

Minutes of February 2020 Decorah Tree Board

Date: 5:30 PM Thursday February 13, 2020

Present: Scott Timm (Chair), Dick Guilgot, Tina Hall, Mark Faldet, Brent Parker, and City Forester Sam Hogenson

Absent: Drew Pellett, Peter van der Linden

Approval of Nov Minuets: Motion to approve the Nov 14, 2019 meeting minutes – motion by Dick, seconded by Mark – passed unanimously.

1. **Tree City USA** - Scott congratulated group and thanked Dick for putting together the application. Decorah is once again a Tree City USA. There will be an event on Thursday, April 2nd, 2020 in Ankeny to receive recognition.
2. **Tree Removal/clarifications.** Several homeowners have ash trees not in right-of-way that need to be remove. One landowner can work with Alliance as the tree is near powerlines, but for other landowners paying for dead or dying and potentially property damaging trees is a dilemma. Several minutes of discussion on possible solutions -including maybe put on tax bill like sidewalk assessment or some type of loan. How to be fair or make sure money goes to those who truly need it is part of problem. The Tree Board recognized this is not an action item for this Board, but for City Council. Decision – Scott will discuss matter with City Manager Chad Bird and report back at next meeting.
3. **Tree Removal Update.** Sam reported that there are 146 Ash trees left in City right-of-way. They are in the process of being marked for removal. Several are being treated by landowners and will not be cut. Sam indicated that there has been a lack of clarity with the current contract with a tree removal company used by the City, and that a new contract is being created and a bid meeting will be held soon to seek bids for a firm to assist in tree removal. The trees being removed are mostly taken to the City compost site and the new contract will specific that the tree sections will not be longer than 12 feet. The Tree Board will be notified when the bid meeting is to be held.
4. **Replacement Planting.** Sam stated that 43 people will replant and that we currently have \$6,227.69 in our budget. Noting that all the tree grants have cut back and that the application for the tree grant is now not due until November, the Tree Board will need to make do with this amount or figure out how to raise some money in the interim. The Board discussed several ideas for fund raisers such as:
 - Round up at Coop – Scott to talk to Dave Lester (there is an application)
 - Round up at Fairway
 - Ask Decorah Bank to match Coop or Fairway – Mark to talk to Bank.

Board discussed the timing of when to order trees and that often more local trees are more expensive – can get more trees from non-local. Board recognized need to try to balance quality, with best use of funds, while trying to buy locally. Often not very possible to meet all three criteria. The Board noted that Earth Day is April 22 and Arbor Day is April 24 both would make a good time for a Round-up Week. There is an a write up that already is available about why we need to replace trees.

The Board has been contacted by the Luther Football team again. The players could be used for a tree planting in early May – like the successful event last year.

Mark made a motion to approve \$5,000 now to be spent on ordering trees, Brent seconded motion and the motion passed unanimously. This leaves us with about \$1,200 until July. Sam will check to

see what supplies we may need to do a tree planting this April – stakes etc. Note we do not need water bags – have over 80 of them available.

5. **Forester's Report.** Sam gave the board a handout that he developed that is a permit for all tree removal companies that operate in the City. All companies will need to fill out the permit. This will better track and monitor those removing trees in the City and give Sam some recourse if follow-up is needed. The Board asked if Sam is going to any meetings or conferences and that Sam should be prepared to ask for funding from the Board for professional development classes. Sam will be going to a Shade Tree planting workshop.
6. **8th Grade Planting.** Brent reported that his daughter's middle school class is preparing to plant over 100 trees somewhere in the county/city. Brent will talk with the teacher/coordinator to find out how the Tree Board can be involved and perhaps direct where the trees are planted.
7. **Dates for Next Meetings.** Next meetings will be March 26th, April 9th, and if needed April 30th.

Adjourned: The Board adjourned at 6:32 pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Mark and seconded by Dick – it was passed unanimously.