

**MUNICIPAL TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 17, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.**  
**Council Chambers, City Hall, 900 Quay St.**

Commissioners Present: Al Schema, Horst Abel, Alder Vanderkin

Staff Present: Dan Koski, Billy Hutterer, Alvin Rehme

Others: Barry Pankratz, Todd Chaney, Kent Brawner, Jeremiah Novak

**Call meeting to order**

A. Schema called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes from the 9/8/2020 meetings**

B. Vanderkin made a motion to accept the minutes. H. Abel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Request to remove tree at 819 N 6<sup>th</sup> St. & 514 Cleveland Ave. causing sewer issues**

Property owners had requested that the City remove the tree due to falling limbs and sewer issues. According to the City Forester, this silver maple tree does not meet the criteria for removal. There are approximately 125 trees on the list to be removed. H. Abel made a motion to move this tree near the top of the removal list. A. Schema seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. A. Rehme said it's possible that the tree would be removed in 2020 depending on the weather. He said that he has some other trees in front of this one that are worse.

**Appeal of Street Tree Removal Permit invoice for 1807 Washington St.**

B. Pankratz gave a presentation on behalf of the Marathon Station. He indicated that semis have difficulty viewing traffic when exiting the driveway as there are also utility poles and guide wires. In addition, there are underground utilities and the tree caused the sidewalk to heave. A. Rehme indicated that he had contacted the Community Development Department, and they would like to see the tree replanted. The City has a list of suggested street trees for small terraces, which was not the case when the tree that was there was original planted. The average life expectancy of a street tree is approximately 15 years. The committee discussed flowers and/or flower planters in that area. A. Schema made a recommendation to refer this issue to the Public Infrastructure Committee and to allow the property owner to place temporary flower containers in lieu of a tree until either Washington Street is redone or the Community Development Department continues their tree planting program in that area of Washington Street. B. Vanderkin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Report on tree maintenance since last meeting**

- 99 locations since 9/8/20
- 18 ash removed + 13 other trees removed
- 92 locations pruned
- 1 callout on Vista Rd.
- 5 loads of firewood
- 31 total plantings
  - Lakeside Foods donated a Kentucky coffee tree at Washington Park
  - Garden Club donated a red oak at Washington Park

- 8 maple trees planted at Red Arrow Park by the Friends of Red Arrow Park
- 37 trees planted downtown by Community Development
  - Some interest in sponsoring public trees on 8<sup>th</sup> Street
- 2 removal permits granted
- 0 planting permits granted
- 44 requests for trimming remain
- 126 requests for removals remain
- 29 4D private trees
- 35 inspection requests on backlog
- EAB treatment injections continue (every two years for each tree)
  - 37 trees treated so far (goal is 50)
- In the process of developing RFQs for tree removals (typically trees in wires)

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

The current balance is \$7210.98. It does not include revenues or expenses from 2020. Funds from 2020 will be transferred once auditors complete their work in March or April.

### **Urban forestry grant opportunities**

A. Rehme stated that an application for a \$5,000 American Transmission Corporation grant for Red Arrow Park was completed. Approximately 17 ash trees will need to be removed at Red Arrow Park.

In 2020, a wasp release was done three or four times at lower Henry Schuette Park to kill the larvae from the Emerald Ash Borer. They were placed in trees that wouldn't be removed for a few years. More wasps may be released in 2021, which will help to slow down the deaths of the ash trees.

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

Tabled. A meeting needs to be set up with staff to discuss tree maintenance and removal related to sidewalks and historic trees.

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

Tabled. This issue is regarding the height clearance.

### **Addition of the Tree Planting Plan into the Street Tree Planting Policy**

Tabled. Staff is working on a rough draft.

### **Revision of the Street Tree Planting Permit to a Street Tree Planting/Treatment Permit**

A. Rehme said that we are looking for some way to catalog the ash trees that are being treated, so that we do not cut down a tree that a property owner has spent a lot of money treating and so that we check to see if they are being treated properly. The Commission debated the merits of revising the planting permit to include treatment of trees or creating a separate permit for treatment of trees. The Commission decided it would be best to have separate permits.

### **Arbor Day 2021**

The Commission discussed possibly planting a tree along the south side of the river east of S. 8<sup>th</sup> St. A. Rehme will order some free seedlings from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade children.

**2021 Meeting Schedule**

A. Schema made a motion to approve the meeting schedule. H. Abel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:47 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

SMSR