



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION MEETING

October 9, 2023

Members Present: Bob Brantsch, Chair
Andy Boateng
Jeff Napieralski
Jeff Saltzman

Members Absent: John Berg
Laura Root

Also Present: Drew Reilly, Deputy Law Director
Sue Mottl, Landscape Arborist
Debra Bennington, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brantsch called the regular Urban Forestry Commission meeting of October 9, 2023 to order at 3:35 p.m. and Ms. Bennington called the roll. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. VISITOR RECOGNITION

No visitors were present.

III. OPENING QUESTION

Each member answered the question, "What is your favorite use for apples this time of year?"

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion:

Mr. Saltzman moved and Mr. Napieralski seconded to approve the minutes of September 11, 2023 as submitted.

Yes Votes: Brantsch, Boateng, Napieralski, Saltzman

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. Failed Legislation – Request for Additional Members

Drew Reilly gave an overview of the Council meeting where legislation was voted down to expand membership up to nine (9). Council members McIntire, Harrison, Riehl, and Fiocca voted against it, Council members Feldman and Licate voted in favor, and Council member Lowdermilk was absent. The rationale given was that other boards have trouble filling their membership, this board was just expanded four years ago from five (5) members to seven (7) members, and there are other ways to serve the City besides being on a board and commission. This request may be revisited at a later date.

b. Invasive Plants in Our Backyard Program – Recap

Six people attended the event held on October 5, 2023. We will do this program again in April at the 2024 Tree Fest at Adell Durbin Park. Ms. Mottl suggested working with the library to do programs in their Community Room such as invasive plants and other timely topics. It may increase attendance and would not be weather dependent. We also could have speakers including master gardeners from Summit County.

c. 2022 Grant – 2023 Tree Planting Update

This grant is for \$50,000 with the City paying half. 69 trees were planted in the spring and 132 trees will be planted this fall.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. 2023 IRA Grant Update

In September, we received notification the City was awarded a grant for \$316,483, which was the amount requested. It is a five-year matching grant; therefore, the City will also pay this amount over a five-year period. The grant is for workforce development to train someone as a municipal arborist. After the five-year period, that person will be able to be employed as an arborist. After a signed contract is in place, we will begin looking to fill the position.

b. August 25, 2023 Storm Update

We are still working on three (3) trees that are on City-owned property. City crews completed the curbside brush pick up within two (2) weeks of the storm.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Update on Tree Commission Academy

A junior class is coming up on October 28 & 29, 2023 in Oak Harbor, which is near Toledo.

b. Street Tree Pruning

In August, Council passed legislation [Ordinance 2023-122] allotting \$75,000 annually for a three-year term for tree trimming, pruning, and other tree work. Details need finalized on administering the program, the specifications need written, and then the project will go out for formal bid.

c. Resignation

Mike Rauh resigned from the Commission effective October 4, 2023. Ms. Mottl indicated she would get an Application to Boards & Commissions to Joe Kollar.

VIII. NEWS ARTICLES

October/November: Planting Native Species to Assist with Stormwater – Sue Mottl
December: Christmas Tree Drop Off

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is November 13, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Bob Brantsch
Chair, Urban Forestry Commission

Debra Bennington
Recording Secretary

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