Bottom: Any other items you'd like to cover?

Nate Bottom: We can move to setting future meeting dates. How does the second Wednesday at 5:00pm work for everybody? Every other month. We can call a meeting in between one if we need.

Susan Allen: If there's somethings we want to do like a newsletter or some other things in between time.

Jan Von Qualen: What are the problems with the Open Meetings Act and getting things done? Because if we don't meet again until November, what have we done in the meantime to get busy on the plan?

Nate Bottom: Do you want to go ahead and have a meeting the second Wednesday in October? The 9th?

Randy Belville: That would be good.

Nate Bottom: We'll go ahead and have a meeting in October. We'll set meeting dates and we can always add another one. The next meeting will be October the 9th and 5:00pm. Are you guys okay with this location? Setting the future meeting dates, we'll set them tentatively. We'll go ahead and do November 13th and then the next meeting will be January the 8th then March the 11th and May the 13th, July 8th, September 9th and November 11th. Like I said, if there are time critical items we can go ahead and call another meeting as long as we have advance notice.

Susan Allen: Does someone take minutes?

Nate Bottom: Yes. We have a recorder going right now and then we'll have someone take minutes and then email those out to you in an allotted time frame.

Nate Bottom: Topic suggestions for next meeting? We may have already covered that.

Jan Von Qualen: So in between time. Each of us should think about what would be an appropriate plan?

Nate Bottom: Correct. Think about it and definitely we want a five year plan but critical item is next year's budget.

Susan Allen: Would the plan have something that the tree commission does? Or not?

Jan Von Qualen: I think you should use your imagination and we should all come together. I think we should all be willing to disagree with each other.

Randy Belville: I haven't taken the training yet. The Open Meetings training, is it wrong of us to email each other information outside of the meeting times? Is that appropriate?

Jan Von Qualen: I think you can email but can't have a conversation to discuss. Two people can go back and forth.

Randy Belville: But if I found some information to share with everybody and just emailed everyone.

Rianne Hawkins: That's fine. The issue comes when you hit "Reply All" and starts the conversation. But I could reply back to you individually and you and I could have a conversation.

Randy Belville: Let's say I went online to Schaumburg and looked up what their Tree Commission had done, if I found that and sent that out to everybody to have a copy of that, is that wrong?

Nate Bottom: No, you can do that. We just can't have the back and forth of everyone without being in an actual meeting.

Rianne Hawkins: The discussion.

Nate Bottom: The discussion, correct. Now you can talk back and forth with another individual you just can't have the majority. I think you can have up to three?

Rianne Hawkins: How many members are there?

All: Seven

Rianne Hawkins: Seven, so we can't do more than four people in a conversation.

Amy McEuen: On the topic of emails and documents; you said that the Urbana Forestry Plan was a good one. Could we get a copy of that?

Jeff Reim: I was going to bring one in. I've got a couple on my desk.

Nate Bottom: We can email it.

Jeff Reim: They gave me a copy of their tree management plan which is their Urban Forestry Plan, which is fantastic.

Randy Belville: We don't want to copy and paste anything.

Amy McEuen: No, but it gives us an idea of the format.

Nate Bottom: One other thing too. Probably should have a Chair too, appointing a Chair which will lead the meeting. I have no problem running this one and can probably start the next one. If you guys want to think about that.

Randy Belville: When you start looking at comparisons between cities in Illinois, what do you use for Springfield?

Nate Bottom: Comparable would generally be Champaign/Urbana, Bloomington, Decatur and Peoria. Sometimes Quincy.

Randy Belville: I just didn't know if there was something better to use in that regard. What's your standard?

Nate Bottom: I think Urbana has a great plan. It's a good goal to get there, it's going to be hard. We don't have the resources that they have. But let's try to get there.

Susan Allen: Now can CWLP come to a future meeting?

Nate Bottom: Yes. We will have them at future meetings.

Nate Bottom: Jeff is going to send out the Urbana Plan and then Randy is going to send out Schaumburg.

Motion to adjourn and seconded.