

Decorah Tree Board

February 27, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chairman Jeremy Brill in the City Council Chambers.

Present: Jeremy Brill, Mark Faldet, Dick Guilgot, Peter van der Linden, Street Commissioner Kevin Nelson, and City Forester Robin Sailor.

MOTION by Guilgot, second by Faldet: to approve the minutes of the January 2017 meeting as circulated. Motion carried.

The City Council will consider the Tree Board's recommended change in the amount of the tree voucher when the Council meets on March 6 (at 5:45 pm). Brill cannot attend and requested that another member of the Tree Board be present to answer any questions.

A new draft of the the brochure "Planting Trees in Decorah" was presented. One edit was noted. Nelson will update the voucher amount if approved by the Council and then print the brochure.

Sailor reported that ash trees are being removed in city boulevards as announced at the January meeting. Nelson reported that the ash trees are being taken to a local farmer, who is burning them.

The Montgomery Street planting will take place on April 22. Sailor has identified 94 planting sites and has been contacting property owners. So far, most property owners have been agreeable to the planting. She has yet to connect with the County Fairgrounds and Bruening Rock Products.

MOTION by Faldet, second by Guilgot: that Sailor and van der Linden select the trees for the Montgomery Street planting and order same. Motion carried. The trees will be ordered from Bailey Nurseries.

Sailor reported that Parks and Recreation is also considering a tree-planting event on April 22. Seedlings from the State Nursery will be distributed. There was consensus among the Tree Board that the two events are complementary but should be scheduled at different times.

Tree Board, Feb. 27 meeting, continued

According to Sailor, most homeowners who have lost ash in the boulevards are interested in having new trees planted. She would like to offer free replacements. It was noted that there may be extra trees from the Montgomery Street planting that could be used for this purpose.

To aid in re-greening the city, Faldet suggested that the Board consider buying trees in quantity and giving these to homeowners on a first-come, first-served basis. Some homeowners would need assistance in planting.

Meredith Borchardt from Trees Forever is encouraging the Board to apply for a tree-planting grant from the Branching Out program of Alliant Energy and/or the Power of Trees program of Black Hills Energy. Decorah will have a strong case for funding because of recent tree loss from storms and Emerald Ash Borer.

There was discussion about purchasing tree guards and watering bladders to protect newly planted trees and reduce watering trips. No action was taken.

Van der Linden prepared a draft news release about the tree survey and other Tree Board news, and circulated this by e-mail before the meeting. Additions and corrections were suggested. He will ask the City Manager to review and approve the revised release before circulation to the news media.

MOTION by van der Linden, second by Faldet: to move the Tree Board's meeting time to 5:30 pm on the last Thursday of each month. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Peter van der Linden, Secretary