

**City of Whitewater
Urban Forestry Commission
April 26, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Meeting was called to order at 4:33 pm

Roll Call: Karen Coburn, Karen McCulloch, Anne Zarinnia, Rose Mary Leaver, Brandon Knedler, Jerry Schoen, Sherry Stanek
staff: Chuck Nass

Chair Coburn spoke about former member, Bev Stone's, many years of service. She announced that Rose Mary Leaver has agreed to serve as our new alternate, as Jerry Schoen has moved from alternate to permanent. We are in need of an alternate again.

McCulloch moved that the agenda be approved, Stanek seconded, unanimously approved.

McCulloch moved that March minutes be approved, Coburn seconded, unanimously approved.

Staff Report: Chuck Nass reported that Center Street trees that could be saved during reconstruction of the street have been removed and are being stored at city garage for transplanting later. Those that had to be removed for utilities that could not be saved, we will be reimbursed for. The George St. project is going forward without the removal of any trees. Downtown tree planting to fill remaining Main St. planters will begin Tuesday, May 3rd, which will also be our Arbor Day Celebration at 11 am, where a plaque in honor of Tiu Grey-Fow's many years of service will be placed. All UFC members are encouraged to attend. Remaining Main St. trees will be planted and guards put up. Stanek asked about "Walking Arboretum" signs for the Main St. trees. Nass and Coburn requested that Schoen prepare the information for the signs and then Nass will order them. Three oaks will be planted at Cravath Lakefront Park as planned for after boat landing reconstruction in 2015. The first Main St. planter in front of Bergey Jewelers will be made slightly smaller to match the size of the planters put in after the first one, as it was determined that it could potentially block access. This is Whitewater's 21st year as a tree city! Jefferson County was left with 250 white oak whips that city staff will be picking up and planting at our tree farm at the old Marshall farm property. City staff plants, mows and waters the baby trees there for future planting in the city.

Bird City/Bird Talk: Coburn and Leaver represented the UFC at the Janesville Rotary Gardens' "Feathered Friends" event on April 23rd. Coburn reported that the replica

Swift Tower, made by Dan Sable of Whitewater, was on display for the first time and was perfect for illustrating what the purpose of establishing nesting sites for these birds is all about. Handouts were offered on Wisconsin Trees, Proper Pruning, our bird handouts and others and were well received. Janesville has a Tree Alliance which is their version of our Urban Forestry Commission and members were there handing out potted small trees to children who attended. Coburn reported that there was a very good turnout and interest. A Raptor Rehabilitation gave two programs with their rescued birds. Janesville's Audubon Society talked with us about their "Swift Night Out

Our Swift Tower Dedication/Migratory Bird Day celebration will be held at Cravath Lakefront Park behind the Community building on Tuesday May 3rd at 5:30 pm. Assistant City Manager, Chris McDonnell will open dedication. Scott Weberpal will speak about migratory birds in the area. McCulloch noted that tall trees on Franklin St. had been left standing and was wondering if they were left to be used as Swift Towers? She will approach property owner for more information.

Great Wisconsin Birdathon, one day of bird watching, will be held between 4/15 and 6/15 to raise money for the Wisconsin Bird City Program. Sponsors are found to pledge money for each different bird species spotted during the count. Schoen said there is also a "Feeder Watch" fundraiser.

Native Plantings: Clay St. Nature Park Update - Hummingbird/Butterfly Garden bed preparation will begin next week after Nass and Stanek outline the final placement. It will be marked and sprayed with vegetation killer and two weeks later, will be tilled and then planted by volunteers. Coburn asked if there is a place where milkweed plants can be placed around the edges of the detention pond that aren't mowed and Nass said that Park and Rec. Board has already okayed planting there so planting can be done.

Tree City/Tree Talk: Zarinnia gave her report on the Tree Survey's progress. Computer problems have been overcome and additional, corrected copies will be placed around town for people who don't have computer access. Library staff have been highlighting and maintaining/collecting surveys. Online survey is great and is being completed by residents. Zarinnia said that this should be available to residents for several months and has met with a Royal Purple Reporter to explain the survey and the Champion Tree Nomination process. Students are being encouraged to participate in the survey too, and results will be tabulated at the end of the year. Knedler suggested that this project go out in Matt Amundson's park letter that he sends to residents. It has also been on the Banner twice.

Kettle Moraine Education Event: Maggie Zoellner has planned three upcoming events, one in Whitewater. The Trippe Lake Pavillion has been reserved for her June

18th "In Touch With Trees" program which will be held at 10 am and will include a hike through the area to see our trees. The next program will be at Natureland Park on July 16th at 10 am, and then the third program will be at Price Park in Elkhorn, where people will have the opportunity to feed Monarch Butterflies. Zarinnia suggested that she use the UFC connection for her grant application as we support all of this work. Stanek moved to approve, Zarinnia seconded, unanimously approved. Zarinnia asked Knedler if he would ask Matt to include these events in his park letter and also will put them on the UFC calendar of events.

Plan Board Report: No report

Park Board Report: Knedler reported that the Park Tour is upcoming - would be nice to have UFC members attend. It's great for citizens to see what is being planned for the city's parks. Coburn presented Minnieska report, Stanek moved approval with corrections, McCulloch seconded, unanimously approved.

Walton Oaks Park - Coburn reported that UFC members had met with Ross Walton, who's family donated the land for this park, and found that one of the neighboring homeowners is seriously encroaching on this park with flower gardens and structures. Nass recommended that this be reported to Chris Munz-Pritchard so that she can send NSOs there to inform the homeowner that she has thirty days to remove her things from the park, and that if she doesn't, these things will be removed by city staff at her expense. Coburn will contact Munz-Pritchard and get this started. Stanek said that there are a lot of mulberry trees, honeysuckle trees and other invasives taking over the park and asked if volunteers could be assembled to clean it up. Coburn asked Stanek to lead the group and she agreed and said that a Saturday work day needs to be arranged soon. Schoen said that he has a saw that would make quick work of the trees to be removed and will be bringing it back to Whitewater in the next couple of weeks which means the clean up day will be held in a couple of weeks. More to follow. The plan is to establish clear boundary lines between this park and adjoining homeowners so that residents feel comfortable using the park without feeling like they are in somebody's yard. Fences? Plantings?

Landscape Plan Review: Coburn presented the landscape plans for the Home Lumber expansion project for review. Nass stated that it was all fine as far as he was concerned. Coburn questioned the use of Korean lilacs and there was a discussion about the request by Neighborhood Services Director Munz-Pritchard that directs the UFC to propose substitutions for non-native plantings and to educate the landscape developers as far as invasive species are concerned and to not put them in landscape plans for projects in the city. Nass said that he had no problem with the lilacs, Schoen said he thinks they are native. Stanek explained that the movement for knowledge

about the benefits of planting native species instead of non-natives is growing quickly and the benefits to the soil, insect and bird populations are huge. She explained that what we propose are 'suggestions' not 'mandates', except for invasives which are not allowed by the state, and that this is part of our responsibility to educate the public about natives and invasives in our community. Coburn asked for volunteers to look over the plan with her, and Zarinnia and Stanek volunteered. A time will be agreed on soon to meet and go over the plan.

McCulloch moved that we adjourn, Schoen seconded, unanimously approved.

Next Meeting: May 24, 2016 at 4:30 pm at city hall

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Stanek, Secretary