

# Muncie Urban Forestry Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2024

## **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Muncie Urban Forestry Committee was called to order at 1:00 on January 17, 2024. The meeting took place in the Mayor's Conference Room.

## **Present**

*Voting members:* Adam Berland, Malcolm Cairns, Carl Malone, Austin Weiland, Rick Zeigler

*Non-voting attendees:* Kellie McClellan, Chris Meadows

**Public comments:** None

**Approval of minutes:** Minutes from the November meeting were approved.

## **Urban Forester Report**

- Focused on removing dead and dangerous trees from Westside Park. Six trees removed recently, with about nine more left to remove.
- Cut down a large tree trunk at McCulloch that had lost its top
- Two trees at Cowing were removed
- Tree on N Vine was removed.
- Tree professional license renewal notifications went out via email rather than mail this year, but they apparently did not receive them. Kellie & Chris have been stopping crews to remind them to renew their licenses.
- Highland between Centennial & Wysor – utility work crew was removing some trees that multiple people called Kellie about with concerns. Kellie made sure they were aware of specs for working with street trees.
- Red-tail Conservancy asked Kellie to address invasive plants and homeless camp in Hughes Nature Preserve. It appears that this is city property, but it is unclear who is responsible for maintaining it. Kellie and Carl have circulated this within the city government to clarify who is responsible.

## **Committee Chair Updates**

- Malcolm sent Mayor Ridenour a memo about our concerns regarding the 1000 Trees program and the new Rooted in Community grant. A copy was shared with the committee. Mayor Ridenour acknowledged that he received the memo, but he has not taken action at this point.

## **New Business**

- Budgeted for Urban Forestry activities
  - Malcolm explored the potential benefits of including a dedicated UF budget request in the annual budget. This would help keep up with needs for contracting removals, dedicating more labor hours to UF work, purchasing new trees to plant, and so on.
- Rooted in Community grant update
  - Malcolm and James met with an IDNR Community and Urban Forestry staff member to discuss grant funding
  - Given the Rooted in Community has not responded to the Urban Forestry Committee's requests to discuss grant programming, the UF Committee expressed an interest in focusing on supporting the important UF work done outside the scope of the grant.
- Committee membership/vacancy
  - Streets/Public Works has not been represented at our meeting for a long time. We agree that someone in a supervisory role should be on the committee rather than a secretary or a mechanic.
- Arbor Day planning
  - James is leading and making progress on event planning

## **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm by Malcolm Cairns. The next general meeting will be at 1:00 on February 21.

Minutes submitted by: Adam Berland