**MARION TREE BOARD**

March 13, 2019

Thomas Park Safe Room

ROLL CALL: Marilyn Tormey, Scott Hansen, Kate Pine, Tom Ryan

ABSENT: Mollie Lorenz, Sunshine McDonald

STAFF: Mike Cimprich, Pat Carlson

GUESTS: Joe Spinks, Brad Neilly

Minutes

Moved by Hansen and seconded by Ryan to approve the January 9, 2019, minutes. All in favor, motion carried. Note: Due to lack of quorum, there was not a February 2019 meeting.

Financial Report

The financial report was received and filed. Alliant Energy and MidAmerican grant requests have been submitted, however the status of the awards is not known at this time.

Public Input

As a follow-up to his correspondence to Mike Cimprich, Brad Neilly provided a brief overview of the request to add trees along the right-of-way along Battlecreek Drive. This area is south of Lowe Park adjacent to Irish and West Williams Drives. At this time due to the current city ordinance, there are no trees planted in the right-of-way in newly established neighborhoods. Cimprich advised he is working with the city Planning Department to revise the ordinance which may require home builders to plant trees in the right-of-way. It was explained to Mr. Neilly the most critical issue for the plantings is funding sources. Mr. Neilly advised he will be contacting neighbors with ideas to get the project started, to include possible funding assistance and planting/maintenance assistance. Cimprich advised a preliminary estimate of plantings would be 35 trees. Mr. Neilly will provide further information after he has contacted property owners.

Board Member Seat Vacancy

Joe Spinks received an e-mail from Mike Carolan advising of the member opening on the Tree Board. He attended the meeting to gain information on board direction and activities and to express his interest in becoming a member. Joe is a past City Council member and a member of various city boards and committees. After brief discussion, it was recommended the mayor appoint Joe Spinks to the Marion Tree Board.

Marion Independent School District Tree Removal Request

The request from Vernon Middle School to remove Black Walnut trees along 13th Street, south of 4th Avenue, in the right-of-way was discussed. The trees are healthy and determined to be a benefit to the community. Each board member provided their input to the issue and were not in favor of removing the trees. Moved by Hansen and seconded by Tormey to deny the request to remove the trees and add them to the maintenance schedule for trimming in the near future. Public Service will also be requested to street/curb clean up the area during the fall walnut dropping season. All in favor, motion carried.

Grant Updates

Trees for Kids (MISD)

Cimprich advised he had contacted Marion Schools about planting trees

adjacent to Starry and the high school along S. 15th Street and they were against the

proposed planting site because of decreased visibility for student drivers. Cimprich

advised he is going to follow up with the school and possibly attend the next School

Board meeting. Cimprich advised the DNR will no longer be funding this program

after this current grant cycle.

Collins Aerospace Green Communities

The grant request is being written and if approved, will be used for the plantings

along Battlecreek Drive.

Trees Forever “Granting a Better Tomorrow” Grant

Cimprich advised he has been made aware of a new grant sponsored by Trees Forever with funding in the $100 to $1,500 range. The grant is to focus on youth involvement and underserved schools and communities. Cimprich will follow up with Trees Forever to finalize the information for possible submission of a grant request.

Receive & File

Members were given a copy of the 2018 attendance report.

Arbor Day Celebration

This year’s Arbor Day celebration will take place on Friday, April 26, 2019, to begin around noon. The planting will be in the Prairie Ridge Avenue basin at the corner of Highway 13 with seedlings provided by the DNR. Trees Forever and Wells Fargo will be assisting with the plantings. More information will be provided at the April meeting.

Urban Forestry Awards Luncheon

The annual luncheon and awards program will be held on Wednesday, April 3, 2019. A workshop is being held at 9:00 a.m. before the luncheon. Marilyn Tormey advised she would like to attend the workshop and luncheon.

Other Action/Discussion Items

Cimprich advised due to poor weather conditions some volunteer work events were cancelled and have not been re-scheduled. Some potential programs in the planning stages include “Mulch Madness” for Earth Day and other tree planting projects. More information will be provided at the April meeting.

Staff Report

Cimprich reported due to cold and snow events, quite a bit of time was spent working on equipment. Some winter trimming of Oak trees was completed.

Adjournment

Moved by Hansen and seconded by Ryan to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:56 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 7:00 a.m. at the Thomas Park Safe Room.

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