

# Urban Forest Commission

## Meeting Minutes March 21, 2017

### **Attendance:**

Commissioners: Chair - Christine Penney, Vic Chair - Liz Johnson, Clark Christenson, Beth Peterson, Mike Pennington, Janet Nelson

City Staff: Erik Birkeland, Dale Sellner

### **Call to Order:**

The meeting started at 6:00.

### **Minute Approval:**

The minutes from the February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 meeting.

### **Forester's Report**

#### Forester Job Description

The revised job description was shared with the committee. The job will be offered as a 13 ½ hour per week non-bargaining unit position. It estimated to pay \$28.00/hr. The hours will be flexible, not necessarily 9-5. By hiring in this manner the City will be able to better assess their forestry needs.

#### EAB Ash Tree Maps

Dale shared the mapping of the City owned Ash Trees.

### **New Business:**

#### Engineering Report

Pat Loomis from Engineering was invited to share their process of project implementation. Key points include:

1. Due to Federal funding, trees in the project are inventoried in the Federal Project Memo.
2. The Committee requested that Engineering provide project list to them. They would use this information to notify residents earlier in the project design process and allows them to discuss the means and methods of installing/repairing infrastructure.
3. Pat explained that most of the utility work projects is driven by the condition of the utilities. This work is reactive versus proactive. Limited budgets define the means & methods of the repairs, costly means to save trees aren't usually affordable. On non-urgent utility projects, Engineering is reluctant the share plans that are currently in design with the public until the project is designed to 100%, Engineering doesn't want to set any public expectations of the project until the final design is released.
4. For trees that are identified for removal for a project, Engineering is considering removing them in the winter. This will allow for a quick start in the construction season and not conflict with nesting Long Eared Bats.
5. For tree replacement on projects, Engineering is considering delaying the planting of trees until the next season. Their goal is to increase the survival rate of the newly planted trees.
6. Engineering has indicated that they would benefit from the services that a City Forester would bring to City Staff.

## Arbor Day Report

Cheryl Skafte reported on Arbor Day Event possibilities. Topics discussed include:

1. A Proclamation from the Mayor can be made available, it will need to be set up with Pakou Ly.
2. Judy Gibbs may be able to receive free tree saplings. The request would have to come from a municipality. Ordering early will increase the selection of species and increased numbers of saplings.
3. It was recommended that 500 saplings be planted by volunteers in early September. The strategy would be to under plant Ash Trees with species appropriate saplings. Cheryl can help with the volunteers.
4. A small committee of Commissioners will work with Cheryl and Judy to work out the details and present to the committee.

## Meeting Room and Time:

In order to accommodate the Commission and Public, the Executive Committee would like to use Room 303 in City Hall. To ensure that the room is available for standing meetings; the day in which the committee meets needed to be changed. A motion was put forth to change the by-laws to allow for meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Month at 6:00 p.m. in Room 303 in City Hall. M/S/C.

## Urban Forest Commission Commissioners Applications:

1. Since the applicants are political appointees, the Commission needs to develop a recommendation process to the Mayor for appointments.
2. Applicants will be invited to an Executive Committee meeting for a "light" interview and a description of what will be expected of them as a Commissioner. They then will be invited to audit a UFC Meeting.
3. The Committee needs to work with either the City Clerk's office or the Human Resources office to determine the final interview process; meeting of the whole or the Executive Committee.

## Old Business

### Recruitment Piece

The Committee was asked to review the most recent edition of the recruitment blurb and contact Christine Penny with comments/edits.

### Emerald Ash Borer Plan

1. Judy shared St. Paul's strategy of marking Ash with green tape. The tape allows for a visual identification of the potential effects of EAB infestation. The tape wouldn't identify trees for removal, but would convey information about the EAB and contact information. I was suggested that this could be used along with door hangers in neighborhoods with a high density of Ash Trees as an educational piece the public on the City's plan for minimizing the impacts of EAB.
2. The committee would like to see an option for the public to be able to save/treat trees by paying for them out of pocket. There could be opportunities for corporate, business, community organization, sponsorship.
3. There is an opportunity to apply for a grant to fund the EAB plan. This will be discussed at the Arbor Day committee meeting.

## Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:07. m/s/c