

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
TREE COMMISSION MEETING
RALPH GRATHOFF, CHAIRMAN
JULY 14, 2016**

Members Present: Chair. Ralph Grathoff, Valerie Blaine, Jon Duerr, Suzi Myers, Caroline Wilfong, Ron Ziegler

Members Absent: Kathy Brens, Ray Hauser, Pam Otto

Others Present: Chris Adesso, Jeremy Craft, Marcelline D'Argento, Isabel Soderlind, Lisa Vielbig

Visitors Present:

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Grathoff at 7:10 p.m.

2. Introductions of Visitors: Chris Adesso introduced Marcelline D'Argento and Lisa Vielbig to the Tree Commissioners. Both Public Works Administrative Assistants will be sharing the duties to support the Tree Commission moving forward.

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the May 12, 2016 Tree Commission meeting. Motion made by Comm. Duerr second by Comm.Blaine to accept and place the minutes on file.

Voice vote: unanimous; Nays – None; Absent: Kathy Brens, Ray Hauser, Pam Otto

- Motion carried at 7:11 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Update on the Urban Forestry Management Plan

Comm. Blaine stated she had made some progress proof-reading the Urban Forestry Management Plan but she still had more editing to do. Her intention is to: (1) reduce the wordiness of the document, and (2) clarify the information for the intended reader. As mentioned before, the document is a combination of urban forestry policies and a procedural manual for the Public Works Urban Forestry team. Once the document is approved by Council, it will be published and posted on the City's website making it available for the general public.

Comm. Duerr recommended reviewing the edited document at the September 8 Tree Commission meeting. After the document is finalized, AJ Reineking will present it to the Government Services Committee, followed by formal approval from Council.

B. Reorganization of the Tree Commission into a Natural Resources Commission

Chair. Grathoff recapped that the Commission had voted and approved the motion to become a Natural Resources Commission last month. In an effort to move this initiative forward, he had written two mission statements for the Commissioners to consider and approve. Once this was voted on and approved, Chris Adesso would present this initiative to the Public Works Director, City Administrator and Council for formal approval.

The mission statements were distributed and reviewed by the Commissioners. (See attached.)

Upon review, the consensus agreed on the following mission statement for the Natural Resources Commission:

“Our mission is to work through a committed partnership with the community to conserve, preserve, protect and enhance the City’s natural resources and to raise awareness and make recommendations concerning environmental issues within the City of St. Charles.”

The recommendation was made to approve the above mission statement and present the concept of reorganizing the Tree Commission to a Natural Resources Commission, given the similar advisory committee model as the current Tree Commission, at the August 22 Government Services Committee meeting,

Chris Adesso recommended a Roll Call:

Comm. Blaine: Yes
Comm. Duerr: Yes
Chair. Grathoff: Yes
Comm. Myers: Yes
Comm. Wilfong: Yes
Comm. Ziegler: Yes

Motion made by Comm. Blaine second by Comm. Myers. Approved by voice vote. Motion carried.

Chris Adesso mentioned the next step of the process was to request the approval of reorganizing the Tree Commission to a Natural Resources Commission and present the proposed mission statement to the August 22, Government Services Committee. Once final approval is received from Council, the next step would be to amend the Tree Commission portion of the codebook.

Chris Adesso will be presenting the Natural Resources Commission mission statement at the Government Services Committee meeting, Monday, August 22 in the Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.

5. New Business

A. News and Concerns from Public Works:

- i. **Tree Trimming:** Jeremy Craft reported tree trimming has been limited to service requests in the last month or so. The primary focus of the division has been other Public Services construction/maintenance duties and to prepare for the City’s America in Bloom judging.

Comm. Duerr asked about the Sycamore trees removed behind Smitty’s and the Harris Bank. Mr. Craft indicated that these trees were private trees and the City did not have any jurisdiction over them.

- ii. **Fall Planting:** Mr. Craft mentioned there are only 65 trees currently on the fall tree planting list. Mr. Craft also added that the division will be sending out a bid for tree planting again this year. This will be a one year contract with an additional two year extension. Jeremy also reminded the commissioners that the Public Services tree replacement budget is now back to “normal”. It is no longer near the amount the division had during the years the ash trees were being removed and replaced.
- iii. **Replacement of Arbor Day Tree at Fox Ridge School:** The Arborist Team was also notified that the tree planted on Arbor Day at Fox Ridge School did not survive but it will be replaced with another Zelkova during the fall planting season.

- iv. **Request from Resident to Remove Parkway Tree:** Public Works received a call from Tim Hovious residing at 1036 Kehoe Drive. He is requesting Public Services remove one of the 3 maple parkway trees running along the Horne Street side of his home, preferably S2 or S3.

Per Chris Adesso, the Norway Maples are apparently 13 years of age. The resident is requesting the removal of one of the trees so the parkway can receive more sun and the parkway grass could grow.

The Commission viewed the three trees online in the 2016 version of Google Maps. Looking at the trees from the "street view", the trees seemed in poor condition. It is a very shaded street with these growing maples being planted too closely together. The parkway appeared to be mostly dirt/soil, with the salt, roots and water draining towards the tree and not to the grass. The resident has tried to reseed grass twice and has not been able to grow any considerable grass in this area.

Jeremy Craft mentioned the arborist staff has thinned out the trees several times and that has not helped. He added that the S1 tree was in worst shape and it may need to be removed in the future.

While the trees did not appear to be in very good condition, the recommendation was made to table the removal of the tree until all the Commissioners conducted their own site review of the S2 tree (2nd tree from the corner of Horne & Kehoe) before the next scheduled meeting, September 8. A motion and vote to remove the tree will be taken at the September meeting.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee:

Comm. Wilfong indicated she still had several copies of the book entitled *Why Would Anyone Cut a Tree Down?* to deliver in honor of 2016 Arbor Day. She mentioned that she would distribute the books to the remaining schools once they were back in session.

B. Publicity Committee: None

C. Langum Park Clean Up:

The meeting tonight began at Langum Park. The Commissioners walked around Langum Woods determining next steps for the Langum Woods Clean Up Project.

The commissioners agreed more clean up was needed and the pathways needed additional chips. Jeremy Craft and the arborist team will inspect the area late this coming fall/winter and determine if the area needs more woody evasive removal. If monies are available in this year's budget, the crews will work on removing the woody evasives. If not, provisions will be made in next year's budget.

D. October Joint Meeting

Isabel Soderlind reminded the Commissioners of the upcoming Tri-Cities Joint Tree Commission meeting in October. It is the City's turn to host the meeting this year. Isabel requested some available dates she could offer to the Batavia Environmental Commission and Geneva's Natural Resources Committee. The Commissioners agreed on two options, October: Tuesday, October 18 or Thursday, October 20.

Comm. Blaine recommended meeting at Creek Bend Nature Center at LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve for this year's meeting. Isabel Soderlind will contact Batavia Environmental Commission and Geneva's Natural Resources Committee to see if either one of these dates was preferable for their group.

7. Communications

Electric Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to accept and place on file the Public Works Tree Activity Reports for May & June of 2016.
Motion made by Comm. Duerr second by Chair. Grathoff to accept and place on file the reports as presented.

Voice vote: unanimous; Nays – None; Absent: Kathy Brens, Ray Hauser, Pam Otto
- Motion carried at 8:20 p.m.

8. Additional Items – Comments

A. Commissioners: None

B. City Staff:

Isabel Soderlind: Thanked the commission for all their support. It has been her pleasure to assist the committee the past couple of years.

Chris Adesso: will update AJ Reineking of today's decision to delay the tree removal at 1036 Kehoe Drive. AJ in turn will contact and update the resident.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Comm. Blaine to adjourn the meeting, second by Comm. Ziegler.

Voice vote: unanimous; Nays – None; Absent: Kathy Brens, Ray Hauser, Pam Otto

- Motion carried at 8:24 p.m.

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