

Urban Forestry Commission Minutes
June 23, 2015 Meeting

Roll Call: Present: Karen Coburn, Karen McCulloch, Brandon Knedler, Anne Zarinnia, Sherry Stanek
Absent: Terry Smith and Beverly Stone

Staff: Andy Beckman

Call to Order by Chair Coburn

Election of Officers: Zarinnia nominated Coburn for Chair, McCulloch 2nd, passed unanimously; Knedler nominated McCulloch for Vice Chair, Zarinnia 2nd, passed unanimously; Zarinnia nominated Stanek for Secretary, Coburn 2nd, passed unanimously.

Approval of March 2015 meeting minutes: Zarinnia moved for approval, Knedler 2nd, passed unanimously.

Approval of May 2015 meeting minutes: Zarinnia moved for approval, Knedler 2nd, passed unanimously.

Staff Report: Pruning and maintenance are on track. There has been a pause while work on soccer fields progresses. There was a citizen comment on the tree removal on N. Prairie St., and Beckman stated that it was explained that these removals were discussed at several previous meetings. The trees were diseased or in the overhead wires. Asplundh trimmed the tops and city staff removed these trees as planned. Coburn read the requirements for mulching city trees with an emphasis on making sure the mulch doesn't climb up the tree trunks. She has noticed that some trees had this problem. Stanek explained that the seasonal workers are being trained on proper mulching and that she is checking their work.

Bird City/Bird Talk: A picture of Swift Tower proposed placement at Cravath Lake was passed out and discussed. Coburn reported that the Park and Rec. Board approved this placement. Zarinnia asked if tower was tall enough. Coburn explained that towers are supposed to be between 12 to 14 feet tall and that ours will be built to those specifications. Coburn asked for design approval for the tower so that fundraising can begin. The expected price will be approximately \$3,000 per tower as designed. UFC must approve the design. Beckman asked who would be in charge of maintaining the towers. Coburn answered that it would be volunteers. Zarinnia asked about design and recommended the design be according to the specs of the Kyle Book on Swift Towers. Zarinnia moved that design and construction be consistent with specs in the Kyle Book and that the cosmetic design (copper type flashing and metal work at base to coordinate with Cravath Park Gazebo) not impact function. Stanek 2nd and motion passed unanimously.

Swift Night Out: Stanek will help whomever decides to take charge of this event. We'll need to have paper and pencils and possibly refreshments. Coburn recommended that an effort be made to include family and children activities. Coburn said that the date of the event will be September 12, 2015 and encouraged everyone to investigate chimneyswift.org. to learn more and then come prepared to discuss and plan at the July meeting.

McCulloch said that the UFC has again been asked to talk about the problem of free roaming cats in the city. McCulloch had prepared a brochure for protecting birds from cats last year and it was distributed at the Main Street Festival. Whitewater city ordinance states that all dogs and cats shall be restrained. There was discussion of a "Call in Cats" program to bring attention to this problem. Cat bibs were discussed along with catios. Is this an enforcement problem as well as an education problem?

Coburn said that fulfillment of 2015 Bird City criteria is on target. We have until 1/31/16 to meet requirements. Stanek mentioned that many of the trees that were planted in the city benefit birds. Beckman said they had some problems with some of the Hackberry trees but that Serviceberry trees were doing well.

Coburn asked about the invasive Japanese Knotweed in town and asked Beckman if he would look into what might be approved for chemical treatment so that we can stop its spread. Beckman agreed to do this.

Website Report: Zarinnia reported on the Google UFC Calendar. She explained that the calendar is under the Park & Recreation city website. Coburn will be keeping it updated with meetings dates and events of interest to the community.

Plan Board Report: Stanek had no report. Coburn would like the UFC to be alerted when the Plan Board agenda concerns plantings that are appropriate for input. There was discussion of how this could be accomplished because Plan Board members often don't receive materials until a few days before upcoming meetings are to take place. Coburn will contact Chris Munz-Pritchard, head of Neighborhood Services, to see how we can work with this. UFC would like information ahead of time.

Park & Rec Board Report: Knedler said that the Swift Tower placement at Cravath Lake Gazebo was approved and that Matt said that he will be recommending which parks should be included in Park Tours in the coming months. Zarinnia said trees planted at Skyway may be an issue for landing airplanes at the airport, and that trees may need to be moved while they are young. She stated that larger planes are using the airport, not just hang gliders and such. Knedler said plans need to be made for future plantings at various parks. He asked about a list for dedications?

Friends of the Effigy Mounds meeting report: Kori Oberle reported that a new mower has been ordered for the Mounds at the request of Midwest Prairie. Walworth County Historical Society has been asked to use LiDAR to differentiate each mound's border.

Skyway Park observation report: The need for more shade near playground equipment and benches were recommended. Coburn stated that a wetland preserve might be a good idea because so much of this park is in low ground.

McCulloch and Beckman leave meeting.

Trip to Minnieska Park and observations: This park has two detention ponds in an effort to help clean water and runoff before it enters Trippe Lake. Zarinnia said that this location might be perfect for another Swift Tower because of the open space and it's proximity to the water. Knedler asked if there are rules or limitations because of the wetlands with regard to future planting. It was recommended that any plantings be kept short because people have built homes there due to the lake views. Further clarification is needed on park boundaries and whether the park has been released to the city from the developer.

Knedler said that he'd be interested in seeing a hummingbird/butterfly garden planted around the park sign, possibly a large triangle encompassing the sign. Stanek cautioned that the park is pretty far away from areas that are currently being watered regularly during the summer and that this could pose a problem for it to be watered regularly until it could get established. The city currently waters plants on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Could the garden be watered on the other days? Knedler also proposed planting trees on the sides of the current sign and planting a shade tree soon in the center of the future playground area so that the trees could develop and give shade earlier.

Zarinnia moved to adjourn the meeting at Minnieska Park, Coburn 2nd, passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: July 28, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Stanek, Secretary