**MARION TREE BOARD MINUTES**

March 8, 2017, 7:00 A.M.

Thomas Park Safe Room

ROLL CALL: Chair Scott Hansen, Mark Sanderson, Sunshine McDonald,

Marilyn Tormey, Tom Ryan, Rodney Bluml

ABSENT: Pam Munro

STAFF: Mike Carolan, Mike Cimprich, Pat Carlson

GUESTS: Greg Wildebour (MidAmerican Energy)

Minutes

Moved by Sanderson and seconded by Tormey to approve the December 14, 2016 Tree Board minutes. All in favor, motion carried. It was noted there was no quorum present for January and February 2017 meetings.

Public Input

Greg Wildebour, Design Technician from MidAmerican Energy, briefly reviewed their goals which include working on street projects and protecting trees. In addition he presented a check to the Marion Tree Board from MidAmerican Energy as part of their *Trees Please!* Grant in the amount of $1,000 and indicated he is trying to get the funds increased for future grant awards.

Financial Report

The expenditures at this time are for memorial trees placed at Lowe Park.

Election of Officers

Moved by Tormey and seconded by Sanderson to retain Hansen as Chair. All in favor, motion carried.

Moved by Ryan and seconded by Bluml to nominate Tormey as Vice Chair. All in favor, motion carried.

Moved by Tormey and seconded by McDonald to nominate Bluml as Secretary. All in favor, motion carried.

The elected officers assumed their roles for the remainder of the meeting.

Tree City USA Luncheon

The Tree City USA awards luncheon is Thursday, April 6 at 11:00 a.m. in Des Moines. There will be a workshop presented after the luncheon with information on native plants and tree landscapes. Tormey and McDonald may attend the event.

The awards and plaques received by the City over the years from Tree City USA were recently hung on display in the hallway of the Thomas Park Administrative building. Cimprich gathered the plaques and awards and arranged the display.

Trees for Kids Seedling Packet Program

Cimprich stated the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Nursery awarded 200 hardwood and wind resistant trees to the Tree Board. They will be planted at the Lowe Park Tree Farm during Earth Week, which is April 23 to 29. Trees Forever will coordinate volunteers to help with the plantings. The trees are 18 to 30 inch bare root trees which will be surrounded by tubex for protection.

Spring Alliant Energy Branching Out Grant

The City has been awarded funding from Alliant Energy’s Branching Out Grant for the spring planting cycle in the amount of $4,715. Fifty trees will be planted at Waldo’s Rock Park as a part of Marion High School’s *One* *Day in May* event Monday, May 15.

City Park Peace Tree Replacement Suggestions

Cimprich reported all the trees in City Park were evaluated, including their species and location. Three species of trees were suggested as a possible replacement for the Peace Tree, which are White Fir, Norway Spruce and Black Spruce. The current species is a Colorado Blue Spruce; while doing research, it was discovered there are issues with this type of tree which would not make it a good replacement. Another tree discussed was a Con Color Fir which grows 40 to 60 feet and has a slow 20 foot spread. It was motioned by Hansen and seconded by Tormey to recommend to the Park Board that a Con Color Fir be planted as a replacement for the Peace Tree. All in favor, motion carried.

Street Tree Replacement Program Property List

A list of properties which have had trees removed in the right-of-way over the last couple of years was presented for the Street Tree Replacement Program. Board members were asked to review the list. The property at 1076 13th Street address was discussed as this was possibly purchased by Baxter-Martinson Funeral Home. Bluml advised he would check with Baxter’s about the status of the property.

2016 Attendance Review and Recommendation

The Attendance Records for 2016 were reviewed. The By-Laws of the board specifies if a member is absent for more than one-third of the meetings in a 12 month period, the Board shall recommend to the Mayor to vacate the member’s seat. It was noted that board member Munro attendance does not comply with the meeting requirements and participation in other activities of the Tree Board is very minimal. Motioned by Hansen and seconded by Tormey to recommend to the Mayor the removal of Pam Munro from the Tree Board. All in favor, motion carried. Carolan will meet with the Mayor to discuss the recommendation.

Receive and File

The funding award from MidAmerican Energy in the amount of $1,000 from the *Trees Please!* Grant was received and filed.

Other Action and Discussion Items

Cimprich reported three bids were received for the forestry bucket truck and will be on the next City Council agenda for approval. The 2018 truck will have a 60 foot reach. There is a 7 to 8 month lead time for delivery of the truck, which would make it a mid-September to October delivery.

Work days were held at Faulkes Woods in January and February to remove volunteer plants. Another work day is scheduled for March 22. Coe College students have been participating.

The Linn County Health Department has approved burning in woodlands with burn practice areas. A burn will be conducted at Faulkes Heritage Woods with Rich Patterson assisting. There will also be a burn at Lowe Park in the prairie areas.

A corridor landscape plan for the 6th Avenue corridor is being developed and will address species and spacing of plants.

Right-of-way (ROW) ash tree treatment criteria is being finalized. Trees that are identified as healthy and meet criteria as eligible will be treated. Homeowners with ROW trees will be sent letters explaining the procedures.

Cimprich and Ryan Hays attended the ISU Shade Tree Course for two days in Ames. CEUs were earned to maintain their Arborist certifications.

A chain saw training course will be presented on March 30 in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Iowa Arborists at the Thomas Park Safe Room. The attendance has been capped at 25. It will include safety and handling of chain saws with morning classroom presentations and afternoon chain saw handling.

Carolan reported the metro area is looking to identify 1,000 acres of land for prairie pollination. Lowe Park has approximately 25 acres off Irish Drive and there are 3 acres at Waldo’s Rock Park.

Adjournment

Motion by Tormey and seconded by Sanderson to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 a.m.

Next Meeting

The meeting will be held Wednesday, April 12, 2017, 7 a.m. at the Thomas Park Safe Room.

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Rodney Bluml, Secretary