

City of Whitewater
Urban Forestry Commission meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Call to Order

Roll Call: Karen Coburn, Jerry Schoen Rose Mary Leaver, Anne Zarinnia, Sherry Stanek present

Brandon Knedler, Karen McCulloch

Approval of Agenda: Chairperson Coburn moved that the approval of the May minutes and the election of officers be removed from the agenda, Schoen seconded, unanimously approved.

Staff Report: Chuck Nass was unable to go to the June UFC meeting because of other commitments, and said Brian Neumeister and Andy Beckman weren't available either, so he asked Stanek to give his report for him which she agreed to do. He reported that the Center Street project is ahead of schedule.

He reported that Walmart had donated all of their remaining trees, shrubs and perennials to the City rather than throwing them away. Stanek added that she had met with Joey Marx, store mgr., and that he wanted us to have a photo event with his employees digging holes and she told him that we would do that. It was not scheduled yet.

Nass asked Stanek to let everyone know that he had met with Kim Adams, the professor who lives next door to Walton Oaks Park and who has created several planting beds on the park property, and asked her to sign a paper acknowledging that she knows where the property line is and that she had made a mistake by putting flower beds on park property but was now donating them to the city. She said she will continue to weed and trim them so that city staff wouldn't have to worry about their upkeep. She told Chuck she was uncomfortable with potentially having a 'creepo' being so close to her when she's swimming in her swimming pool, and that keeping the flower beds there would discourage people from using that part of the park and getting too close to her which Nass said he thought made sense.

Bird City/Bird Talk: Schoen has completed information on our Bird of the Year, Woodpeckers. Coburn's son is putting Schoen's report into a brochure with pictures. Coburn said that the brochures can be part of our educational requirement for our Bird City membership and can possibly be tied into the activity that UFC creates for the Main Street Festival, to be held September 10 and 11, 2016. Leaver reported that Janesville Botanical event had bird guessing and bird matching games and will call to see if we can use theirs or we will create our own. Swift Tower Dedication/Migratory Bird Report: Coburn reported that a very nice group came to the dedication. Assistant City Manager McDonnel, Scott Weberpahl and Karen Coburn spoke. The event was well attended and Chimney Swifts were flying overhead!

Schoen is continuing to work on the information for signs identifying the newly planted Downtown trees for the "Walking Arboretum" project.

Detention Pond Considerations: Zarinnia reported that she had done research as to the safety for children near detention/retention ponds. She wants to know if this is in the UFC's purview. There is also a concern about e coli bacteria in the ponds from geese and ducks and wonders whether tall grass should be planted around the ponds to deter geese from entering the ponds.

Native Plantings: Stanek reported that the grass has been killed at Clay Street Nature Park, both for the Hummingbird/Butterfly Garden and also for a corner planting area that will help to identify the parameters of the park for residents. Planting can begin soon.

Tree City/Tree Talk: Tree survey is still in progress. Leaver has been picking up completed surveys. Leaver asked about the health of the trees on the side of City Hall. Stanek will talk to Chuck Nass about replacing them.

Kettle Moraine Education Events: Natureland hike to collect edible plants will be held on July 16, 2016.

Plan Board Report: Stanek reported that when the Plan Board met in June, she was nominated to be the Urban Forestry Commission representative and she accepted.

Park & Recreation Board Report: Coburn reported that the report on Minnieska Park will be presented at next Park Board meeting.

Report on Walton Oaks Park - There was a discussion of the need to establish boundaries at this park so that residents know what is 'park property' and what is 'private property' so that residents feel comfortable using this park. At this point, it is very confusing as to where the park begins and ends and where the adjacent property begins and ends. Possible planting trees on the property line with benches for viewing all of the birds there? A report will be prepared for presentation to the Park Board at a later date.

Schoen reported that the clean-up of invasives that was planned for late spring must wait until fall now because everything is so overgrown. Coburn will talk to Wes Enterline to find out if he can connect us with college students who may need community service who might be able to help with this clean-up project.

Adjournment: Leaver moved that meeting be adjourned, Stanek seconded, unanimously approved.

Next Meeting: July 26, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. at Cravath Lakefront Room, 2nd floor of City Municipal Building at 312 Whitewater Street, Whitewater, WI 53190

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Stanek, Secretary