

City of Whitewater Urban Forestry Commission

February 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Community Room - 1st Floor - 4:30 p.m. and Virtual

312 W. Whitewater St., Whitewater, WI 53190

Call to Order: 4:26 pm by chair Stanek

Roll Call: Leaver, McCormick, Neis, Oberle, Stanek, Taylor, Chandler, Neumeister
Absent: Alt. Also present: Barry Rosenberg; Chris Bennett, Neighborhood Services Director, City of Whitewater.

Hearing of Citizens Comments: None.

Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve McCormick. 2nd Taylor. Unanimous approval.

Approval of January 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve McCormick. 2nd Oberle. Unanimous approval.

Treasurer's Report: (Leaver): No activity since last report. Account balance: \$1,049.

Staff Report: (Neumeister): The city continues with tree removals and trimming projects on the terraces. The bucket truck is still out of service and the city is not sure when it will return to service. Any major tree work will happen when it is. In the meantime, the city is working on small tree trimming that can be accomplished from the ground.

Stump grinding is progressing on terraces, and as the frost melts work in the parks will pick up.

Tree order is in for two street reconstruction projects (E Main St & Yoder Ln) as well as our city planting for a total of 97 trees. Additionally, the city has ordered 200 free 2–3-year-old saplings 12-18 inches not including roots. These saplings are individually packed to hand out at the tree sale and possibly to school children.

Arboretum Update: Tree Inventory (Stanek): Andy Beckman and Jacob Mass are locating trees using Wisconsin Community Tree Map and then identifying and measuring them to enter information for mapping. Additional information will be included in QR codes for signs that will be accessible on smart phones and computer. Barry

Rosenberg will lead the mapping team with Stanek a part. Using Google maps will be a problem once the trees leaf out. GIS mapping software may be required and Neumeister will investigate. Barry is also willing to create tree tags for self-guiding arb tour. A big thank you to Barry.

Barry wrote a beautiful piece entitled *Hiding in Plain Sight – The Arboretum at Starin Park* that appeared in the *Banner* on February 3. <https://whitewaterbanner.com/hiding-in-plain-sight-the-arboretum-at-starin-park/>

Arbkeepers (Neis): Maintaining the AASP will require a lot of work and more resources than the UFC can offer. Therefore, we need to narrow the scope of UFC's participation to tree sales and developing and running the education programs. Instead, it is essential to form a dedicated group of Arbkeepers to maintain and operate the AASP.

Generac Welcome Pavilion: A UFC subcommittee consisting of Stanek, Neis, and Alt was formed and met with Eric Boettcher to discuss signage for the pavilion. It was agreed that signs describing the arb, an arb map, interpretation and education are needed. Alt gave a PowerPoint presentation of various options. Neis requests volunteers to help develop these signs. Middle school Chris Fountain is excited to help with associate principal Ben Holzem.

Recognition: Nick Alt was recognized for his expertise and extraordinary efforts. It was agreed that a city proclamation be offered to the city council and that Nick's name be included in a plaque at the pavilion.

Fundraising for 2023: Neis created and circulated a list of businesses to approach for donations, e.g., Kwik Trip, Dollar General, Walmart, etc. It was agreed that an itemized list of arb needs should first be created so contributors would know what their donations would go towards. It was questioned whether the UFC has the authority to raise funds as it may be outside its scope. UFC members have raised the funds used for the Arboretum up to this point. It was suggested that a "Friends of the Arboretum" Group be formed to raise funds.

Dollar General Landscape Site Plan Review and Discussion: Landscape architects for Dollar General appeared remotely to discuss their choice of plantings at the new DG location. Alt prepared a list of plantings indicated by DG and an excellent list of possible replacements to reflect the native species. DG seemed receptive to making these changes and the list was provided to them for inclusion in a revised site plan.

Tree City: Tree Benefit Calculator (Stanek) to help people understand the benefits of trees will be discussed at the next meeting.

Bird City/Bird Talk: (Stanek) Everything is in order for the Bird City designation for 2023. (Chandler) Covers for the Purple Martin Houses can be taken off anytime in March. A technique has been developed to block sparrow habitation in the houses by repurposing of styrofoam pool noodles and these will be installed. The private martin houses in the city will be checked by Chandler.

Items For Future Discussion: Tree benefit calculator.

Adjournment: Motion by McCormick. 2nd Stanek. Unanimous approval at 5:55 pm.

Next Meeting: March 27, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick Taylor

Secretary, UFC