

URBAN FORESTRY COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 16, 2018 8:00AM
City Hall – City Hall Conference Room 5

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Keith Jones, Chairman
Tim Kastning
Glenn Truscott
Bob Hallock
Steve Bloedel
Bruce Martinek

STAFF PRESENT:

Katie Kosanke, Urban Forester

GUESTS PRESENT:

Erika Eidson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

John Schwandt, Vice Chairman (*out of town*)
Marie Michaelson, Student Rep

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jones at 8:07am.

1) MINUTES

Bob Hallock made a motion to approve the January 19, 2018 minutes, Tom Ball seconded the motion, motion passed.

2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

3) COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Please see attached report.

4) URBAN FORESTRY COMMITTEE VACANCY

Staff mentioned there is a vacancy on the committee and one application has been received. At this time, the application will be reviewed and appointment will be considered at the March meeting. Keith Jones welcomed Erika Eidson and copies of her application and professional data sheet were distributed. Erika introduced herself; she has a M.S. from Utah State University and a B.S. from University of Minnesota. She is currently a Forest Health Specialist with the Idaho Department of Lands. Erica served as a forestry inspector with the City of Aurora Parks in Colorado and assessed pruning, insect and disease issues and worked with community members to design tree care plans. She has also designed, implemented and managed city-wide emerald ash borer detection surveys.

5) REVIEW OF NATURAL OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Glenn did not have an update for the Natural Open Space Committee.

6) TREE INSPECTION FORM

Katie handed out the staff report for this item and revised inspection form. The committee has been working on a revision for some months. Tim mentioned the new form is consistent with the International Society of Arboriculture is a qualitative system instead of quantitative, which simplifies it. Steve mentioned the points system allowed for further discussion if a tree does not score as you think it may, it then requires further evaluation at the inspection of the rating to justify the outcome. Tim commented that the new form still allows for a thorough inspection and also gives room for discussion in addition to considering homeowner's requests. Bob mentioned in the past if a tree was not nearly dead, the request was denied, now additional factors are considered including declining condition and the opportunity to replace the tree and increase tree age diversity. Keith mentioned he struggled with the points rating system. Staff mentioned during appeals, the points system was questioned and at times it was difficult for others to understand. Erika mentioned codes could be added for pest or other issues and also what the decision is based on should be clear. Erika recommended verbiage added stating the recommendation is based on professional judgement. Tim pointed out the inspection follows a general form for the committee's review. **Bob Hallock made a motion to adopt the new inspection form for reviewing tree removal requests, with the addition of verbiage 'decision is based on professional judgement', Glenn Truscott seconded the motion, motion passed.**

7) DIVERSITY OF TREES IN NEIGHBORHOODS

Staff mentioned this item was discussed at the January meeting. It appears some developers may only be planting one or two tree species to fulfill street tree requirements. It was discussed that more could be done to increase species diversity throughout neighborhoods. Bob mentioned it is important to have species diversity to prevent developers from planting only one type of tree. He then gave an example of a subdivision where only pin oak trees were planted which have ongoing pest issues which have easily spread due to the lack of species diversity. Staff will send a link to the inventory for committee members to review and look at species diversity. It may be somewhat difficult to require specific percentages of diversity when there are multiple contractors within a development. Also, residential street tree inspections are requested after trees are planted and staff only provides feedback at the time of subdivision on common area/buffer street tree plantings.

8) CITY-LICENSED TREE SERVICE ACCREDITATIONS

Tim mentioned he would have liked to be more prepared for this agenda item. He has some items for this discussion. Katie passed around copies of the previous list of services city-licensed tree companies provide. This document could be expanded to list tree service qualifications and accreditations. At times, property owners are looking for a particular service, which not all tree services provide, such as pesticide application or tree risk assessments. Additionally, a link could be added to each tree service on the website which provides information on their services and qualifications. Committee members requested this item be further discussed at the March meeting.

9) 2018 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION

Staff mentioned NIC has taken many steps, and applied to be a Tree Campus USA. City Staff has been assisting them to achieve this status, and many of the items they were already doing. Currently

there is only one Tree Campus USA in Idaho, NIC will be the second. A combined Arbor Day event is planned at NIC. Staff thought it may occur on a week day so college students will be there and can participate. The committee will be kept up to date on plans and it will be discussed further at the March meeting.

10) URBAN FORESTRY PROJECT IDEAS

Keith suggested having a consent agenda for the minutes or other simple action items that may not require as much discussion. He believes this will assist in keeping the committee on track. Katie thought that was a good idea as sometimes conversations can run long, however there usually aren't many action items on the agenda. This will be further discussed at the next meeting.

11) INSPECTION REQUESTS

- City Park, west of the playground - request to inspect a ponderosa pine. The committee recommended a higher level of inspection of the cavity and preserving the tree if possible. It is recommended to prune this tree (as long as the cavity is minor) to reduce the dead branches in the crown and multiple tops.
- 522 Indiana Ave – request to inspect maple tree near powerlines for pruning or removal. The utility company asked that the committee inspect the southern-most tree on Indiana Ave for a recommendation. At the least, the utility company will prune the tree away from the lines, however they thought perhaps the tree could be removed because of a cavity in the trunk. The committee assessed the tree and the cavity is surrounded by sound wood and strong reaction wood. The committee recommended pruning the tree away from the utility lines and also recommended the routine pruning all of the street trees at this location.
- 508 Randle Ave – removal request inspection cancelled by abutting property owner.

12) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:45am, which included the field inspections as a group.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Kosanke, Urban Forester