

TREE BOARD

February 3, 2020

The Tree Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Executive Conference Room on the 3rd day of February 2019, at 4:00 P.M.

ITEM 1, being:

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Lavastida, Spain, Tedder-Loffland and Winegardner

Absent: Members Janaway and Huffman (one vacant position)

City Officials: Tim Vermillion, City Forester
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

ITEM 2, being:

APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 2, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Member Fagin made the motion and Member Spain seconded to approve the minutes. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Lavastida, Spain, Tedder-Loffland and Winegardner

NAY: None

ITEM 3, being:

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Member Lavastida made the motion and Member Fagin seconded to approve the agenda. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Lavastida, Spain, Tedder-Loffland and Winegardner

NAY: None

ITEM 4, being:

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Menzie said he and his daughter are still handing out prizes to the winners of the Tree Story Contest and should get them delivered soon. He said they are trying to schedule a time where they can go to a school assembly when a parent(s) can attend.

Member Fagin said he will begin setting up a booth at the 2nd Friday Art Walk when the weather gets better, hopefully in April.

Earth Day is Sunday, April 19th at Reaves Park. Chairman Menzie asked Staff to put Earth Day on the March 2nd agenda so the Board can discuss this year's activities.

Mr. Tim Vermillion, Forester, said he ordered and potted 25 American Elm Survivor seedlings (from the survivor tree that withstood the 1995 Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing) and the Mayor will help plant one of them on April 17th at a park to be determined later. He said he had to order a bundle of 25 and is not sure where the remaining 24 seedlings will go at this time.

ITEM 5, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING BERRY ROAD TREES AND VEGETATIVE MANAGEMENT OF RIGHTS OF WAY

Several Tree Board Members attended a Ward 2 Public Meeting on December 18, 2019. Mr. Tim Vermillion, City Forester, gave a presentation at the meeting on the spirit of the Tree Ordinance, the social impacts of losing a tree canopy or other important trees in a community, the difficulty of cutting the central line of certain trees, and the importance of keeping the electricity on. He also discussed tree issues, such as over-pruning and insects.

Mr. Clifford Chastain with OEC also attended the Ward 2 Public Meeting and addressed questions concerning moving power lines underground (maintenance, cost, outage times, etc.). Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, brought up the fact that many other communities across the country pay more, specifically to have underground lines installed.

Mr. Vermillion said several homeowners have accepted OEC's offer to have the trees removed. He said there has been some controversy and is an agenda item on the City Council Study Session tomorrow evening, Tuesday, February 4th at 5:30 p.m. Member Tedder-Loffland asked if would be safe to bury the electric lines and Chairman Menzie said yes, the electric lines would be buried well below the tree root(s) which are about two feet deep. Mr. Vermillion said the trees in question along Berry Road are not in good shape and felt boring and burying the electric line would not be particularly good for the trees. Chairman Menzie said the trees under the electric lines along Berry Road should be removed and Mr. Vermillion agreed. Chairman Menzie said 16 of the 17 homeowners want the trees removed; however, some people say another removal would not be good. He said replanting a vigorous tree would be better for the environment as well as look better than the trees currently along this area. Mr. Vermillion said the cost to bury electric lines is approximately \$750,000 to \$1 million per mile. He said most of the trees in this area have been declared as "at risk" trees and Oklahoma Electric Cooperative (OEC) has agreed to help replant any tree that is removed as well as pay a fine (as indicated in the Tree Ordinance). Mr. Vermillion said nine (9) tree species have been selected to replace/replant any tree that is removed.

Member Fagin felt it is part of the Tree Board's work to help explain the procedure of the tree removal and educate people on the Tree Ordinance. Member Spain asked if there are going to be more trees to be planted than are being removed and Mr. Vermillion said yes.

Mr. Vermillion said he has ordered some door hangers to put on front doors. Member Spain asked whether pictures of the trees that can be replanted can be included on the door hangers and Mr. Vermillion said yes, pictures of trees are already printed on the door hangers. Mr. Vermillion said the University of Oklahoma (OU) Environmental Organization will assist him with the replanting trees and Member Fagin said he would like to volunteer as well.

ITEM 6, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE TREE PHOTO CONTEST

Member Tedder-Loffland said she and Members Fagin and Lavastida are on the Tree Photo Contest Sub-committee and continue to work on the specifics regarding the Tree Photo Contest. She said the sub-committee has contacted The Depot as site for showing the tree photos and the Norman Public Library has given tentative permission to show the photos there as well. Member Tedder-Loffland said Stash is another possibility; however, that venue may be a too small – depending on the number of entries submitted.

Member Lavastida said the showing/displaying of the photos would get a lot of traffic if the Board could nail down a date for the Tree Photo Contest and have it coincide with the 2021 Norman Music Festival. She said time may be limited and wondered if the Norman Public Library would be a better location for the showing. Member Lavastida said it would be great to announce the Tree Photo Contest at the 2020 Earth Day Festival scheduled on April 19, 2020. Member Tedder-Loffland agreed and said an announcement and information could also be put on the City's website. Chair Menzie asked whether applicants would mail their photos and Member Tedder-Loffland said photos could be submitted digitally.

Member Tedder-Loffland said she can sent a jot.form that can be uploaded to the City's website. She said categories are still trying to be determined and asked the Board their thoughts on limiting the number of entries per person, i.e., two per category, etc. Member Fagin felt like entries should not be limited since the contest has been dormant for a few years. Member Tedder-Loffland said if entries are not limited, we may not have to space to display all of the entries. Chair Menzie felt 10 entries per person would be plenty and Member Tedder-Loffland agreed, stating participants will pay a fee per entry.

Member Tedder-Loffland said three (3) classifications for the Tree Photo Contest have been discussed to include:

Professional: 18 or older and make more than 50% of annual income on their photography;

Amateur: 18 or older – have not made any money on their photography; and

Student: Under 18 years of age – have not made any money on their photography.

Member Tedder-Loffland asked if payments could be received online and Chair Menzie said the payments must go through the Norman Park Foundation. Mariah Menzie, Norman Park Foundation member, said she would check to see if online payments for the Tree Photo Contest can be done online. Member Tedder-Loffland said the sub-committee will continue to work out the details and bring back more information to the Board at the March 2nd meeting.

Member Fagin left the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

ITEM 7, being:

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY ORCHARD PROGRAM

Mariah Menzie and Wyatt Schmitz addressed the Board regarding the Norman Fruit Tree Initiative. Ms. Menzie said the program encouraged community involvement in the care of trees through the strategic planting of urban orchards and fruit tree giveaways. She said tree giveaways are already an established event in Norman and fruit trees could be incorporated in the giveaway.

Mr. Schmitz said community orchards are long term projects to have clusters of fruit trees in the community and said community orchards can be in public spaces to include parks, churchyards or schoolyards. He said the

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fruit trees are planted with the goal of providing the community with fresh, locally-grown organic fruit. Community orchards are established for a range of reasons to include:

- Encourage local residents to live more sustainably and grow their own food;
- Educate the community about how fruit grows;
- Bring fresh fruit to low-income communities;
- Grow food for food banks;
- Build community in a neighborhood; and
- Animate green spaces by providing activities for children and adults.

Ms. Menzie said her focus was on planting the community orchards in the City parks since they were irrigated. Mr. Tim Vermillion, Forester, mentioned the tri-angle piece of property located west of Andrews Park might be a good area.

Ms. Menzie felt Norman could benefit from a Community Orchard.

ITEM 8, being:

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Chair Menzie asked Staff to add Earth Day discussions to the March 2, 2020 agenda.

ITEM 9, being:

ADJOURNMENT

Member Tedder-Loffland made the motion and Member Winegardner seconded to adjourn. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Lavastida, Spain,
Tedder-Loffland and Winegardner

NAY: None

Passed and approved this _____ of _____ 2020

Don Menzie, Chairperson
