**MUNICIPAL TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**September 10, 2019**

**1st Floor Hearing Room, City Hall, 900 Quay St.**

Commissioners Present:  Chairman Todd Holschbach, Vice Chairman Nic Levendusky, Glenn Pfeffer, Alderman Lee Kummer

Staff Present: Dan Koski, Chad Scheinoha, Alvin Rehme

**Call meeting to order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Todd Holschbach.

**Approval of the minutes from the February 26, 2019 and April 26, 2019 meetings**

A motion was made and seconded to approve both sets of minutes.

**Public input session**

None.

**Report on tree maintenance since last meeting**

296 locations had tree work done since Feb. 26th

139 trees removed plus 40-50 ash trees

157 trees trimmed

5 after-hour callouts

12 loads of firewood

2 sales to Krueger Lumber of ash trees from Lincoln & Washington Parks

21 tree plantings

13 tree removal permits

7 planting permits (1 was for 12 trees)

107 trimming requests

160 removal requests

Since the Parks Division now has a full forestry crew (3 full-time employees plus 2 seasonal employees), removals have more than quadrupled this year. Ald. Kummer asked what could be done to increase the number of trees planted, since we remove more than we plant, and we are a tree community. He said that the Commission needs to make the Common Council aware of this issue at budget time.

**Update on the forestry fund**

The balance in the fund is $8112.06 as of September 9th. *[This figure will not reflect 2019 revenue or expenses until after auditors complete their work in spring of 2020.]* The fund is used for maintenance and for planting new trees.

A couple of local companies & organizations have donated trees to be planted in city parks, and approximately 20 to 30 trees have already been planted in the Waldo Boulevard medians.

**Urban forestry grant opportunities**

The City of Manitowoc has applied for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which would give the City $30,000 to plant approximately 50 trees (with a matching $8,000 from the City and in-kind contributions for watering). An application will also be filed for an American Transmission Company (ATC) grant, which is a maximum $5,000 grant.

**Review Arbor Day 2019**

The Arbor Day Celebration was held at the Library. C. Scheinoha said that it went very well. They watched a movie clip from the Lorax instead of reading the book. Donated trees were planted over by the Flower Gallery, and white spruce tree seedlings were given away to attendees instead of white pine.

**Revisions to Tree Maintenance & Removal Policy**

A few Commission members are planning to meet with Greg Minikel, Engineering Division Manager, and Steve Herzog, the City’s sidewalk inspector, to discuss the policy and what can be done to help preserve historic trees.

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

The City’s current ordinance is 14’ over the street and 10’ over the sidewalk. The Commission discussed having different policies for arterial streets versus side streets. No action was taken.

**Update on Emerald Ash Borer infected trees**

The Parks staff has removed 21 EAB trees, and 20 trees were removed by a contractor through the Urban Forestry Grant. The City will try to hire a contractor to remove another 30 to 50 EAB trees before the end of the year.

Staff treated 32 trees prior to infection, and the plan is to treat another 15 to 20 trees. The cost to treat a young healthy ash tree is less than $100 every two years. Larger trees will cost more. The City’s initial investment was $1,500 for equipment. A $550 bottle of insecticide treats approximately 20 of the 10” diameter trees. The treated trees are generally in more visible areas, such as along the Mariners Trail, Citizen Park, and the Visitors Information Center. Unfortunately, the trees at Washington Park were too far gone to do treatment. A. Rehme said that he expects the EAB issue to get worse next year, and C. Scheinoha said that they requested another $10,000 in next year’s budget to help deal with the EAB issue.

It was suggested that the goal should be to plant two trees for every one removed. Ed Hansen is fundraising for tree plantings at Red Arrow Park. The donated trees are mostly maple trees, however, so A. Rehme will talk to Ed about possibly diversifying the type of trees, since close to 90% of the City’s trees are maples.

**Updated Emerald Ash Borer Plan**

No discussion.

**Forestry assessments for 2019**

The Commission discussed the proposed forestry assessments for 2019. L. Kummer made a motion to approve the assessments. N. Levendusky seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

A formal Tree Planting Plan is being developed by City staff, and they were wondering if the Commission would support having that incorporated into the Street Tree Planting Policy instead of having a separate sheet. A donation section could also be included. The Commission supported the idea.

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

Two citizens have requested to treat their terrace trees for EAB. The staff felt it should be documented or permitted, since the average person cannot do the injections. Commission members were in agreement, so the staff will draft some revisions.

**Adjournment**

N. Levendusky made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by G. Pfeffer. Meeting adjourned.

SMSR