

Urban Forestry Advisory Board

Minutes of March 14, 2024

Members Present: Mrs. Caryl Fullman, Mr. Mark Bambach; Ms. Maria Dienger; Mr. Gerald Checco; Ms. Berteena Rollins; Ms. Crystal Russell; Ms. Angie Strunc

Members Absent: Mr. Scott Beuerlein; Mr. Greg Long

Staff Present: Ms. Crystal Courtney; Mr. Robin Hunt; Mr. Jon Harmon; Ms. Sheila Stump

Meeting: A regular meeting of the Urban Forestry Advisory Board (UFAB) was held on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at the Bettman Natural Resource Center, 4 Beech Lane. Mrs. Fullman, Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Quorum was in attendance.

Meeting Agenda: Mr. Checco made the Motion to approve the meeting agenda, all members voted in favor and the agenda was approved as submitted.

Meeting Minutes of Previous Meeting: Mrs. Fullman asked the members if everyone had a chance to read over the December 14, 2023, meeting minutes. All members replied that they had, and that everything looked good. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Welcoming of New Members and Staff: Mrs. Fullman asked that everyone introduce themselves. The newest Members, Ms. Maria Dienger, Building & Inspections, Ms. Berteena Rollins, Community Representative, Ms. Crystal Russell, new Business Representative and new staff member, Mr. Jon Harmon, Executive Administrative Specialist, gave brief overviews of their background. Members briefly discussed term limits and the need to work on staggering term limit deadlines in the future.

Voting in New Chair and Vice-Chair: Mr. Checco stated that he would be happy to serve as Chair and Mr. Hunt shared that Mr. Beuerlein (by telephone) stated that he would be happy to serve as Vice-Chair. Mrs. Fullman asked if there were any objections. Being none, all members voted in favor of Mr. Checco as new Chair and Mr. Beuerlein as new Vice-Chair. After the unanimous votes, Mrs. Fullman handed the floor over to the new Chair, Mr. Checco.

Monthly Activity Reports for December 2023, and January and February 2024: Mr. Checco asked about Urban Forestry's source of Red Bud trees. A member of the Clifton community is interested in applying for a \$10,000 grant for the planting of red bud trees on Middleton Avenue, adjacent to the Wasson Bird Preserve. There was a brief discussion on how street trees differ from trees on private property, and that all money raised for planting trees must go through Park Foundations. Ms. Courtney explained that if the trees were planted in the right-of-way, that assessment funds could be used. She explained that each tree planted would cost approximately \$400; \$200 for the cost and planting of the tree, and \$200 for the first year of maintenance.

Mr. Checco asked if it would be possible to add a column to the Program Statistics to reflect the previous year's numbers. Ms. Courtney asked Ms. Stump if this would be easy to accomplish; Ms. Stump said that she could do that. The next Monthly Activity Report will reflect the new column.

There was a brief discussion on having future meetings at the new Ludlow office. Nothing was decided at this time.

Report of the Natural Resource Manager:

- **New UFAB Members:** Welcomed new UFAB Members and staff.
- **Office Move:** Mr. Hunt gave a brief overview of the office move, stating that staff are still getting used to the building. He explained that Greenspace needed to move crews to Warder Nursery. He gave kudos to Ms. Ann Uhlman, Greenspace District Crew Leader, and her crews for the phenomenal job they did cleaning all the out-buildings at Warder and getting the trailer ready for office space. Mr. Hunt also discussed phone and mail issues at Ludlow office that are finally working themselves out. Ms. Courtney explained that most of the DNR staff will be working from the Ludlow office during the winter months. Ms. Courtney updated members on the Bio-Char project located at Warder Nursery, there will be four-acres fenced off for this.
- **Street Tree Assessment:** We are presently in the notification period; letters were sent by certified mail on March 8, 2024, to everyone paying over \$500.00. Property owners will have 14 days of receipt of letter to appeal.
- **City-wide Planting Contract Update:** Two contracts (Downtown areas plus remainder of City) fully executed early October in for time for fall 2023 planting. Oberson's getting caught up on the backlogged work orders from spring 2023 and before, plus redo jobs.
- **Preventive Maintenance:** Mr. Hunt gave an update on the PM schedule: Area F (Madisonville, Mt. Lookout, Mt. Washington, and Oakley) are now out for bid and scheduled to close in one week. Next PM cycle, Area C (East Price Hill, Sayler Park, West Price Hill). PM Reorganization - UF staff to discuss and revise PM process. This will be the first change to PM process since Urban Forestry's inception).
- **Arbor Day 2024:** This year's Arbor Day is scheduled for John P. Parker School in Madisonville, Urban Forestry Specialist Ms. Marianne Prue's neighborhood.
- **Tree City USA Awards:** Program will be held in Tipp City, Ohio on Friday, April 19, 2024. There is a limit of four attendees from each community. Registration deadline is March 19, 2024. Cost is \$25.00 per attendee. Mr. Hunt asked members who are interested in attending to let him know as soon as possible. Mr. Checco said that he would be interested.
- **Staffing Update:** Job Reclassification (Florist to Arborist 1) / Arborist series (I & II) still pending; AFSCME still objecting Arborist I & II positions so will need to reconcile. The Lead Arborist position has been approved and filled by Mr. Josh Jump, former Tree Maintenance Leader. New Seasonal Recreation Specialist for Urban Forestry hired. Ms. Lauren Myfelt. will begin work on March 18, 2024. Ms. Courtney has been given the approval to double-fill the Urban Forestry Supervisor, the Explore Nature Supervisor, and the Administrative Technician position. These employees will be retiring this year.
- **Tree Valuation:** Mr. Harmon, DNR is working on the updated pear tree policy, as well as other items. Pear trees are an invasive species. Members discussed how pear trees became an issue. Ms. Courtney and Mr. Hunt both touched on the subject.
- **Aylesboro Avenue Appeal:** The appeal will be scheduled for the April 11, 2024, UFAB meeting. Mr. Hunt gave a brief overview of the appeal process to the new members. Ms. Stump will send the appeal information to members before the April 11 meeting.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made. All members were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

Next Meeting Date: The next regular meeting of the UFAB will be held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at the **Bettman Natural Resource Center, 4 Beech Lane.**

Approved:



Gerald Checco, Chair