

Urban Forestry Commission  
2020 Arbor Day Planning  
October 31, 2019 12:00pm  
300 S 7<sup>th</sup> St, Conference Room 203 – Municipal Center West

I. Call to Order

- A. Meeting called to order by Jan Von Qualen.

II. Attendance

- A. Roll call. In attendance: Ernestine Lawrence, Rianne Hawkins, Susan Allen, Jan Von Qualen, Nathan Bottom, Randy Belville.

III. Unfinished Business

- A. No discussion.

IV. Arbor Day Activities

A. School Contest

- a. Susan suggested sending a letter out to District 186 and parochial schools for a city-wide contest for Arbor Day. A poster and/or slogan contest for grade schools and an essay contest for middle schools. Susan read out loud a draft letter that would be sent to the schools.
- b. Ernestine suggested the poster contest for the younger students, i.e. kindergarten, first grade and second grade, to create a poster that signifies what Arbor Day means to them. The winner of the poster contest would receive a tree as an award that they could take home to plant in their yard. She also suggested having the posters on display at the Board of Education building. Ernestine stated she agreed with the idea of having the middle school and high school students participate in an essay contest.
- c. Rianne asked if the commission members would be the judges for the contest. Ernestine suggested having the students be the judges among their peers by displaying the posters at school and having the students vote for the winner. Rianne stated that having the students vote might be too much of a burden on school staff and challenging.
- d. Rianne suggested displaying the posters at the Municipal Building, in the hallways. Director Bottom suggested the best place to display the posters in the Municipal Building would be the old sports hall of fame room which is on the first floor.
- e. Rianne recommended including the school district in the discussion to determine what would work best. Susan suggested to Ernestine that they both make a visit to 1900 Monroe and discuss with someone there and report back to the commission.
- f. Randy stated he spoke with Connor with Plant Possibilities, a nursey in the Chicago area that is the leading supplier of potted trees and seedlings to nonprofits and municipalities. He mentioned for a bald Cypress they can provide 100 for \$50 but it's a bare root which would need to be bagged with peat moss versus a potted tree you can get 18 for \$50 but the mortality rate is only 10% or less with a potted tree.

- g. Randy suggested instead of opening up the contest to all of District 186, selecting one school from each quadrant of the city and then doing the same thing the following year. He stated this would be more manageable and help bring the cost down as well.
- h. Randy stated he liked the idea that another community is doing that Susan had sent out where a high school student partners with an elementary student for a tree planting program. The high school student would partner with 3 to 4 younger students to help plant trees.
- i. Susan asked Randy what costs he associates with this. Randy stated the decision would have to be made whether to go with the bare root trees or the potted trees. For the bare root trees which would need to be bagged with peat moss would run approximately \$50 for a case of a thousand bags and then \$12 for a four cubic foot bale of peat moss. Director Bottom asked Randy if the potted trees would cost \$100 for 18. Randy stated an average cost of \$50 for 18 potted trees, depending on the species.
- j. Susan asked Randy if we would provide a diverse selection of trees. Randy suggested limiting the trees to four species this year and then another four species next year to provide diversity and limit the information from being overwhelming. He stated offering three shade trees and one ornamental tree.
- k. Randy suggested the Lincoln Library would be a great opportunity to display the winners there. Ernestine liked this suggestion as well. Ernestine and Susan both agreed with Randy's suggestion earlier about selecting schools in each quadrant of the city and to ensure we include not just District 186 but parochial schools along with homeschoolers too. Rianne recommended instead of outreaching to specific schools, making the contest self-selecting. It would be a city-wide contest but whomever could choose to participate, this would lessen the burden on the schools and administration while still opening up the contest to public school, parochial school and homeschooling.
- l. Susan asked Director Bottom if we have money available to purchase the trees. Director Bottom stated we do not have any money available at this time. Randy stated there is a grant opportunity through the Illinois Native Plant Society that offers one time grants to plant native trees and/or plants. Rianne stated she would write the grant proposal.
- m. Randy asked the group if they were in agreement on which age group to reach out to. Susan stated a poster contest for the younger students and then either the essay contest for the older students or having the older students partner with younger students for planting of trees.

## B. Educational Events

- a. Jan stated she spoke with Adam's Wildlife and they have a room available for hosting an educational event. Jan also stated that the program manager at IDNR said he would do an educational event as well. Jan stated she reached out to Starhill Forest Arboretum as well as fellow commissioner, Amy McEuen for participating at some educational events. Jan suggested these educational events would be separate from the bi-monthly UFC meetings, possibly beginning in January 2020. Randy suggested having an educational event once every three or four months for a year.
- b. Susan mentioned having an "Ask the Arborist" question session. Randy suggested having a small round table session with a panel of speakers with various backgrounds. Jan suggested the first round table could be about native plants, native trees and the benefits of trees.
- c. Jan stated she would take a look at the Lincoln Library's schedule to narrow down dates for educational events.

## VI. Recognition of Partners in Tree-Planting

- A. Susan discussed the non-profit group, Sustainable Springfield Inc., who was planting trees on city property along Clearlake Avenue and this group had an agreement with the City years ago about planting trees. Susan suggested recognizing them in some way as a partner in tree planting.
- B. Director Bottom stated the commission would need to talk with the Director of Communications, Julia Frevert, to discuss options along with what types of materials the commission would like to put on the city website. Jan suggested we could discuss material options for the website at the next UFC meeting. Director Bottom suggested inviting Julia Frevert to one of the UFC meetings to discuss communications.
- C. Susan stated the plan is to recognize Sustainable Springfield at the next Urban Forestry Commission and suggested a certificate as an option. Susan made a motion to recognize Sustainable Springfield Incorporated for their tree planting efforts in conjunction with the city on Clearlake Avenue at the next meeting. Motion was seconded by Ernestine Lawrence. All in favor.

## VII. New Business

- A. No discussion.

## VIII. Adjournment

- A. Jan adjourned the meeting.