

URBAN FORESTRY TREE BOARD PROCEEDINGS
August 20, 2020
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Ruth Ludwig, Robert-Jan Quene, Jane Anklam, Justin Holmes, Nick Nelson

Members Excused: Richard Kaufman

Also present: Linda Cadotte, Russ Behlings, Terri Asleson

Chairperson Ruth Ludwig called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

1. Introductions
2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Motion by Quene, second by Holmes to nominate Ruth Ludwig as chair and Nick Nelson as vice-Chair.

Ludwig gave up her nomination as chair in favor of seeing a citizen representative as chair.

Motion by Anklam, second by Ludwig and carried to appoint Justin Holmes as chair and Nick Nelson as vice-chair.

3. Approval of the March 4, 2020 meeting minutes

MOTION by Quene, second by Holmes and carried to approve the March 4, 2020 meeting minutes.

4. Brush Pickup Report

COVID provided some challenges in doing brush pickup this year. More of the brush pickup was done with picking up the brush with the clam truck and using dump trucks rather than hand chipping it on-site. Chipping was still done with a crew of 6 people for 20 days. They were able to stay on schedule. There was a large volume with 4,000 yards of loose brush and about 400 yards of chips. This may be recommended as the process next year for the big piles as it worked really well, especially for large piles that were at the maximum limit of size. Currently, brush pickup is broken down into a lot of different areas with each day covering a different area. He would recommend blocking several of those areas together as one bigger area with everything due on that Monday. This would leave only five dates for people to think about instead of trying to figure out the schedule and thus making it less confusing for residents. In years past, the brush was all chipped up and taken to the landfill due to not knowing what type of material is in the brush. This year 1 or 2 of the very large piles were chipped, the rest was hauled out to the tree dump area and stacked into one big pile with the dozer. This will break down at some point or if in the future we have enough volume, the city could hire a tub grinder to come in and grind it all. There is also the potential of getting a burning permit if needed. Combining

schedules into more combined blocks gives the crew some more flexibility.

Our insurance provider, Cities and Villages Mutual Insurance Company, does an on-site visit every spring or fall and discuss ways we can mitigate injuries. Major shout-out to our department – there have been very few injuries and Behlings has put in a lot of additional safety measures. The insurance company has a safety grant that they allocate for different things that you can purchase and get reimbursed for that help cut down on injuries. We are looking into getting a retractable auto-locking harness tether and new harnesses for the bucket truck. Seven out of the nine injuries that our department did end up filing claims for over the last couple of years were all related to the chipper and brush pickup so the main thing about this year, with a different style of pickup, was that there were no injuries associated with it. We are moving forward with purchasing a new bucket truck soon so it would be good to have updated equipment to go with that.

5. CN Grant Communities in Bloom update

The planting sight is holding up quite well. Watering was kept up on quite well until recently when the rain picked up. When snowmobile grooming begins, extra markers will be added to the sight. Typically, the judges will come on site and do the judging but due to COVID, judging was all done via Zoom. Self-nomination forms were completed to receive awards for Outstanding Achievements in Urban Efforts, Urban Forestry, Celebrating Heritage, and then special awards for Let's Get Wild, Tree-mendous Trees, Water Warriors, Public Art and History in the Making. Results will be announced during the overall awards ceremony that will also be via Zoom. There still may be an onsite presence from the judges at some point. There is some money left in the grant. Originally all of the plantings were going to be done by volunteers but because of COVID we had great support from the Environmental Services Division staff and the Parks staff and crew who took care of the planting. Director Cadotte is working on getting some quotes from a few different companies to do the landscaping and add landscaping fabric for the America in Bloom project before the judges arrive. While volunteer efforts have been sporadic and not as robust as years past, there was some volunteer effort.

Regarding the Tree City USA celebration, Director Cadotte did a brief program on our Urban Forestry Program, Tribute Tree program, Municipal Forest, and all things trees to the Rotary Club. A screen shot of all the participants was taken and shared in their program. The Federation of Labor for the Fallen Workers Memorial asked to do a live tree planting during the Webster Dream Park celebration on September 9th. Between these two things, this will satisfy the requirements for Tree City USA. During the tree planting ceremony on September 9th there could be education done on how to plant a tree properly.

Councilor Ludwig suggested using the Osaugie Trail planting for the Tree City USA next spring.

6. 2020 Tree planting and maintenance update

Tree planting was stopped earlier in the year due to the dry weather. Of the 300 trees that were to be planted this year, 100 – 150 have been planted so far. Some specific plantings that were completed were some Tribute Trees and the Fire Hall at Station 1. The crew

hopes to resume planting in September. The trees are doing well in the gravel bed until they are able to be planted. The door hangers that were designed are still being handed out when trees are staked and then when they are planted. The new vendor, Chestnut Ridge, went pretty well and the trees are doing well.

7. Continuing Discussion/Action on Municipal Forest Management Plan

Feedback was provided by a couple of people. That feedback was incorporated into the Plan. Director Cadotte shared the changes that were made to the Plan.

Additions/Changes included: (Director Cadotte will refine the document and email it out to the board members as well)

- a. The specific purpose for the plan. The purpose statement was called for as part of what is discussed in the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) to have a management plan specific to the Municipal Forest.
- b. Boundary Revision map for the State Natural Area (SNA). Ryan Magana sent the revised map. The Billings Drive is used as the eastern boundary, which would remove about 700 acres from the overall state natural area. There are other possibilities using topographical lines, but he believes this is a cleaner line to use. He suggested that the City should decide on the boundary with the larger forest management in mind. The City could then decide to not harvest or manage any timber within that boundary. Generally, the land to the east of the boundary is accessible and decent. Some areas of the SNA are of a much higher quality of timber. This line allows the protection of the boreal with the necessary buffer. This area would then be managed according to this stewardship plan, which will reflect the CORP. Councilor Ludwig suggested the members of the board walk through this area to really see what is out there. The Superior Municipal Forest Plan was combined with the CORP. If there are items in the 2010 Master Plan Study that were not incorporated into the CORP, we may be able to incorporate those into this new stewardship plan and members should send those items to Director Cadotte.

8. Continuing Discussion/Action on Dwight's Point.

Chair Holmes brought up the access to a main road. If there is no access, it would be much harder to do any harvesting. Building new road to access areas is one of the most expensive parts of an operation. The Board would like to have Ryan Magana at the next meeting to answer some questions they have regarding access, harvesting and why the line is where it is. Chair Holmes will also send out an email with possible dates for the board members to go to the Municipal Forest to look at the area and walk the Purple Trail.

9. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director's Report

In a local development area, there was a vacant spot and the building inspection team went through the process of approving a building plan that included removing a single tree that was where the driveway was to be placed. This would be a convenience removal and so builder/owner will pay the convenience fee for the permit to remove the tree. The City will be able to plant more trees in that area to replace the canopy. This was also an

opportunity to open dialog with other departments to consider the trees when approving building permits and such.

Director Cadotte is submitting a grant for Woodstock Bay through Coastal Management. They only have so many funds available and she still needs to have the Parks and Recreation Commission outline the goals and directions for the spending of the dollars for next year; but when we can get grant money it is usually a streamline into putting dollars into it. To try to minimize the cost of the project, she would like to break out the different components of it. One would be waiting to do the trail connecting for a possible DNR grant down the road. There is a large section with a significant amount of tree plantings on that site and so the thought is to apply for the DNR tree planting grant that is up to a \$25,000 match and that would be a big planting that could be done. Even if the Woodstock project grant is not received, there wouldn't be that big open space, we would begin to stabilize shoreline with the tree planting, and ultimately because of how the project is positioned with all of the trails and such around it, the planting would be able to be a standalone project to a certain extent. October is the DNR grant deadline and November is the deadline for the Coastal Management grant and awards are announced months after. The board was in agreement that this is a good idea to break this up. Councilor Ludwig commended Director Cadotte on her hard work on grants that she has received for our parks.

10. Next tentative meeting October 15, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

Councilor Ludwig announced the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Minutes submitted to the Council Meeting of February 4, 2020.