



Urban Forestry Committee Meeting
February 11th, 2020
West Fargo City Hall

Members Present: Dave Schacher, Dave Janssen, Mary Beth Odegaard, Lynn Samsten
Others Present: Chad Zander, Mike Opat

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 PM in the West Fargo Room

Introductions were made for the newest member appointed from the Park District, Dave Schacher.

Mary Beth Odegaard made a motion to approve the minutes from November 12th, 2019. Lynn Samsten seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The first item on the agenda was the 2020 tree planting grant, Chad Zander gave the update. The forestry department plans on applying for the tree planting grant again this year. The grant will focus on filling in the gaps in the areas of town that are primarily ash trees and will include around 100 trees.

The first item of new business was the 2020 Arbor Day nomination. Chad Zander distributed the current list, along with some recommendations from city staff. After discussion, Dave Janssen made a motion that Larry Weil should be honored at this year's Arbor Day, Lynn Samsten seconded the motion, motion carried. Mary Beth Odegaard did note that the list contains mainly city staff and would like to see more variety in the list, Chad Zander agreed. This year's Arbor Day will be held on May 15th, 2020, if that works with the recipient.

The second item of new business was the approval of the city's Tree Emergency Plan. The draft version was reviewed by the committee at the last meeting. The draft was also reviewed by the city's emergency manager, public works director and communications coordinator. Mary Beth Odegaard made a motion to approve the plan, Lynn Samsten seconded the motion, motion carried.

The last item of new business was the Urban Forestry Committee Members. The committee did receive two applicants for two open positions. Michael M. Opat and Barry D. Johnson were the two applicants, both submitted the completed application, resume and cover letters. After a short discussion, Dave Janssen made a motion to have Michael Opat as the committee member and Barry Johnson as the educational liaison, Lynn Samsten seconded the motion, motion carried. The committee is now at full membership.

The first item of old business was an update on this year's upcoming street fair. Chad Zander handed out the application submitted to the street fair, Chad noted the street fair is on June 13th, 2020 and will be held on Sheyenne St. All committee members are encouraged to attend, it was discussed to have more of the small trees this year. Also another large tree will be given away, possible after a short survey about the forestry department taking over the boulevard trees, this would be a great way to get public input on the issue.

The next item of old business discussed was the plan for the city to take over maintenance of the boulevard trees. Chad Zander gave the update. The new Public Works Director, Matt Andvik, has been brought up to speed about the plan and recommendation from the committee. Chad noted that the 2021 timeframe was very aggressive and it will be more likely for 2022. The city commission would like to involve public input as much as they can. Chad has been collecting information on other municipality's forestry department numbers and funding. He has also put together a preliminary estimate of workers and equipment for Matt Andvik for review. Some discussions have also been had with the city administrator and finance director.

Several miscellaneous items were also discussed, Chad Zander gave those updates. The first item was the 2019 forestry department work. Chad had several handouts showing hours and costs for all 2019 forestry activities. The next miscellaneous item discussed was the black knot factsheet. Chad noted that city staff collected addresses of any resident that had trees with obvious black knot. The new black knot factsheet was then sent to those addresses as an educational handout, and several hundred were sent out. The third miscellaneous item was several sets of plans that Chad Zander has received. One plan was 9th St NE proposed construction and the other plan was construction on 32nd Ave. W. and 9th St. W., where several trees will be moved. The fourth miscellaneous item was the growth award changes. Chad Zander noted that two planned activities for this year didn't really fit with the city's planned work. Instead Chad recommended that a "hazard tree program improvements" and a "licensing program" were more in line with current work plans. Mary Beth Odegaard made a motion to approve the hazard tree program improvements, Lynn Samsten seconded the motion, motion carried. Dave Janssen made a motion to approve the licensing changes, Mary Beth Odegaard seconded the motion, motion carried. The last item of miscellaneous was the 2020 budget, Chad Zander handed out the current budget for members to see, he noted the tree planting update. Grant money is no longer put back into tree planting, so the current year's budget will not support the amount of trees installed the past couple years. The grant money is now counted as revenue in the budget. Chad Zander also talked a little bit about getting a landscape or tree planting project added to the city's CIP list, that would include 13th Ave. E., Main Ave.W. and the west boulevard of Sheyenne St.

The next meeting will be April 14th, 2020.

Lynn Samsten made a motion to adjourn, Dave Janssen seconded. Meeting was adjourned.