

**CITY OF AURORA
TREE COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, January 16, 2018**

The Aurora Tree Commission met for a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 in City Hall Council Chambers for the purpose of holding a regular meeting. Chairman Deborah Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Deborah Davis – Chairman
Laurena Entsminger
Rob Swaney – Vice Chairman
Martha Sickinger
Dr. Jim Tomko
James Vaca Sr.

Absent: Kim Pease

Also Present: Ben Askren - Arborist
Madeleine Marazzi –Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Jim Tomko moved to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2017. Rob Swaney seconded and the motion was passed, 5–0 with a voice vote.

ELECTION OF COMMISSION OFFICERS:

MOTION: The Tree Commission nominated Deborah Davis to be chairman of the Tree Commission for the calendar year of 2018.

Jim Vaca moved to close the nominations.

Jim Tomko nominated and Martha Sickinger seconded and the motion passed 6-0 with a voice vote.

MOTION: The Tree Commission nominated Rob Swaney to be Vice-Chairman of the Tree Commission for the calendar year of 2018.

Jim Vaca moved to close the nominations.

Jim Tomko nominated and Martha Sickinger seconded and the motion passed 6-0 with a voice vote.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Deb Conti, 234 S. Chillicothe Rd., stated she noticed that there are a lot of different trees around town that are not identified. She thought it would be a good idea to label them with signs such as at SLP. This might be helpful to the children that do the community walk with their teachers and also to the community. She felt it was a wonderful way to show the community where their money is going and what the city has.

Deborah Davis stated she had a comment from a citizen complaining about a neighbor who bought a house in Four Seasons knowing there were woods in the back of them. These citizens started cutting all the trees down and wanted to know what recourse they had. Mr. Vaca stated the City of Aurora did not have an ordinance on private clear cutting, it is their property. If a business is working on a project that involves clear cutting they have to be cleared by the City of Aurora first.

NEW BUSINESS:

Urban Forestry Assessment: Deborah Davis stated Mr. Alan Siewert; Regional Urban Forester ODNR had compiled the results of the assessment of other communities in preparation for the Division of Forestry celebrating its 40th anniversary. The city of Aurora came in second, Mr. Siewert had complimented Mr. Askren on doing such a good job leading the city in urban forestry the Commission expressed how lucky they are to have the support of the Mayor and City Council.

Commemorative Tree Increase: Ben Askren stated last January we voted to increase the fee for the commemorative trees and were asked to do it again by the Mayor.

MOTION: The Tree Commission recommended raising the fee to purchase a commemorative tree to \$600.00.

Jim Vaca moved: Jim Tomko seconded and the motion passed 6-0 with a voice vote.

Commemorative Bench Increase: Deborah Davis stated it has also been suggested we increase the fee of the bench due to the fee we use now not covering the cost of purchase and cement pad.

MOTION: The Tree Commission recommended raising the fee to purchase a commemorative bench to \$1,0000.

Jim Vaca moved: Laurena Entsminger seconded and the motion passed 6-0 with a voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

Calendar Review: The Committee reviewed the calendar and made appropriate changes. Tree City USA will be held in Avon Lake on May 8th this year.

The Commission decided to have a little pot luck for the retiring secretary at the Moebius Nature Center for the May 15th meeting.

Tree Preservation Ordinance: Mr. Askren stated he has discussed this with the new Director Laura Holman, and Laura would provide updates as they are available.

Tree Museum Update: Ben Askren stated the grant was finalized and we were in compliance. There are about 425 trees in the ground and they are doing well except for just a few. 41 post to hold "Family" signs will be installed in the winter. There are a few more trees that will need to be purchased in the spring.

Ben Askren stated he will be having student volunteers from the high school who are interested in horticulture help him do the research on each tree so that 200 "Species" signs and posts will be ready by the end of spring.

There are a few water issues that will need to be addressed in the spring, and he is having trouble with the deer hurting the trees so he is spraying the areas and trees affected.

ARBORIST REPORT:

November Storm:

A late wind storm on November 4th played havoc on Aurora and surrounding communities. About 3600 cubic yards of brush were generated from the storm. Comparatively, our street trees only received minimum damage, with only 8 trees needing to be removed in the subdivisions. We removed several trees along W Pioneer and will have trees replanted this spring in the open spaces.

There is still clean-up needed to be done on City owned property behind 503 Fox Tail Trail.

Fall Tree Planting:

Peterman Landscaping planted 20 trees in late November – 6 in the Yorkshire Dr. cul-de-sac and the rest were Commemorative Trees in the parks.

Spring Tree Planting:

Contractors will be planting 57 trees that are scheduled for this spring; 48 along the streets and 9 in the parks

Winter Tree Maintenance:

Contractors will be pruning 59 trees along Brandon Ct in Walden, 69 trees along Parkway Blvd East in the Reserves of Aurora, and 82 trees along the roads in the Hawthorn Estates. Another 300 young trees will be pruned in-house in Hawthorn Estates.

6 trees are scheduled to be removed by Northeast Tree Service along N. Bissel due to line of site issues or because they have died.

Tree Museum:

All forms, receipts and pictures needed to be compliant with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission's "Cultural Grant" have been submitted.

425 trees have been planted along the path over at the Hartman property. 41 post to hold "Family" signs will be installed this winter. The signs will be ready to hang by March.

Student volunteers are helping to do research on each tree so that 200 "Species" signs (and posts) will be ready by the end of spring.

There are areas that are holding water that need to be ditched

MISCELLANEOUS:

Jim Vaca stated he had heard on the news that there was an invasive species attacking the Hemlock trees and had Ben Askren heard about it. Ben stated it was like a larva (wooly adelgid) that has been attacking Hemlocks for a long time and has made its way to this part of the country. Sprays can be used to help prevent it. We don't have a lot of Hemlocks on city property to worry about.

Deborah Davis had the Commission vote on the pictures for the Landscape Awards. Every Category is not filled this year. It was a bad year for flowers and landscaping. She would like to get the corridor of beauty going next year on the historic district and was happy to see one of the contestants won.

ADJOURNMENT:

Jim Vaca moved to adjourn: Laurena Entsminger seconded and the meeting adjourned at 7:30p.m.

Deborah Davis – Chairman

Madeleine Marazzi – Recording Secretary