

URBAN FORESTRY TREE BOARD MEETING NOTES
October 17, 2019
Government Center, Room 204

Members Present: Ruth Ludwig, Jane Anklam, Justin Holmes

Members Excused: Nick Nelson, Richard Kaufman, Robert-Jan Quene

Also present: Linda Cadotte, Russ Behlings, Angie Harker, Terry Asleson, Adam Rider

Chair Ruth Ludwig called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. and since there was not a quorum, the meeting began with introductions and then agenda items 4 – 7 were discussed.

1. Introductions

Introductions were made and Justin Holmes was welcomed to his first meeting of the board. Holmes is a forester for the Douglas County Forestry Department. Terry Asleson and Adam Rider, foresters with the Wisconsin DNR were also in attendance.

2. Election of Officers.

No action

3. Approval of the August 22, 2019 minutes.

No action.

4. Referred from the Public Works Committee meeting of 9/18/19: Tree abatement assistance program draft.

Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director Linda Cadotte recapped the history of the Tree abatement assistance program draft which was requested by Councilor Dalbec. Cadotte indicated that \$10,000 had been placed in the 2020 budget and a group was tasked with coming up with a program to distribute those funds to residents who may not be able to afford the cost of ash tree removal on their property. It was determined that there would be no way to implement such a program with just \$10,000 and that the cost to assess on taxes would more likely be in the millions. Cadotte cited the City of Milwaukee as an example as they bonded for \$200,000 per year, but soon discovered the cost was upwards of one half million annually. She explained that the Capital Improvement Program will see a deficit due to the decreased terminal tax. Suggestions for the use of the \$10,000 included funding public education about ash tree removal on private property, through brochures etc. or using the funds for a part-time person to inventory the private ash trees and issue nuisance letters. Board member Jane Anklam offered to provide more public education through her position with the UW-Extension.

5. Superior Municipal Forest

- Inventory and Analysis
- DNR State Natural Area
- Management Plan

Terry Asleson and Adam Rider, foresters with the Wisconsin DNR, spoke about the three bulleted items and began by explaining that because the State of Wisconsin has a community forest law that the City signed onto in the 1950's, they are allowed to work in the municipal forest and there is no cost to the City for them to assist us in completing an inventory and

analysis and developing a forest management plan. Those items in turn, will help to guide the update of the DNR State Natural Area plan. Our current management plan for the forest dates back to 1995. First steps would be to obtain good field or reconnaissance (recon) data regarding the trees in the municipal forest. This data would include things such as species, size, density and conditions of the trees. After the data is gathered, the DNR would meet with the city to set goals and objectives for the forest. There was an in-depth discussion about the data gathering, forest health, timber harvests, protecting water resources, etc. Asleson suggested a good resource for learning more about the issues discussed would be to visit the Wisconsin DNR website and search “sustainable forestry.” Cadotte then outlined next steps indicating that after the data is gathered, the tree board (at their January 2020 meeting) could work on identifying stakeholders to be involved in moving forward with an updated management plan.

6. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director’s Report

Cadotte informed the board that she has been appointed to the State Urban Forestry Board by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers. She recently attended a meeting where the some membership of the Northeast Midwest State Forestry Alliance convened. The Alliance includes 20 states and four were represented at the meeting including Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri. She shared facts from that meeting and indicated that the Wisconsin Board will be finalizing their priorities for the State and she would share those with the members at a future meeting. Superintendent Russ Behlings indicated that he and the other certified arborists on staff just returned from an urban forestry meeting today in Eau Claire. They learned that compared to other area communities, Superior plants a significant amount of trees. They also gained some helpful information regarding tree inventory systems and Behlings indicated that there may be an option to secure tree plotter software through a State contract. He also discussed using our own GIS and the “Collector” app. New Richmond, WI used this system and found it very easy and offered to help us with it, should we choose to go in that direction. He recapped the tree planting season stating we have 310 trees in the ground and 90 more to go. That planting will be completed in about 3 working days. He reported great success with the gravel bed. He reviewed the 2019 tree planting area and indicated we are actually ahead of schedule and have moved into Allouez, which is part of the 2020 planting area.

7. Next tentative meeting January 16, 2020 @ 4:30 p.m.

Ludwig announced the meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Meeting notes submitted to the Council Meeting of November 5, 2019.