

Community Forestry Advisory Board Special Meeting Minutes

Location: Parks & Recreation Administration Office, 3131 O Street, Third Floor

Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Attendees: Members Present: Lachel Bradley-Williams, Kendall Weyers

Members Present via Zoom: Erin Chambers

Members Absent: Jessica Gieseke, Patty Nguyen, Mary Sweeney

Staff Members Present: Lynn Johnson, Lorri Grueber, Chris Myers, Roy Rivera, Kaylyn Nerverve, J.J. Yost

Members of the public present: Emma Craig

Agenda items

1. **Call to Order:** Lachel Bradley-Williams called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:** Roll Call was not made. Quorum was not met. Meeting proceeded as an information meeting.
3. **Updates:**

Lynn Johnson shared with the group a few member updates. Patty Nguyen and Mary Sweeney have resigned to the board. Both Patty and Mary have schedule conflicts and other commitments that will not allow for them to be members of the CFAB.

Lynn also announced that a new member will be joining the CFAB. Her name is Emma Craig. Her appointment goes before the City Council on Monday, September 20th, at which point she will be a formal member of the board, leaving one vacancy.

Erin Chambers will send a message to Cacey Wilken and see if she would be interested in joining the board.

4. **Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Events:** Lachel shared that the Events Committee has been meeting and discussing different opportunities to apply for funding for future tree distributions. The consensus at this point regarding applying or not, there was consideration given that other things are happening taking precedence on capacity. The committee has also started to consider what Arbor Day 2022 will look like and revisiting conversations about a potential event at Union Plaza. If it would be feasible and

what would it take. Lachel and the committee during their conversations also posed the question regarding applying for a tree distribution grant. Would a tree distribution event be held at the same location as the Arbor Day Celebration, or at another venue/time such as Star City Shores? The committee is open to comments and feedback. No major planning for an event this Fall. Mary welcomes any board members that would want to be a part of this committee.

- b. Policy:** Kendall mentioned that the biggest item is the 10-year Facilities Plan. J.J. Yost and Lynn carefully explained the plan to the policy committee. Kendall suggested the plan be discussed during the meeting. J.J. Yost shared with the group that Parks and Recreation Department develops a 10-year Facilities Plan, that takes a look at everything the department is responsible for. Everything the department manages, operates, and maintains. The plan identifies over course of the next 10 years, what will be needed to be done to keep facilities in good working order as well as other new facilities that need to be developed to meet the community growth and more capacity. The plan is updated every 2 years. The department does that to be ahead of the preparation of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which runs concurrent with the City's biennium operating budget. The 10-year plan serves as a guidance document to the CIP. The plan prioritizes, summarizes and details estimated costs. There is a section specifically for Community Forestry within the 10-year plan. The section was presented to the group during the meeting. The 10-year Facilities Plan is presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for reviews and adoption and would like to bring this section of the plan to the Community Forestry Advisory Board for review and endorsement. The section pertaining to the Community Forestry 10-year plan is available upon request. The entire 10-year Facilities Plan has been made available on the Parks and Recreation website for public review and comment. The department is accepting comments until October 8th. Motion for endorsement of the 10-year Facilities Plan section pertaining to Community Forestry will be brought forth during the December meeting, if quorum is met.

Kendall asked if the number of members present to achieve quorum changes with the number of members appointed. Lynn indicated that the Bylaws may consider quorum being met by the percentage of board members present. For example, if there are 5 members appointed, 3 would be needed for quorum. More information will be provided at the December meeting regarding quorum.

Kendall asked what the resolution was regarding the city budget. Lynn shared that what happened at the end of the process the city received \$3.5M of added revenue from the residential re-evaluation. Of the \$3.5M, \$170,000.00 was identified for contractual trimming. Lynn mentioned that the letter that was submitted and sent by the board to Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and the Lincoln City Council absolutely made an impact; additionally, there is a funding possibility from dollars that were not used during the fiscal year that will be carried over. The department will ask the Mayor to approve the use of this dollars for contractual tree removal. The injection of funding for contractual tree services will assist Community Forestry catch up with the current workload.

5. Appointment of Nominating Committee for 2022 slate of officers for action during December meeting.

Emma Craig arrived at about 4:30 pm as a guest

The Chair can appoint a nominating committee, which would bring forth a slate of offices to be voted on during the December meeting. The Nominating Committee can be composed of two members. Lachel Bradley-Williams appointed Erin Chambers and Kendall Weyers to the Nominating Committee.

6. Staff Reports

- a.** Denise Pearce has prepared a Grant Application to the Nebraska Environmental Trust for funding for contractual planting and establishment of new street trees to replace ash trees in low-moderate income neighborhoods and high rental occupancy neighborhoods. The department is

asking for funding to plant 500 trees over a year and half cycle. The amount requested is just under \$100,000.00 which would cover the planting cost and the match is coming from City funds, the funds would provide for the watering during the tree establishment period.

- b. The Nebraska Forest Service working with the National Forest Service received \$250,000.00 to fund a pilot program to provide funds to low-moderate income property owners to remove dead or dying trees, including ash trees. The program would be for %100.00 of the cost to remove the trees. One of the requirements is that the property owners would have to agree to plant a replacement tree on their property. The connection with the department would be that if the department has a tree distribution event in the Spring, that we can issue voucher or certificates to the property owners so that they can receive a tree during the distribution event and plant the tree on their property and fulfill the requirement. The program requires a \$1.00 for \$1.00 match. Urban Development would be the grant administrator and hoping to roll out the program maybe in October. This would be a two-year program.
- c. A group of local faith-based organizations reached out to the department regarding a program they developed called the Faith to Forest Program, which would be a one-year loan program and are encouraging local churches and faith groups to get involved. The program would have a couple of different focuses, one is to encourage people to plant trees in their own yards or participate in the volunteer tree planting program and the other would be to encourage people to donate to tree planting projects and third potential focus would be start a young tree pruning program which they call the Prairie Pruners program. The plan is to roll out this program in 2022.
- d. Lorri Grueber presented the quarterly Community Forestry report to the group. The report is available upon request. Lorri let the group know that this is a starting point for reports. The data provided is for work completed from April - June 2021 and some of the categories provide only partial data. Please use this report as a guide, it changes day to day with work performed and data entered in Beehive, the platform that is used to track asset and work management.
- e. Lorri shared with the group that Community Forestry has had several challenges throughout the past two years with six storms during 2020, equipment issues, and staff shortage. With all these challenges, Community Forestry has been put significantly behind. All of the crews have been instructed to work from their oldest, highest priority things to their current ones. A positive note is that now we have a third Trim Crew. We did not add staff, instead re-arranged the current staff. The third crew is working on trimming trees and reducing the backlog. This is also the crew that is treating ash trees. Alex is the member of the third crew, who has been recently promoted to Arborist II.
- f. Adam Klingenberg shared with the group an EAB response and recovery program status report. There was contracted removals at Meadow Lane, Broadview, and West Broadview, they removed about 60-65 trees. The stumps were removed. About three trees were treated. Adam also marked other trees for removal, letting homeowners know that the trees have been assigned for removal.
- g. Kaylyn shared that she just received bids back for the Fall tree planting that will be street trees. She received bids from Nebraska Nursery and Seeds of Life, the bid was awarded to Nebraska Nursery. This is a two-year contract in which they plant and water for two years. Nebraska Nursery will be starting as soon as next week. About 250 trees are planned, 200 of those will be street trees, the majority are good ash tree type replacement trees. Remaining trees will be going to mostly parks and Bradfield.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Notes prepared by Roy Rivera, Office Specialist.

Next meeting December 14, 2021