

## **Decorah Tree Board**

April 26, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeremy Brill at 5:33pm in the City Council Chambers.

Present: Jeremy Brill, Mark Faldet, Peter van der Linden, City Forester Robin Sailor, and City Manager Chad Bird.

Brill reported a balance of \$2,032.80 in the Tree Board's budget. The cost of trees for this spring's planting have not yet been recorded.

Mark Lovelace from the A & J Petersburg agency reported on property owners' liability for ash trees infested with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The presence of EAB in a community does not in itself create extra liability for property owners. If a tree is obviously dead a property owner (or the City depending on the location of the tree) might have liability for damage caused by the tree. If an apparently healthy tree falls on a neighbor's property and causes damage, the tree's owner is not liable. The insurer for the damaged property pays the claim.

Sailor suggested that the Tree Board mail information to residents about EAB and who has responsibility for dead trees.

Bird reported on conversations with Street Commissioner Kevin Nelson about the possibility of the City assuming responsibility for pruning trees in boulevards. No decision has been reached.

According to Bird, if the City (Tree Board) plants trees in boulevards, and those trees are not requested/approved by adjacent property owners, the City is responsible for watering them. The City staff does not want this responsibility.

Bird suggested that the Tree Board may wish to participate in a working session with the City Council regarding the direction of the City Forestry program and financing tree removals on private property.

Upcoming events:

May 7. Tree Board presentation to City Council at 5:45 pm.

May 9. Trees for Kids planting at 10:00am at Swimming Pool Park and 10:30am at Vennehjen Park.

May 11. Tree pick up day. Volunteers are needed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:47pm.

Peter van der Linden, Secretary