

**MUNICIPAL TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 18, 2018**  
**Department of Public Infrastructure Conference Room**

Commissioners Present: Chairman Todd Holschbach, Vice Chairman Nic Levendusky, Glenn Pfeffer, Alder. Rhienna Gabriel, Al Schema

Staff Present: Chad Scheinoha, Alvin Rehme

**Call meeting to order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman T. Holschbach.

**Approval of the minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes from the February 13, 2018 and April 27, 2018 meetings was made by A. Schema and seconded by Ald. Gabriel. The motion carried unanimously.

**Public input session**

None.

**Report on tree maintenance since last meeting**

City crews have:

- Performed work at approximately 141 locations,
- Removed 25 trees,
- Trimmed 116 trees,
- Responded to four callouts of a tree/limb down,
- Delivered 37 loads of firewood,
- Planted 24 trees, and
- Reviewed 2 tree planting & 10 removal permits.

Current have forestry service requests for:

- 129 "4-D" (dead, diseased, dying, or dangerous) trees to be removed, and
- 78 trees to be trimmed.

2018 Contractor tree/stump removals

1. Chris Lewis Tree Service
  - a. Removed 15 trees (9 of which were infected by the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and 6 of which were associated with the Engineering Division's sidewalk replacement program)
  - b. Removed 23 stumps (9 were due to EAB and will be funded by grant money from the DNR and 14 were part of the Engineering Division's sidewalk replacement program)
2. Dave's Tree Service
  - a. Removed 18 of the City's 4-D trees in June
3. Lemahieu Tree Service cleared approximately two acres of the Maritime Buff in May. C. Scheinoha explained the plantings that were completed to help restore the bluff.

T. Holschbach requested stump removal be put on a future agenda as stumps can be an eyesore if they are not removed. C. Scheinoha mentioned that another idea being discussed would be for the City to have a contract with someone to remove the stumps and property owners could get on a list to have their stumps

removed at a lower rate and then be invoiced for the cost. C. Scheinoha will make a note to discuss this at the next meeting.

### **Update on the forestry fund**

The balance of the forestry fund as of September 11<sup>th</sup> is approximately \$11,687. After expenses, the usable balance is approximately \$7,800. The majority of the funds are used for planting trees and a small amount is spent on equipment or safety items.

### **Urban forestry grant opportunities**

City staff is currently working on a \$25,000 matching grant for which an extension will need to be applied for in order to get everything completed. The majority of the funds will be spent on the EAB issue. A small ATC grant was also received for street tree planting.

### **Tree Planting for 2018 & beyond (planting program)**

A. Rehme keeps a list of property owners requesting replacement of terrace trees. Trees are generally planted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

G. Pfeffer asked about the trees by the Red Arrow Park memorial. A. Rehme stated that 16 trees were planted in 2017 and that five of those trees were replaced in 2018. Ed Hansen has been coordinating the purchase of the memorial trees. The trees mostly have red leaves to go along with the Red Arrow Memorial theme.

### **Revisions to Tree Maintenance & Removal Policy**

T. Holschbach questioned if the City would allow people to take down large, older trees just because people don't like a lot of leaves, etc. A. Rehme stated that if the tree is healthy and people don't have a good reason for removing it, then he will not approve the removal permit.

One of the steps needed before a new policy is approved is to take a look at the tree removal policy versus the sidewalk replacement program to make sure that they are in agreement. For example, when replacing sidewalks, the concrete panels could be moved to go around a tree instead of removing the tree to accommodate the sidewalk. There is a concern though about going onto private property as an easement would then be needed, and because there would be additional costs of going around a tree, such as additional labor, concrete, etc. T. Holschbach and C. Scheinoha will meet with the Engineering Division to discuss this issue. Ald. Gabriel suggested that the City could set up a payment plan so that the additional costs were not a hardship to the property owners.

Some of the changes that are being considered include:

- Adding language that states trees affecting the sidewalk or sanitary sewer lateral do not qualify as a 4-D tree unless, for example, replacement of the sidewalk included in the designated annual City sidewalk replacement program would cause the tree to become dangerous as determined by the City Forester (i.e. cutting 1/3 to 1/2 of tree roots), and
- Adding language so that a homeowner could remove a healthy tree for sidewalk purposes, although the property owner would need to plant a new terrace tree. The problem with this is that it would not provide the same aesthetics as a more mature tree would.

### **Utility/contractor trimming guidelines**

T. Holschbach thinks that sometimes the utilities or contractors do more tree trimming than is necessary. C. Scheinoha and A. Rehme met with Steve Bacalzo and Bob Bouril from Manitowoc Public Utilities (MPU) and showed them some examples of how they would like to see the trees trimmed versus some they have seen. MPU is currently using Dave's Tree Service, and A. Rehme talked with a representative from the company about trimming. The meetings seemed to go positively, and we will wait to see what their future trimmings look like.

At the meeting, they also talked about ways to get some of the street trees limbs that are hanging over the street trimmed. When the next contract is due in a few years, there is a possibility of adding on trimming of street trees for height clearance over the street or trimming of any 4-D trees that involve wires. This could be a five or ten year rotation. Another option would be to the main arterial streets instead of trimming by quadrants.

### **Tree ordinance violations over the street & sidewalk**

The City of Manitowoc's height clearance is currently 14' over the street and 10' over the sidewalk. C. Scheinoha researched what other municipalities do. Most of the sidewalk clearances were either 8' or did not stipulate a height. Little Chute was the only city that matched our 10' height clearance over the sidewalk. In the past, Parks crews used to walk the sidewalks with a 10' pole and trim branches back to the 10' height clearance. Neenah and Appleton had 14' height clearances over the street. In Appleton, low volume streets are sometimes allowed a variance. Green Bay's ordinance just says free passage of pedestrians and vehicles must be maintained. T. Holschbach was concerned that vague wording might cause legal issues. Commission members liked the idea of focusing on the main arterial routes. A. Rehme said that he also focuses on trimming trees on the bus routes. C. Scheinoha indicated that he would like to see a designated height clearance on side streets as that will make it easier for forestry staff and so that properties are treated the same.

### **Update on Emerald Ash Borer infected trees**

EAB was first found in the City of Manitowoc last year. Currently, there are approximately 20 to 30 City trees infected. EAB was found from S 22<sup>nd</sup> Street (on the west) to S 11<sup>th</sup> Street (on the east) and from Franklin Street (on the north) to Columbus Street (on the south). According to A. Rehme, there are probably five to seven trees infected with EAB in Washington Park. It is spreading very quickly. A few signs were made with QRS codes and were posted in the City to educate the public. EAB infected wood piles were left in the sun to heat to over 140 degrees in order to kill the EAB. Wood chips were taken to the gravel pit, although it is believed that insects should not have survived the chipper.

There are about 800 ash trees in the City of Manitowoc that will eventually need to be removed and replaced. City staff are working with Ranger Services to update our EAB plan, which was originally developed in 2009. Approximately 25 EAB infected trees will be removed this year, and about 45 trees will be treated for EAB. Chris Stephani in the Streets Division is certified for pesticide application, and he does EAB treatments for Manitowoc Landscape, so he has been working with A. Rehme on the EAB infected trees. Treatment will be done every other year for the life of the tree.

The City is working to diversify the tree canopy. Most of the City's trees have been inventoried. In the future, C. Scheinoha would like to apply for a grant to have a student update our tree inventory.

### **Review of Arbor Day 2018**

A. Rehme said that we gave away 100 seedlings on Arbor Day. One thing that could be done better for the celebration is better preparation for introducing the speakers. A. Rehme said that one of the trees planted on Arbor Day eventually snapped off, perhaps due to a vehicle hitting it. *G. Pfeffer left.*

### **Sewer pipes clogged by tree roots**

Tabled until the next meeting.

### **Annual review of fees (wood sales, etc.)**

C. Scheinoha reviewed the current fees with the Commission. T. Holschbach proposed that the fees be looked at again at the next meeting to see if some fees could be raised in order to increase the amount of money in the forestry fund. In C. Scheinoha's opinion, the firewood fee could be raised as there is a waiting list for the firewood. A. Rehme said that if we had more time, we could sell more firewood.

### **Assessments**

The list of assessments are for removals or trimming of trees that are either ordinance violations or are considered dead, diseased, dying, or dangerous and were not removed by the property owners after receiving a 30-day notice. The Council will still need to approve these assessments to the property owners. Ald. Gabriel indicated that she feels that there should be incentive to remove these before the City gets involved. There was a question of whether or not the assessments go through the Public Infrastructure Committee or Board of Public Works prior to the Council meeting. C. Scheinoha will inform the Commission of the procedure at the next meeting.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Ald. Gabriel to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by A. Schema and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

smsr