

# Muncie Urban Forestry Committee

## Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2023

### **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Muncie Urban Forestry Committee was called to order at 1:00 on September 20, 2023. The meeting took place in the Mayor's Conference Room.

### **Present**

Voting members: Adam Berland, Malcolm Cairns, Dustin Clark, James Edwards, Carl Malone, Austin Weiland, Rick Zeigler

Non-voting attendees: Kellie McClellan, Chris Meadows

**Public comments:** None

**Approval of minutes:** Minutes from the June and August meetings were approved.

### **Urban Forester Report**

- Watered Storer Estates yesterday. One tree is dead and others are very stressed
- Pruned at fire stations on Wheeling and Hoyt
- Stump grinding in McCulloch Park and other locations around town
- Removal on Highland
- Sent ordinance violations for overgrown alleys
- Following the report, a discussion took place about disposal of tree waste and potential for cooperation among different entities (e.g., Parks, Beech Grove, Prairie Creek).

### **New Business**

- Announcements
  - Arbor Day 2024 (James)
    - Looking to get an exhibit called Woods on Wheels to come. This has a DNR representative and promotes the work of the timber industry
  - Committee memberships
    - Carl noted his absences stemmed from a misunderstanding about committee memberships, thinking he was being replaced at the start of the year

- Malcolm responded that it might be worth having a broader discussion with the Mayor about the process for selecting committee appointees, to help ensure the representative is interested in serving. Kellie added that it would be helpful to have city representatives drawn from supervisory roles
  - Riverside Trail trees
    - 84 new trees are planned, including replacements for trees that were lost during the project
  - Storer Subdivision trees
    - 42 newly planted trees were in desperate need of watering. They were planted during the hottest stretch of the summer and not followed up with watering.
    - Redevelopment Commission project
      - The tree planting was subcontracted by Bunn. The specs called for watering bags, but these were not implemented. There may be a 1-year warranty on the trees if they do not survive.
    - Kellie & Chris watered the trees yesterday
  - East Central and Old West End tree planting
    - Kellie is delivering trees for East Central, and the community is planting them. Locations primarily on Washington
    - Old West End wants to plant on side streets with narrow planting strips. Kellie was reluctant to deliver the trees before utilities are marked and planting locations are clearly planned.
  - Grant funding (Dustin)
    - Muncie won a USDA Forest Service Inflation Reduction Act grant (~\$2 million) to support urban forestry (titled 'Rooted in Community'). This was among the largest awards in the state. The funds are targeted for assisting in underserved areas.
    - Delaney Fritch sent the proposal and grant guidelines on 6/22/23 via email.
    - Malcolm proposed that we will focus our October meeting discussion on planning for programming related to this grant.
- 1000 Tree Initiative update (Dustin)
  - Currently have 397 proposed tree sites. We need less than 300 to meet the 1000 trees goal. Some sites will probably be pared down as they are examined more closely.
  - Bigger planned locations are: Memorial, Blue Ways (new kayak trail) launch points, Riverview, Ross Center, Senior Center, across from quarry at the end of E Washington

- Discussion about meeting with City Building Commissioner last month
  - Lorey Stinton (Plan Commission) noted that, in the County, it is required to plant one tree for every 50 feet of lot frontage. Lorey is working on a draft ordinance revision that would make this a requirement in the City too.
  - There is potential for collaboration between the Building Commissioner's office and Urban Forestry, in which the Urban Forester keeps an eye out for issues and works with the Building Commissioner on enforcement. Budget conversations would need to take place to figure out who will do this work and how their role will allow for capacity to do it.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm by Malcolm Cairns. The next general meeting will be at 1:00 on October 18.

Minutes submitted by: Adam Berland