

Urban Forestry Commission  
2020 Arbor Day Planning  
January 15th, 2020 5:00pm  
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. Attendance by Jan Von Qualen. In attendance: Susan Allen, Ernestine Lawrence, Randy Belville, Jeff Reim, Rianne Hawkins, Amy McEuen and Nate Bottom
- a. Public Members in attendance: Patty Morton, Charlie Stratton.

III. Approval of October 31<sup>st</sup> and November 13, 2019 Minutes

- A. Motion made by Rianne Hawkins to approve the October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 minutes, seconded by Ernestine Lawrence. Motion passes 6/0/0.
- B. Motion made by Rianne Hawkins to approve the November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 minutes with the amendment to page 17, seconded by Amy McEuen. Motion passes 6/0/0.

IV. Budget for Arborist/Forestry Projects, including: Tree Survey, Tree Purchase & Planting, Arbor Day Activities

A. Tree Survey

- a. Jan reviewed the budget numbers that were proposed at the budget hearing. \$215,000 in total, \$100,000 for tree survey, \$100,000 for tree planting and \$15,000 for Arbor Day and various activities. The budget received some pushback from the council members. The main concern seemed to be with \$100,000 for the tree survey.
- b. Nate stated that the money for a tree survey would be difficult at this time and the best option moving forward would be to achieve most of the tree survey in-house. He mentioned utilizing our GIS coordinator, Riley Potts, to generate data, locations of trees, determine the high and spread and create a 3-D image.
- c. Nate explained that Riley is doing the computer work of the tree survey, laying the format and Jeff would be responsible for gathering the additional data and identifying the trees.
- d. Jeff explained that the data that Riley is working on will be able to depict by ward how many trees there are. Nate added that this would determine the height of trees and the spread/density but somebody would have to be in the field to determine tree species and condition.

B. Tree Purchase & Planting

- a. Jan discussed the option of applying for grants to help offset costs.
- b. Susan brought up the option of buy in from community outreach to pay for trees. Reaching out to corporations or businesses for support. Nate stated that Springfield Green would be dealing with that aspect in regards to community outreach for support.

- c. Jan stated the commission would like to have more of a partnership with Springfield Green. Susan suggested meeting with some people from Springfield Green. Nate stated he would discuss with the mayor.
- d. Susan brought up that Eddie Bauer gives grants to urban forestry for planting trees.
- e. Randy stated that Morton Arboretum has a list of grants that we could apply for.
- f. Nate reiterated that 200 trees are a done deal which came from the previous budget and we are waiting for approval for the additional 500 trees. Rianne inquired where the 700 trees would be planted. Nate stated it would be a combination between corridors, downtown and subdivisions. Jeff stated that 140 of those trees have already been planted at Stratford Place and the remainder 60 trees will try to be planted downtown.

#### V. How to water trees for fall tree planting

- A. No discussion

#### VI. Review of Rules and Procedures

- A. No discussion

#### VII. Springfield Urban Forestry Plan: timeline, goals, responsibilities

- A. Nate reiterated that we need to focus on developing the Urban Forestry Plan along with the Arbor Cultural Specifications Manual to ensure we are ready for the next fiscal year. Additionally, the Urban Forestry Plan is needed and/or required in order to apply for some grants.
- B. Rianne asked Jeff if the data we would receive from the tree survey be enough to draft a plan. Jan discussed about forming a subcommittee to work on the plan.
- C. Randy discussed setting goals and whether that involves just the commissioners or does it involve people in the industry, CWLP, homeowners, homeowner associations, developers? Randy also brought up the permitting process for new development and what the requirements are in regards to trees and shrubs for a new business. Jan stated those requirements would be for the specifications manual and she hopes in the future to have stronger ordinances and to make some changes to the ordinances. Nate agreed. Randy stated that businesses plant trees that are required in order to obtain an occupancy permit but down the line there is no accountability for businesses to maintain the trees that have been planted. He further states that the ordinances were put in place to protect the environment and to shade parking lots.

#### VIII. Arbor Day Activities

- A. Ernestine stated she is working on meeting with District 186 to discuss Arbor Day activities. Susan stated she reached out to several parochial schools as well. Susan suggested reaching out to the Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA. She asked the commission for their thoughts.

- B. Jan and Nate both agreed that reaching out to the Y and the Boys and Girls Club is a good idea since this is the first year to start out small to ensure success.
- C. Nate brought up the idea of having a station at the upcoming Earth Awareness Fair that the city hosts on Saturday April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Old State Capitol to help promote Arbor Day. Randy, Jeff and Nate discussed handing out bare root trees at the event along with educational material. Susan stated we should have an emphasis on kids and kid activities.

#### IX. Educational Events

- A. Jan announced that Mike Brunk with IDNR will be speaking next Wednesday January 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Lincoln Library from 5pm-6pm. She stated he is willing to give presentations as often as the commission would like.

#### X. New Business

- A. Randy discussed the importance of making people aware of what's going on to promote a positive influence on the council members, that we need their help and support.
  - a. Charlie stated that the word "beautification" creates limitations. The word beautification is seen as a luxury and would typically be the first budget item to be cut. He discussed the importance of educating the council members on the tangible benefits trees bring to homeowners and property owners.
  - b. Nate agreed with Charlie's comments and reiterated the importance of developing the plan and developing the outreach material moving forward. He stated that developing the tree management plan will make the commission more eligible for receiving funding.
- B. Randy discussed Clear Lake Avenue and how Jeff made great effort to please the mayor by having all of the utilities marked. The result was that only about a dozen trees could be planted due to the extensive amount of underground and above-ground utilities.
  - a. Nate stated utility easements are now required behind the sidewalk to allow planting in boulevards.
- C. Nate discussed that the South Grand Ave corridor is an area that would benefit from planting trees there and that Jeff will be taking a look at the conditions along that major corridor.
  - a. Randy then brought up the area by the fairgrounds that Alderman Fulgenzi mentioned. Nate stated there is no way to put trees along Peoria road due to it being nothing but solid sidewalk as well as it being a state route. Nate stated a corridor plan needs to be developed for that area.
  - b. Nate stated that we need to look at areas along all of the corridors and identify areas.
  - c. Susan stated we need to be planting trees in neighborhoods too. Nate stated that is the plan.
- D. Randy asked Nate about the sidewalk along the Lincoln Apartments regarding the locust trees being removed and concreted over?
  - a. Nate stated he was just informed a couple days ago that there is a high pressure gas main under there along with some other underground utilities. Nate suggested doing a 12 year plan which would consist of planting trees in larger planters and then down the road transplanting the trees once they outgrow the planter.

- b. Jeff stated the mayor would like us to dig up the concrete and plant trees back however it would be very difficult due to the amount of utilities underground. Therefore, the planters is an option to consider.
  - c. Randy asked Nate if those trees were containerized? Randy was under the impression that there were plans from back in the 80's for the corridor along the Lincoln Apartments that received TIF funding. Nate stated they would look at the records to confirm.
  - d. Rianne suggested why not go with option B, the planters? This way there wouldn't be any worries about the utilities or the additional expense of digging up the concrete.
  - e. Susan suggested asking Mike Brunk what they did in downtown Urbana.
- E. Susan stated she saw Westminster Church plant new trees. Randy stated they are huge and the plan is coming along great. Susan also informed the commission that the ash trees that were removed by Lincoln's Home were replaced with 10 new trees.

#### XI. Public Comments

#### XII. Adjournment

- A. Randy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Rianne.