

MINUTES OF THE TREE COMMISSION MEETING HELD AT THE GREENFIELD DPW, ON THURSDAY, March 16, 2023, AT 6:30PM

1. Joan Stevens, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:40pm. **Meeting called to order at 6:40pm**

Roll Call:	Joan Stevens	Present
	Ald. Bruce Bailey	Present
	Terry Krell	Present
	Joe Dex for John Laskoski	Present
	Dennis Ferme nich	Present
	Andrew Drzewiecki	Excused
	Robert Hansen	Excused

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes **Approval of 1/19/2023 Minutes**

It was moved by Bruce Bailey seconded by Terry Krell to approve the January 19, 2023 meeting minutes.

3. Aldermanic Report **Aldermanic Report**

Mr. Bailey stated that the Spring 2023 Aldermanic Newsletter was released and disbursed copies. Some of the information entailed on this included the Honey Creek Stream Restoration Project, the approval of Café Hollander and a Feisty Loon Restaurant on 84th and Layton Avenue, trying to get east/west sound barriers for I-894, as well as information on the Powerline trail.

All 4 Powerline Trails have been approved:
Trail 1 – opened last Fall
Trail 2 – planned for 2025, ranging from 60th Street to Pondview Park
Trail 3 – starting at Layton Avenue and the Parkway and go up the electric company right-of-way crossing the back of Mr. Radler’s property to Edgerton Avenue with a spur to Brookdale Drive
Trail 4 – starting at 92nd Street by the Fire Station and go to 99th Street and Cold Spring Road, connecting with trail 1

- 4 Superintendent of Public Works Report **Public Works Report**

Mr. Dex reported a lot of storm damage from last week consisting of mostly resident trees. Some smaller branches had come down from city trees, but only 1 fell by Morgan Avenue. The structural pruning that DPW works on helps to decrease the amount of storm damage.

Mr. Dex stated there has been a crew out every day working on clearance pruning especially in the areas of future road projects such as the one planned for 68th Street.

5. Chair Report

Chair Report

Ms. Stevens went over the 2022 Forestry Accomplishments. She asked Mr. Bailey to bring a copy to post on the board at City Hall. Mr. Fermenich added to the 2022 Forestry Accomplishments that 100% of tree debris were recycled into useful wood chips and compost.

Ms. Stevens had the Arbor Day 2023 flyers printed and disbursed copies. She stated that she will send these along with letters to the regular donors and if she doesn't hear back she will follow up with them via phone call or email.

Ms. Stevens had a long meeting with Mr. Fermenich brainstorming ideas for future events. She will be getting in contact with the curriculum director at Whitnall School District. Ms. Stevens said that they are trying to get a board member to volunteer to give ideas on what can be done educationally.

The Beautification Committee, Forestry, The 3 Bees & Pollinator Committee are going to be coming up with a plan to work together and help each other. The Beautification Committee is in need of more volunteers to help with plantings at City Hall and other groups have had a hard time getting memberships. The synergy between groups will broaden the pool of volunteers for everyone.

6. City Forester's Report

City Forester's Report

Mr. Fermenich reported that the Whitnall Forest contracts have all been signed. The planting bid was won by Larson for this project. Mr. Fermenich has been working with him on species and is expecting a list from him to divert a few species that weren't on the bid list. Mr. Fermenich is hoping to get trees native to a wild forest environment.

The original contract with MMSD included tailored trees and the bid was approved at a certain cost with an expected number of 300 trees. The contract came out over budget due to the rising cost of trees, which led negotiations down to around 230-250 trees. This ended up working out as a benefit since the original amount of trees was more than needed to fill the vacancy. The adjusted amount of trees is adequate to fill the vacancies in the forest without overfilling it.

The stewards of the Whitnall Forest have been spending a lot of money, time and energy to remove dead ash trees and other plants that aren't native to the area. The contracted trees will be planted on the west side of the forest where most of the trees were removed. There is a creek running through the middle of the forest which is part of a Lake Michigan watershed and the current vacancy has been allowing more water flow into the watershed. This is coming downhill from a dead-end development on 119th St. The plantings will fix MMSD's concern to slow down the water going into the watershed. This fits with MMSD's criteria, solves the problems for the school and will benefit the community.

Ms. Stevens recommended holding a celebration for the planting of the trees at Whitnall Forest. Mr. Fermenich said that the area is open to the public and there are pathways with directional signs making it easy for community to walk through. Ultimately, the planting celebration will be up to Whitnall and will be brought up to them in future discussions.

The stewards of Whitnall Forest have also been purchasing tree protection ahead of time for this project, but have limited funds. Mr. Fermenich mentioned that this would be a good opportunity for the Rotarians to assist with purchases; it would help to guarantee the future of the trees. Ms. Stevens stated that she will be attending a Rotarians meeting, in the past they have provided funding for 1 tree for Arbor Day as well. Mr. Fermenich stated that he could get a better idea of the tree protection deficit next week. He will get the numbers for Ms. Stevens before the Rotarians meeting.

Mr. Fermenich also reported that his work has slowed down this past Winter, partly due to the conscientious, good work of DPW staff. This has allowed him more time to focus on projects such as Whitnall Forest, Konkell, etc. Mr. Fermenich has been working with planning on community development as well.

7. Review of Arborist Conference program and information

Mr. Dex stated that Mr. Krolicki went to the Arborist Conference for continuing education credits. Mr. Tomashaski and Mr. Burton expanded their knowledge in the climbing corner, safety practices and at Mike Wendt's tree species identification booth.

Mr. Fermenich mentioned how large of an organization this has become. The Arborist conference had around 1,000 attendees this year with a variety of classes comprising of climbing safety and techniques as well as science-based teachings on environmental approach, planting with bare root and updates on traq certification for hazard tree inspections. There are great presenters at the event with important safety tips and a lot of high quality information. He stated that there is always something to learn at the conference no matter your level of expertise. Mr. Fermenich enjoys the many networking opportunities at this event. He spoke with someone from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and they are going to have a booth at the Forestry Nature Fest this year. They will be coming with a display that looks like an Asian longhorn beetle for kids to take pictures with. He was also speaking with Melinda Myers regarding Nature Fest and World Migratory Bird Day, she offered to post these on her website to assist with promotion of the events. During the banquet, Mr. Fermenich was immensely honored to be presented with the Wisconsin Arborist Distinguished Service Award for 2023.

Ms. Stevens stated that there are instructors from all over the United States who are excellent in their specialties and you have the opportunity to pick and choose all the different topics you want to learn. It is also great for speaking with all kinds of people from different specialty backgrounds to gain knowledge from.

**Review of
Arborist
Conference
program and
information**

8. Greenfield Arbor Day Plans

Greenfield Arbor Day Plans

Mr. Fermenich met with a number of people regarding the plans for Arbor Day. He had mentioned previously that they will be planting 12 trees at Konkel Park which will be replacing some ash trees that are in poor condition and have been undergoing treatment. The goal is to gradually fade out the treated ash. Some of the trees will be planted in the corner of the central parking lot by the park sign. There are 5 spruce trees in that area that are in bad shape that can be taken out for replacements and other plants, the trees help to deter guests from driving onto the park.

Mr. Fermenich communicated with Mr. Dex at DPW regarding the removal of the shrubbery and two berms on each side of the electronic sign along Layton Avenue. The berms are mounted higher than they want and decrease visibility in that area. Taking these out will allow for a greater view of the Pavilion from Layton Avenue for betterment of public safety. The area around the sign will be enhanced with perennial plantings which are being grown by Annie's Acres through contract. The city was able to obtain these for \$3.60 each as opposed to the market pricing of \$5.99. Annie's Acres is owned by a Greenfield family and this provides them a great opportunity to contribute to the city. Ms. Stevens would like to extend an invite for them to attend the Arbor Day event.

Mr. Fermenich met with Scott and Kent with Parks and Recreation. They would like to get rid of the shrub beds to allow for even more visibility of Konkel Park. Mr. Fermenich recommended putting perennials in there to make the park more colorful and inviting. The Parks and Recreation department will be contributing funds towards this project which will cost around \$3,600.00.

There is a smaller planting bed containing Arbor Vitae underneath the flag pole in front of the pavilion where an Eagle Scout will be volunteering with about 15-20 other Eagle Scouts. They will own this project and assist with other areas as needed for Arbor Day. Native perennials and pollinator plants will be going in this planting bed. Mr. Fermenich is also have them work with Mary Philips to get a sign explaining the purpose of these low maintenance, native plantings which would be to help with pollinator insects.

Ms. Stevens reiterated that she would like assistance from Tree Commission members on Arbor Day. The duties would include being assigned to supervise the plantings on a certain number of trees. Communications for this event will be sent out via email to the members in advance regarding the details. Ms. Stevens stated that the Beautification Committee would be there to take care of set up and sign in for registration, set up of tables, tent and signs as well as handling the refreshments. The event area is vast, going from the parking lot to the mini golf course so it would be helpful to have enough members there to distribute attention appropriately.

The total cost of the Arbor Day projects will be around \$6,000.00 for the purchase of 12 trees plus the 2 trees for each district school and 1,000 perennials. Ms. Stevens is requesting funding from the Tree Commission for 1 Arbor Day Ceremonial tree in the amount of \$225.00.

It was moved by Bruce Bailey seconded by Terry Krell to approve funding in the amount of \$225.00 for the Arbor Day Ceremonial Tree. The vote passed with approval from Ms. Stevens, Mr. Krell & Mr. Bailey.

9. District Schools Arbor Day Plans

**District Schools
Arbor Day
Plans**

Mr. Fermenich stated that the Whitnall Middle School planting will be right in between the schools. Ms. Stevens would like for there to be one to two faculty members besides the designated class to attend Arbor Day since the event will be transferring between schools each year.

The Greenfield School plans are undetermined at this time. Each of the schools have participated in past years and it will be up to them to decide where they want to host it, but Mr. Fermenich can help to make recommendations if needed.

Ms. Stevens will talk to Lisa from Greenfield and Lisa from Whitnall to encourage donations for 1 tree per district, if unable to obtain funding it will have to come out of the Tree Commission budget. Mr. Fermenich stated it would be good for the district schools to show commitment in the form of funding for the Arbor Day events.

The date for District Schools Arbor Day has yet to be determined and will be up to each school. Mr. Fermenich said have typically participated on either the Friday before or the Monday after Greenfield's Arbor Day.

10. Forestry Fest Funding

**Forestry Fest
Funding**

Mr. Fermenich is planning on having Forestry Nature Fest on Sunday, August 27th, 2023. This will be held during the Farmers Market hours. Sheila from the Greenfield Library offered for use of their tent to be set up by DPW in the middle of the market. Other tents, tables and chairs will be provided by Parks and Recreation and the Farmer's Market.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture will have a booth there and as far as the other booths there will be most of the same vendors as last year. This is consisting of the Zoological Society, Pollinator Committee with butterflies in nylon enclosures, a face painting booth for the kids, environmental art activities, the Seed Library, wildlife specialists, and Hoo's Woods Raptor Center exhibit. The raptor center will be bringing several birds, hawks and owls to the fest since these raptors are native to the urban setting. Mr. Fermenich is requesting funding from the Tree Commission for Hoo's Woods Raptor Exhibit in the amount of \$395.00.

It was moved by Bruce Bailey seconded by Terry Krell to approve funding in the amount of \$395.00 for the Hoo's Woods Raptor Exhibit. The vote passed with approval from Ms. Stevens, Mr. Krell & Mr. Bailey.

Mr. Fermenich is hoping for two Tree Commission members to volunteer and meet with the representatives from Hoo's Woods. Their role would be to assist with set up the exhibit and to assist with crowd control during the event. Mr. Fermenich would like them there from 10:30am to at least 12:00pm when the exhibit ends and to assist with take down.

There have been preliminary discussions between Mr. Fermenich and MMSD for a booth to bring awareness to the importance of the urban environment and waterways. Mr. Fermenich also spoke with Jeff Katz to have a sign-up sheet during the Nature Fest to allow for attendees to take a tour afterwards of the Honey Creek Stream Restoration Project. This would give the opportunity to show what is happening with waterways in urban settings and the importance of naturalizing concrete channels. The community would be able to see the way that engineers are emulating nature in an interesting way. There are root wads being planted in the channels to clean the water of chemicals and minimize downstream flooding.

Mr. Fermenich and Ms. Stevens had also discussed putting together a seminar at the library by the Beautification Committee. When Mr. Fermenich was talking to Jeff Katz about the seminar, he mentioned that Nick Connor from Ruckert & Mielke might be interested in being a speaker. He had written and published a book regarding the importance of waterway naturalization. This event will mostly be ran by the Beautification Committee, but Mr. Fermenich suggested for Tree Commission members to be there as participants. Ms. Stevens mentioned getting the Tree Commission to help with publications for the event as well as utilizing the Recreator to promote the seminar. This will be discussed more in depth in the future as more information comes along.

11. Discussion and decision regarding changes to the Master Tree List

There are no changes this year, but there were a few last year to keep up with invasive species. Mr. Fermenich stated that there are a couple matters under development and he will keep everyone informed.

Discussion and decision regarding changes to the Master Tree List

12. 2023 Planting Contract

Mr. Fermenich has not worked with engineering yet on the contract for this year, but he has been putting together spaces along with a list of residents requesting trees. The majority of the list will be where there were prior ash removals. There was no DNR grant for 2023 after receiving it for 6 years in a row which would have provided an additional 25 trees. The funding is going to come from GENTR1 which will provide enough for about 40 trees this year. Mr. Fermenich stated that he should have more information regarding this by the May Tree Commission meeting.

2023 Planting Contract

13. Discussion of obtaining a new member and adjunct member for Tree Commission

**Discussion of
obtaining a
new member
and adjunct
member for
Tree
Commission**

Mr. Fermenich stated that Pollinator Committee member Lauren Boos has interest in becoming a member for the Tree Commission. She is primarily a Horticulturist and has a lot of knowledge on native perennials. Ms. Boos has provided helpful insight to Mr. Fermenich on plant specific information over the years. He thinks she would be an asset to the committee with her noble environmental practices and willingness to promote them.

The steps to obtain the new member were discussed as follows: Mr. Fermenich to meet with Ms. Boos at City Hall to inform the City Clerk's office, the item would be added to the Common Council Agenda, and then published to the Journal. The turnaround would take around a month for member approval.

14. Suggested dates and discussion items for next meetings

**Suggested
Dates &
Discussion for
Next Meetings**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday May 11, 2023.

Items to be added to the next agenda:
2023 Planting Contract
Summer Program

15. Adjournment

Adjournment

Moved by: Bruce Bailey
Seconded by: Joan Stevens
At: 8:05pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Baumgardner
Clerk/Typist
Division of Public Works
Date distributed: 3/23/2023