

CITY OF AURORA  
TREE COMMISSION MEETING  
Tuesday, February 19, 2019

The Aurora Tree Commission met Tuesday, February, 19, 2019 in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Deborah Davis at 5:02p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Deborah Davis – Chairman  
Laurena Entsminger  
Kim Pease  
Martha Sickinger  
Rob Swaney – Vice Chairman  
Jim Tomko  
James Vaca

Also Present: Laura Holman, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Ben Askren – City Arborist  
Tina Gerber – Recording Secretary Pro-Tem

**AMENDMENTS TO THE MINUTES:**

Dr. Tomko motioned to accept the minutes for January 15, 2019 with one correction: Kim Pease Seconded.

Discussion: The minutes were accurate but they said we (City of Aurora) were one of the best Tree Commission Programs in Northeast Ohio, but we were actually the 2<sup>nd</sup> best Tree Commission Program in Northeast Ohio. This designation should be recognized.

All in favor with a voice vote of 7 – 0.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS:**

None

**ARBORIST REPORT:**

**Spring Tree Planting**

Quotes have come in for the Villas of Bertram and citywide tree planting projects. Three contractors were asked to provide quotes and two provided them.

The Villas of Bertram project will be presented for City Council approval at the February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting because it is over the \$10,000 threshold. If approval is given, I will be going to nurseries to tag trees after February 26<sup>th</sup>.

## **Tree Maintenance**

Quotes were received for the 2019 Winter/Spring Maintenance in Four Seasons. Three contractors were contacted and three provided quotes

Pruning of 166 Trees over 6 inches in diameter

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| Davey Tree:        | \$9,115.00 |
| Falls Tree Service | \$8,710.00 |
| NE Tree & Crane    | \$6,135.00 |

An additional 428 young trees located in the Four Seasons will be trained by NE Tree at a cost of \$6,255.00.

An additional 100 trees located in Kiwanis-Moore Park, The Walker Building and Aurora Police Department are scheduled to be pruned after the Four Seasons maintenance is completed.

Ash Tree removal:

- W Parkway Blvd: 16 removed - will be replaced this spring
- North Bissell Road: 17 potential to be removed. These trees were planted by the city in 2002 as part of a utility improvement project. They are on private property, so the city has requested property owner approval for the removal. The city will not be planting replacement trees.
- Geauga Lake neighborhood: Several will be removed.
- W. Pioneer Trail: 5 trees across from Fire Station #1 need to be removed.

## **Tree Museum**

An additional 7 large planters have been acquired from the old Sea World parking lot. I would like to have all 50 State Trees represented in the museum.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

Arbor Day Storage:

Laura was to get back to us about where we are to store the Arbor Day Crafts. According to Laura, the situation is still the same. Finance is supposed to be moving their offices into the large conference room where the Tree Commission has used to judge the Arbor Day exhibits, but it is hard to say for sure when that will be, thus it is probably better to use Moebius for this matter.

## Calendar Review

March: Meeting 3/19 5:30pm @ City Hall

April: Meeting 4/16 5:30pm at Moebius Nature Center to vote on Arbor Day projects

\*\*Note: Arbor Day celebration will be rescheduled from Friday, April 26, to Friday May 03, 2019 at 2:15 PM.

May:

- Arbor Day Celebration 5/3 at Leighton, 2:15pm
- Tree City USA is May 8, 2019. Waiting for invite: next meeting we will need to know who is going to Brecksville.
- No meeting in May
- Clean-up day in Aurora is Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. Tree Commission can and help with the clean-up. Details TBD.
- Mulching Day at Sunny Lake is tentatively set for Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Will have a mulch blower this year to speed work up.

June:

- Meeting 6/18 5pm @ Moebius: picnic first
- Landscape Awards presented at 6/24 City Council meeting (letters to be sent first week of May)

July:

- Fourth-of-July: TBD – probably will do a booth.
- No Tree Commission Meeting in July

## Tree Preservation Ordinance:

Mr. Askren stated the final version is finished and a copy has been forwarded to the Director of Planning and Zoning and Director of Parks and Recreation. Waiting for a response.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Urban Forest Management Plan:

Mr. Askren has been working on the 5 year management plan and hopes to have it ready by next month's meeting. Ben will clarify approval requirements moving forward.

Society of Municipal Arborist Accreditation:

The Society of Municipal Arborist (SMA) is an off-shoot of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) where the emphasis is on urban forestry. The SMA has developed a peer-viewed program that formally recognizes urban and community forestry programs for implementing excellent and comprehensive management practices. There are currently 8 communities nation-wide whom have been awarded this distinction: Aspen, Colorado; Glencoe, Illinois; Arlington, Texas; Downers Grove, Illinois; Atlanta, Georgia; Sacramento, California; Upper Arlington, Ohio and Homewood, Illinois. After having our management plan approved, we will have satisfied all accreditation standards.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Landscape Award Winners: Mrs. Davis announced the Landscape Award winners, which will be kept secret until the winners are informed. Letters are to be drafted and sent first week of May; Plaques need to be ordered and ready for June 24<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

First Energy: Dr. Tomko submitted a draft letter to First Energy referencing power line controversy. Lines are currently scheduled to butt up against Audubon property. Large birds are being electrocuted in other places where these large poles are been installed. Utility company is scheduled to clear-cut an easement on or near Audubon property. Pesticide use was also mentioned as a problem. Ms. Holman stated she would copy and forward this letter to the Mayor.

#### Arbor Day Calendar

Dr. Tomko submitted idea of making a calendar out of the Arbor Day crafts, posters, poems etc. that the middle school students make. The winners would then receive a calendar and other calendar could then be purchased. This could be used towards the "Growth Award". The Commission will follow up on this idea and try to get it ready for this year's Arbor Day. Everyone should check out where they can get a calendar made by next meeting.

#### Advocate Cutouts

Councilman Vaca passed around old pictures from the Aurora Advocate for the Tree Commission members to review. Some had to do with the purchase and renovation of Moebius Nature Center.

#### Christmas Tree Recycling

Ms. Sickinger asked about looking into a Christmas tree recycling program similar to Twinsburg where people could take their trees out to the street or take them to a common drop off site.

#### Hike Challenge

Ms. Sickinger brought up the recurring idea of a "Hike Challenge". Ms. Pease stated we should wait until later to discuss this subject.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Ms. Pease moved to adjourn and Mr. Vaca seconded. All in favor with a voice vote 7-0.  
The meeting adjourned at 6:29p.m.

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Deborah Davis – Chairman

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Tina Gerber – Recording Secretary Pro-Tem