

MUNICIPAL TREE COMMISSION MEETING
August 12, 2014
Department of Public Works Conference Room

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Mike Penckofer, Glenn Pfeffer, Rick Schwarz

Staff Present: Chad Scheinoha, Al Rehme

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by M. Penckofer at 4:42 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes

G. Pfeffer made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2014 meeting. R. Schwarz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Report on Tree Maintenance Since Last Meeting

C. Scheinoha stated that with such a small staff, it is difficult to keep up and be proactive. Because it was a "bad" winter last year, the staff only had time to take care of a handful of trees over the winter. The goal is for A. Rehme to spend eight hours per week on administrative issues for trees (inspecting tree complaints on site, replying to citizens, & updating Stratapoint, etc.) They have taken care of 16 trees in May, 13 in June, 22 in July, and two in August so far.

A. Rehme said that they are working on two grants right now. One is from American Transmission Corporation and the other is a \$25,000 matching grant through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

A letter regarding stump removal is currently being sent out to property owners after the City removes a stump on the terrace area. It was suggested that the names of established contractors be listed in the letter to make it easier for property owners. M. Penckofer suggested that the City get bids for stump removal and include terrace tree stumps in the bid if property owners indicate they would like stumps professionally removed.

Lakeside Boulevard Bluff

The Lakeside Boulevard Bluff was a good success story according to C. Scheinoha. Jim Nickelbine from Woodland Dunes started the Restore the Shore Initiative along Lake Michigan in Manitowoc County, in part to make better habitats for birds. He also wrote up the proposed management plan for the bluff. C. Scheinoha, along with the City Attorney, etc., worked with the Citizens for a Scenic Lakeshore group to develop the scope of work. A. Rehme did an inventory of the trees in the area and developed a list of recommended trees. A native plant list was developed by the Citizens group and Woodland Dunes.

The bluff was split into five work sections. There are about 90 small, deep-rooted trees (2'-4' tall) that will be planted in fall on the bluff, which will replace many of the non-native species and those are not recommended for the top of the bluff. Woodland Dunes received a grant for their Restore the Shore Initiative and are donating the trees for the area. They are also doing invasive species control, such as for garlic mustard, along the area. There is a sign that will go

up on the boulevard representing all the groups that contributed time, effort, and money to the project.

North Lake Street Bluff

Philip Meisnest from North Lake Street approached the Mayor about the condition of the bluff there. He submitted a short plan for the area for hand trimming some of the vegetation in the area, which includes raising the crown of some vegetation in order to enjoy the view, as well as picking up garbage.

Downtown & Calumet Avenue Street Trees

Green space is limited, so M. Penckofer said that an option would be talking to property owners about planting trees on private property. The problem with that is that oftentimes, too much of the tree is trimmed in order to maintain visibility for business signs. The Harbor Town area seems to be the best location for future trees right now. M. Penckofer suggested a raised flowerbed by a Welcome to Manitowoc sign as even a little greenery would help.

Urban Forestry Grant Opportunities

A. Rehme said that they are almost ready to submit the application for the \$5,000 ATC grant for line clearance trees, which does not require matching funds to be spent. Tracy Salisbury has offered to help with grant applications.

Review of Arbor Day 2014

Everything went well, and there was a good, enthusiastic turnout. M. Penckofer suggests choosing a 3rd grade at a different school next year, since you will have a captive audience.

Recommendation to Increase Staffing for Forestry Issues

To become proactive, more staff is needed. M. Penckofer stated that if there is a tree that is deemed unsafe, legally it needs to be taken care of, and he suggested that support for additional staff could be gained from the City Attorney. C. Scheinoha said that either more forestry staff could be hired or more general Parks staff could be hired to free up the current tree crew for forestry issues.

Recommended Tree List for Street Tree Planting Policy

Cedars and Norway Maples should be placed on the "Trees Not Recommended for Street Tree Planting" list. It was suggested to update the "Suggested Street Trees" list with new recommendations from Silver Creek Nursery.

Guidelines for Adoptable Areas

Sandy Ronski altered the Adopt A Park program to include the adoptable boulevards and other right-of-way areas. C. Scheinoha said that approximately 1/3 of the parks are currently not adopted. M. Penckofer suggested that a separate person is needed to oversee this program to increase participation and be sure that all criteria and guidelines are being met.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by R. Schwarz. The meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.