

City of Whitewater  
Urban Forestry Commission  
Tuesday, May 26, 2015 Meeting

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

**Staff:** Brian Neumeister

**Guests:** Richard Helmick and Kori Oberle

**Call to order by Chair Coburn**

Tabled approval of March minutes until June 15 meeting.

Motion made by Stone to remove Website Report (due to Zarinnia's absence) from Agenda, Stanek 2nd - all in favor.

**Staff Report:** Brian reported that tree guards will go on in June. The rest of the trees will be planted downtown soon. Asplundh is removing 7 Ash trees in poor condition in the city. The Main Street tree planting and watershed planters are being prepared. The tree areas will be larger and square replacing the round iron grated tree areas that are being removed. Larger trees will go into the watershed planters, smaller trees will have decorative tree guards that match the iron fencing around the watershed planters. Coburn asked about quadrant planting in the city. Brian stated that we are not doing that this year because we are working on diseased trees all over the city. Coburn said that there is a citizen on Clay St. that would like a couple of trees planted. Brian said that he would address this. Coburn asked if UFC can have input into what trees are replanted, and said that we would prefer native species if possible. Brian said they are currently out for bid.

**Starin Park Arboretum Proposal:** A proposal has been submitted for consideration by resident Jim Nies (for The Historic Starin Park Neighborhood Association). Coburn said that they would like us to vote on this proposal. Stanek said she'd like to see them consider another park that is more in need of trees, rather than Starin Park which is very well treed. Oberle reported that the Park Board is looking for a report from UFC to the Park Board. Stanek asked if they might be interested in labeling the trees that are currently growing at Starin Park. Oberle stated that she would like to see a plan that is further along, including long and short term goals, a proposed budget, and where funds might come from. McCulloch said that she loves the plan but she would like to see a better fleshed out plan. Oberle would like city staff to weigh in on this idea and thinks the UFC should definitely be involved in the development of this plan, and also said that there should be stakeholders throughout the community. Stanek made a motion that we vote to support the concept of a community arboretum, but not necessarily this particular Starin Park plan at this time. Stone seconded; unanimously approved.

**Bird City/Bird Talk:** Coburn handed out Chimney Swift pamphlets for distribution to the community. She said that two possible sites for Swift Towers were being considered by the Tower Committee, both of them at Cravath Lake Park. The first suggestion was by the gazebo and the second was at Mill Pond Park. Coburn will be presenting this proposal to the Park Board on June 9th. Stone moved that we recommend the gazebo location for the first tower, McCulloch seconded, passed unanimously.

Coburn asked members to think about volunteering to chair the Swift Night Out project and Swift count which will happen in September.

Coburn thinks that the UFC should have an alternate member. Council would need to approve this. McCulloch's son Gabe was involved in an exciting and successful UW-W outreach program. He will be going into environmental sciences and would like to get involved in ongoing projects in the city. McCulloch asked if Zarinnia can put on website a place for volunteers to sign up if they are interested in volunteering for various things in order to develop a volunteer pool? Oberle said Landmarks Commission has a Facebook page with links to Effigy Mounds Preserve. Helmick said that he's not sure UFC can have it's own Facebook page. Members were asked to consider possibilities for future discussion.

**Plan Commission Report:** Stanek said that new truck repair business approved on Hwy. 59 plans to landscape around the building before they open. Site is in rough shape now.

**Parks & Recreation Board Report:** Coburn talked to Matt Amundson about parks. UFC members will visit Skyway Park today at the end of our meeting. Park Board has postponed Parks Tour. They will meet on June 9th and will provide information on which parks are priorities.

McCulloch reported that 14 Whitewater High School students met at Effigy Mounds along with Richard Helmich, Richard Ehrenberg, Denay Trykowski, and Coburn. Kids were interested and engaged. They then met at Brewery Hill Park and worked to remove invasive plants and the kids got right in there! Stream sampling was done at Whitewater Creek at the Ray Trost Memorial Park. The idea is to check on the health of the creek. They filled ten large bags with weeds!! Denay gave a tour of her own garden. Richard Ehrenberg is an expert on native plants. It was a beautiful day. Each WHS student needs 10 hours of community service or 15 if they are National Honor Society students which is a lot of potential people power that can be tapped into! Oberle suggested that we set up a sub-committee to put together a proposal by the UFC, Effigy Mounds Committee and Landmarks Commission that could be submitted to the high school. Petra \_\_\_\_\_ supports this idea and her replacement does as well. Will discuss further in the future.

Oberle reported on Effigy Mounds. Maintenance of grounds, not mounds, was discussed at the March Park Board meeting. There was discussion of hiring Midwest Prairies to do 'no till grass seeding' combined with herbicide use to get rid of invasives. Ken Kidd voiced need for Park Board to work with Midwest Prairies. We need to get rid of the garlic mustard that is abundant

there. The Midwest Prairie contract is due in May. While here, they will do some consultation with city workers on what should be planted to distinguish the mounds. We need to let people know that they need to be patient, that this will take time to see results. Informational signage is on its way - there is money in the Park Board Budget for this. The former Friends of Effigy Mounds stopped meeting in March of 2013, and the new group is meeting at the library on June 1st, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in south half of public meeting room. The goal is to try and rejuvenate a group that could meet quarterly to educate the community about the ongoing work at the Mounds. They would also like to have an information table at the Farmer's Market and all members could take turns manning it. Oberle is going on a field trip to National Effigy Mound Park through the Park Service to do fact finding. She will hopefully share at next meeting.

**Possible future agenda items:** Skyway Park needs. Stanek offered that an 11 year old friend said that Skyway Park needs a big shade tree.

Coburn, Smith, McCulloch and Stanek toured Skyway Park.

**Next Meeting: June 23, 2015**