

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL  
TREE COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2012**

**Members Present:** Chair. Jim Nau, Bill Bangs, Suzi Myers, Ralph Grathoff, Chris Scott, Ron Ziegler

**Members Absent:** Valerie Blaine, Pam Otto, Phil Zavitz

**Others Present:** Peter Suhr, Isabel Soderlind, Nicole Wang

**1. Opening of Meeting**

The meeting was convened by Chair. Jim Nau at 6:39 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

**3. Introductions of Visitors - Comments and Concerns: None**

**Omnibus Vote**

**4. Recommend approval of March 2012 Minutes**

Motion by Vice-Chair. Myers second by Commissioner Ziegler to accept the March 14, 2012 Minutes as presented.

**Voice vote:** unanimous; Nays – None; Absent: Otto, Blaine, Zavitz - Motion carried.

Commissioner Bangs questioned if City Council had to approve the removal of trees. Peter Suhr clarified the removal list is presented to Council every month as an informational item. Presentations are given to Council when necessary; approvals are needed when there are policy or budget changes.

**5. Old Business**

**A. Discussion on City Forestry/Ordinance Plan**

Vice-Chair. Myers will work with Commissioner Grathoff and Peter Suhr on the Urban Forestry Plan. They will connect and finalize a time and date to review the Forestry/Ordinance Plan after this meeting.

## **6. New Business**

### **A. Update on the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)**

As discussed at the last meeting, EAB and its financial impact is a concern for the department. The City projected 95% of the ash population will be identified with EAB within the next two years. The current projected budget will not be able to keep up with the number of removals and replacements. Peter Suhr made another presentation to the Council on April 9. Three different strategies were presented as it relates to the future of the EAB program and its corresponding impacts. At that meeting, Council decided to move forward in its initiative to remove and replace all confirmed EAB ash trees within the next three years. This is similar to the existing program.

The City has also researched several funding opportunities. A full 10-year program bond option was approved by Council, borrowing \$2.5 million to remove and replace trees within the next three years. This is an estimated cost of \$350,000 over the next 10 years. The prevailing wage was included in the budget which may include anywhere from a 40% to 60% increase on removals.

At the suggestion of the Tree Commission last month, treatment programs were also discussed at the presentation. At the end of three years, the City projects 85% of the ash trees will be removed and replaced, with approximately 15% of the trees remaining. The City will not remove a tree unless it is confirmed. There are currently about 250 trees being treated and there may be more that survive.

In conclusion, Council's direction is: if a tree is confirmed, it needs to be removed and replaced as soon as possible. Moving forward this is the direction the City will take, even though this plan will be evaluated every year.

According to Peter Suhr, the next step is to conduct a bid process and determine how this plan best fits with the estimated costs and the City's projections.

There are approximately 5,400 city ash trees. Approximately one-third of the trees are already removed; a quarter of the trees have been replaced, with the exception of those located in the Commercial Manufacturing District (CMD). Overall, there will be approximately 1,000 trees removed and replaced each year for the next 3 years.

Commissioner Ziegler asked if the City has been able to analyze the effectiveness of the treatments conducted.

The city has been treating ash trees for approximately the last two years with Safari and other programs. Peter Suhr indicated the City will need to research the effectiveness of these treatments further, but to-date the overall effectiveness has been positive.

Vice-Chair. Myers asked if and how resident's are notified.

Peter Suhr indicated residents receive a series of notification letters:

1. Homeowners are sent a letter via mail when the tree is confirmed with EAB; the letter explains the condition of the tree. The tree is marked with a purple dot at that time.
2. A second letter is then mailed notifying the homeowner that the tree will be removed and replaced. If they have any issues or concerns, they have a two-to-three week opportunity to respond to the letter. The letter also specifies a choice of replacement trees. Homeowners can choose a tree from the list, planted at no additional cost. Homeowners can also select a larger tree at an additional cost.

The spring planting list is almost complete. Approximately 624 trees will be planted towards the end of April beginning of May.

#### **B. News from Public Works:**

Peter Suhr announced that Ben Deutsch chose to leave the organization. The City is in need of a City arborist, but it is presently relying on the expertise of its current vendors. If the committee has any suggestions or recommendations of an arborist, please call Peter.

#### **C. Langum Woods Clean Up.**

Langum Woods Clean Up is planned for Tuesday, April 24 from 9:00 to 3:00 pm. There will be two separate sessions, 9:00 am and 12:30 pm. There will be approximately 65 students in each group, for a total of 130 students.

Peter Suhr and the arborist team will be the city contact for this event. Peter Suhr has already contacted Lisa and will they will meet before the clean-up date.

The St. Charles Park District instructors as well as Vice-Chair. Suzi Myers and Commissioner Pam Otto are planning to attend the day of clean up.

### **7. Committee Reports**

**A. Education Committee:** No comments.

**B. Publicity Committee:** See Arbor Day Publicity.

**C. Arbor Day Committee**

**Day of the Event: Friday, April 27 at 4:00 pm**

**Publicity:** All articles have been completed and distributed.

**Art Activity for Children: Commissioner Blaine**

Commissioner Myers will bring all the “leaf rubbing” materials to Arbor Day.

**Entertainment: Chair. Nau**

Rick Weals will provide the musical entertainment. He is confirmed.

**Presentation of Colors: Commissioner Zavitz/Commissioner Scott**

American Legion Post 343 Color Guard and Cub Scout Pack #113 from Lincoln School will present the colors. Sandbags will be needed hold up the flags on the stands.

Chair Nau will bring another flag as a backup.

**Tree City Presentation by the City: Not Determined**

Peter Suhr will give this some thought and respond to the commission.

**Set up and Food: Public Works Department**

Public Works will pick up the cookies for the event, set up of chairs, tables, podium, and speaker system.

**Speaker - Jon Duerr: Chair. Nau**

Jon Duerr has been confirmed as the speaker. The topic is still to be determined.

**Donation of Perennials - Midwest Groundcovers: Chair. Nau.**

Midwest Groundcovers will donate perennials as they have in past years. Bill Bangs will pick up approximately 10 trays, with approximately 20 plants to each tray. Contact at Midwest Groundcover is Chris Darbo.

**Contests: Photography Contest:**

The St. Charles Park District has donated three separate prizes for the Photo Contest:

1. Moonlight Hay Ride at Primrose Farm for a party of ten people.
2. Four free passes to Otter Cove Water Park.
3. Four passes to Riverview Miniature Golf Course.

There were approximately 10 entries to the photo contest from two contestants. The winner will choose two of the prizes; the runner up will receive the third prize.

The committee voted on all the entries. David Frye's "Forest Path" was determined the winner. Honorable Mention went to: James Gebhardt.

There were approximately 47 entries so far for the Coloring Event. Commissioner Scott has picked up approximately 50 free sundae coupons. He will contact Colonial for another 20 coupons. A Free Sundae certificate from Colonial will be awarded to all children who have submitted an entry.

Isabel Soderlind and Nicole Wang will ask the mayor to sign all of the entries.

**Educational Materials: Public Services**

The City will bring a variety of brochures to distribute.

**Tree Demonstration – Graf Tree Care: Commissioner Scott**

Commissioner Scott has not finalized the demonstration, but is considering an "Interactive Climbing" demonstration with the assistance of the Lincoln School Cub Scout Pack #113.

**Raffle of the Tree: Peter Suhr**

Peter Suhr will contact Pedersen for the donated tree. Commissioner Myers will conduct the drawing.

**Rent the Tent: Chair. Nau**

A-1 Canopy will supply the tent. It will be delivered between 2:30 – 3:00 pm on April 27, with the Park District marking the utilities earlier in the day.

**Chairs, Tables and PA system: Public Works**

Peter Suhr indicated that the PA system is not working well. Chris Scott will bring an amp and microphone as a back up.

**Invitations and Brochures: Public Works Department**

Additional information is still needed from Chair. Nau to complete the brochures.

Public Works will distribute the invitations to the mayor, aldermen, and department directors at the City. They will be posted at the Municipal Building and the Public Works Facility.

**Reading of the Proclamation: Mayor of St. Charles**

This has been placed on the Mayor's calendar.

**8. Communications**

**A. Electric Division/Tree Activity Reports**

**March 2012 Communications-Electric Division/Tree Activity Reports were presented.**

**9. Comments**

**A. Commissioners**

Commissioner Scott: None

Commissioner Grathoff appreciates the extra effort the City is making in resolving the EAB issue and for making the choice to take the more aggressive option of removing the trees. He commended Peter for leading this effort.

Commissioner Bangs: None

Vice-Chair. Myers is looking forward to see everyone at Arbor Day. She also mentioned the Touch-A-Tractor demonstration on Saturday at Randall and Oak Street. They will also be carving the trunk of an ash tree at the demonstration, which will be on display.

Chair. Nau announced his resignation from the commission. Due to other commitments, he will no longer be able to participate on the commission; this is his last meeting as Chair. He mentioned that he will attend Arbor Day and the meeting in May to wrap up any Arbor Day business. He remarked how much he has enjoyed his time with the committee and will email the rest of the commissioners not present at the meeting.

Vice-Chair. Myers asked its members to consider the Chair position as Chairman, Vice-Chair or Co-Chair. Nominations and voting will be taken at the May meeting. Vice-Chair. Myers indicated she will conduct the meeting in May.

**B. Staff :**

Peter Suhr indicated that he has enjoyed working with Chair Nau.

Nicole Wang indicated she has enjoyed watching the committee's process and is looking forward to attending Arbor Day.

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**10. Adjournment**

**Motion by Myers to adjourn meeting at 7:35 p.m.**

**Voice vote:** unanimous; Nays – None; Absent: Otto, Blaine, Zavitz- Motion carried.

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