

# Urban Forest Commission

## Meeting Minutes September 19, 2018

### Attendance:

Commissioners: Christine Penney, Judy Gibbs, Brandon Van Tassel, Beth Kleinke, Mike Pennington, Jim Lemmerman

City Staff: Diane Desotelle, Natural Resources Coordinator; Erik Birkeland, Ex-Officio; Jim Filby Williams, Director of Public Administration; City Councilor Em Westerlund (not present)

### Call to Order:

The meeting started at 6:01 pm.

### Minute Approval:

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Meeting. M/S/C.

### Public Comment Period:

Gail Gilliland spoke on her support of the transition of the UFC to the Duluth Natural Resources Commission (DNRC). She shared her opinion that there needs to be a commission that is focused on both protection and stewardship of our precious resources and lands.

### Forester's Report (Clark Christenson – City Forester)

Clark started his full time Forester position with the City on Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. Clark reported that the EAB treatment injections along 40<sup>th</sup> Ave West through Central Avenue (“Ash Alley”) were completed and the area should be good for approximately three years. A comprehensive plan to maintain and replace trees is in the works. There are around 100 tree/stump slated for removal in the Lakeside neighborhoods. Crews have been busy dealing with recent storm damage but we hope to still address these this fall.

Christine Penney asked Clark to share his vision for his position. Clark commented that while his position will be defined by the position description that he hopes to continue work on EAB and increase the number of street trees planted each year. Clark shared that a historical inventory was never really completed, so as time allows, he'd like to continue that endeavor. Currently for every 2 trees we have 1 space “available”, so initially he'd like to see *plantable* spaces utilized.

Christine asked Clark to comment on the plan for trees in the greater downtown. Clark shared that we have not yet received word as to when we can begin planting along Superior Street but that he will obtain the specs and share them with the commission (see attached).

### Natural Resources Report (Diane Desotelle– Natural Resources Coordinator)

Diane reported she is currently in the process of collecting information to prepare the nomination of the Saint Louis River Natural Area to the Duluth Natural Areas program. Parks will use the same public process as was used for the Hartley nomination. The Hartley nomination is moving forward and successfully passed both the planning & parks commission and will be brought to council. Once approved, Diane will work on establishing a technical committee that will aid in the development of a management plan for Hartley. For additional information see: <http://www.duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-planning/duluth-natural-areas-program>

Diane indicated she is also in the process of developing a plan for the City's Invasive Species. This will be a coordinated effort and will likely begin with public information on specific species, i.e. Japanese Knotweed and Wild Parsnip. In addition, fact sheets will be created on pesticide and herbicide use. Discussions are needed to prioritize locations to target as well as the development of a management plan. Early efforts will include grant applications and the use of coordinated volunteerism. Ideally, the City will strive to lead by example in the management of invasives on City owned lands.

For additional information see: <http://www.duluthmn.gov/parks/volunteer/duluth-invaders/>

**Old Business:**

UFC View shed Policy Subcommittee – Tabled

UFC Term Limits – Tabled

**New Business:**

**Grants Update (Christine Penny)**

Christine explained that the City have been very successful at obtaining restoration grant funds. Over the past five years we have raised over 5 million dollars...this is extraordinary! Christine feels that the City needs to do a better job at telling the public what we are doing. Most recently, Christine has been working on a collaborative grant with Community Action Duluth and the Soil & Water Conservation District on the ISD 709 land adjacent to Hartley. The grant will include acquisition funds for the 17 to 23 acres that surround a tributary to Tischer Creek as well as a substantial amount dedicated to restoring the stream channel. Christine will be working with Pakou to highlight our success and partnerships. Currently, Christine is collecting support letters for use in grant applications. Additional efforts will be made to circle back, notify, inform and thank funders.

**Adjournment:**

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00, M/S/C.