

MARION TREE BOARD MINUTES

December 10, 2020 6:30 a.m.

Thomas Park Safe Room

ROLL CALL: Marilyn Tormey, Scott Hansen, Kate Pine, Tom Ryan, Sunshine McDonald, Mollie Lorenz

ABSENT: Joe Spinks

STAFF: Mike Cimprich, Pat Carlson

GUESTS: None

Based on COVID-19 guidance from Linn County Public Health and the State of Iowa to limit the size of groups gathering, this meeting was held electronically and in the Thomas Park Safe Room. The agenda and City's website provided instructions on how others could participate in the meeting.

Minutes

Moved by Pine and seconded by Lorenz to approve the November 12, 2020, meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Financial Report

The November budget report was reviewed. Cimprich reported there were minor expenditures for vehicle maintenance and operating supplies which included fencing for newly planted trees. Tree plantings included Memorial Trees and right-of-way Ash Tree replacements by urban forestry and park staff.

Public Input

None

Faulkes Heritage Woods Salvage Harvest Proposal

There was only one proposal received for the Faulkes Heritage Woods Salvage Timber Harvest from Forestry Consulting Services, LLC, (FCS), Cedar Rapids. Cimprich did not expect a lot of interest in the project due to limited access and the steep grade involved to get the project completed. FCS estimated the pre-storm value of the trees at approximately \$2,000 per acre and excludes Walnut trees which can significantly increase the value per acre. The consultant estimated the post-storm value at 55 to 65 percent of the pre-storm value. FCS agreed to all terms of the proposal except for the firewood sale following the timber sale salvage. A commercial firewood business would have very little interest in smaller wood and inviting the public could be very problematic due to limited staging area, steep terrain and poor access. A woods landing would need to be created and would have to be rocked to allow log transport during wet conditions. It may be possible to turn the staging area into a parking lot at the completion of this project. We have been in communication with some of the neighbors and they are in favor of the clean-up efforts. The consultant did request a long-term contract (at least two years) to get the work completed. The timeline for the project needs to be established. Pine asked if we can request specific native seed to be planted after the tree removals. Staff will work closely with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Iowa Department of Natural Resources to develop a forestry management and replanting plan. Moved by Lorenz and seconded by

Tormey to recommend to proceed into securing an agreement with Forestry Consulting Services, LLC for Faulkes Heritage Woods. Yeas: Tormey, Pine, Ryan, McDonald, Lorenz; Nays: Hansen. Motion carried.

Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget Proposal Adjustments

The first draft of the 21-22 budget has been submitted. Cimprich advised a new tree removal service contract will be solicited as there have been issues with Breeden. There was a significant reduction in monies budgeted for Grounds Maintenance Contracts due to the decrease in required public Ash tree removals since they were removed as part of the Derecho clean-up activities. Other items were decreased including Vehicle Operating Supplies due to yearly trends, and Forestry Maintenance Supplies due to a significant reduction in pesticide product for EAB injections. Increases were recommended in Vehicle Repairs and Other Equipment Repairs due to yearly trends, and Equipment Rentals for the rental of a stump grinder attachment to response to the Derecho storm cleanup. There was a significant increase in Contracts-Other Services as there are plans to support a newly established Trees Forever Growing Futures Team which will be dedicated to Marion planting initiatives. The significant increase in the Trees line item is due to increased tree planting in response to the Derecho storm.

2021 Grant Applications

The deadline for the Alliant Energy Branching Out grant was changed to November 1 and there are now two application cycles. Cimprich said he will work on the other proposal over the winter. The MidAmerican Energy application is due December 31. Our application will talk about natural disasters and include the Derecho storm. The cap for the grant application is \$1,000, however, our application will ask for \$2,000. Trees Forever is establishing a seedling program which is in early planning stages. There will be no deadline for the program and may include free public giveaways and public demonstrations.

Tree City USA and Growth Award Applications

Both applications are due by December 31 and will focus on the tree canopy and tree maintenance.

Our Woodland Legacy Symposium

This event is being held virtually today from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm presented by Trees Forever. The link to the program was provided to any interested Tree Board members.

Receive and File

None

Other Action or Discussion Items

None

Staff Report

Forestry staff have been grinding stumps over the last two weeks. Over 150 stumps were removed over the last 10 days with the rental unit. In addition to grinding the tree stumps, staff is completing clean up and back filling where the trees and stumps have been removed. The final tree assessment from the Derecho storm is almost complete. There are some trees that are in conflict with utilities. Tree trimming needed and stump removals are being reviewed and sidewalk damage is being assessed.

Board Discussion Time

Pine requested that power point information which is used at Tree Board meetings be forwarded to members before the scheduled meeting. Cimprich advised that will be done for future meetings. Hansen asked if a tree inventory has been completed. He was advised a listing has been compiled of trees that are left and where trees need to be planted is in the process of being finalized. Before the storm there were approximately 6,300 trees and after the storm there were about 2,400 trees removed. A final assessment will be completed in the spring. We do expect to have additional losses due to the Derecho storm.

Adjournment

Moved by Pine and seconded by Hansen to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:47 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 6:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2021, at the Thomas Park Administration and Operations Facility.

Sunshine McDonald, Secretary