

Muncie Urban Forestry Committee

Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2023

Opening

The regular meeting of the Muncie Urban Forestry Committee was called to order at 1:00 on October 18, 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

Non-voting attendees: Kellie McClellan, Chris Meadows

Public comments: None

Approval of minutes: Minutes from the September meeting were approved.

Urban Forester Report

- Replaced dead oak and pulled weeds and mulched ten memorial trees at Westside Park on the west end of the park.
- Removed dead crabapple tree at 1005 W. Kilgore & Charles Street that was recently damaged during high winds.
- Removed dead Norway maple at Beechgrove Cemetery in section F. Bees were in the tree which made it more difficult. Removed two other dead ash trees there. One by the office and one west of the train tressle. He wants two more removed ASAP but there are many more trees in very poor condition.
- Messaged Brad Grant from Five Star Tree Service about being licensed and insured to work in the city. He came in and got licensed.
- At 2409 Lincolnshire in Halteman neighborhood someone "butchered up" 4-5 city trees (stubs, ripped bark, lion-tailing, etc.)
- Assessed private tree at 4318 N. Rosewood. Limb on powerline. Contacted Stacy Lawrence from I&M. Assessed another private tree at 4001 S. Beacon St. and sent ordinance violation.
- Restaked small oak tree in Heekin Park by Hackley Street.
- Removed a dead oak and dead ash tree at McCulloch Park, and pruned the dead out of an oak tree nearby.
- Discreetly marked some poor trees in McCulloch Park that need to come down before the leaves fall off. Lonnie Buchanan removed a large stump at McCulloch Park.

- Removed large dead silver maple at 4001 N. Oakwood.
- Took several quizzes on the ISA website to continue getting CEU's for my arborist recertification which is due by June.
- Large unbalanced sycamore pruned on Pershing between Main & Jackson.
- Saw the finance committee meeting for the city and Adam Leach's report on removing 36 Public trees. I contacted the Street Dept. for the list of locations. They did not have them. I contacted Diana from Controllers Office for locations to update our tree inventory.
- n unimproved right of way at dead end on North New York, a tree in the right of way had fallen into an adjacent private tree over a trail that the neighborhood uses to reach the cardinal Greenway. We removed it for safety.
- At the north west corner of Jefferson and Memorial, we have a resident complaining numerous times about an adjacent silver maple in good condition that she wants removed. She has called numerous times, but there's nothing wrong with the tree and she says she's going to call a news anchor from Indianapolis to investigate. (Rafael Sanchez) I took photos if you would like to see after the meeting.
- Removed a poor red maple at 313 N Chinquapin Way on Gilbert side. (decay at base and included bark).
- Updated tree inventory.
- Other park work: fixed two furnaces in the cabins, lowered the flags, blew out the deck at Tuhey Pool (winterized), took down the shade structures at Tuhey Pool, helped winterize Gainbridge field, replaced the photocell at the Vietnam Memorial, etc.
- Removed suckers around flowering trees at Vietnam memorial.
- Drove the recent Normal City, Riverside neighborhood.
- Pruned silver maple at 205 W. 6th St. (Low limbs)

New Business

- 61 new small homes are being constructed around the city to replace homes that were demolished. Gretchen Cheesman agreed to send the list of locations to us, so we can see if there are good opportunities to plant street trees in front of those homes.
- Muncie Subdivision Ordinance Revision Focus Group/UF representation
 - From Steve Selvey's visit, it was emphasized that there is no requirement to plant trees in new subdivisions in the city
 - Malcolm talked to Lorey Stinton (Plan Commission) about an ordinance revision. Some draft language from Lorey was enclosed with agenda. A

group will meet to discuss this further, and Malcolm will represent Urban Forestry in that group.

- The Urban Forestry Committee voted unanimously to support an ordinance revision that would require trees to be planted in new subdivision developments.
- Rooted in Community Grant Discussion
 - Dustin met with Adam Leach and Delaney Fritch about the grant. Delaney started a new role and will not be involved going forward.
 - Dustin reported on some takeaways from the meeting:
 - The proposed budget was larger than the award amount, so there are revisions needed to both the budget and scope of work.
 - Currently, the funds will go to Public Works. It is unclear if any funds can or will be transferred to Parks/Urban Forestry.
 - Adam Leach believes the relationship between Public Works and the Urban Forestry/Parks is unchanged at this time.
 - We discussed an ongoing lack of communication between Public Works and Urban Forestry. The Street Dept representative has not attended any recent meetings. There was agreement that someone in a supervisory role at Public Works should be appointed to the Urban Forestry Committee.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm by Malcolm Cairns. The next general meeting will be at 1:00 on November 15.

Minutes submitted by: Adam Berland