

Laurel Tree Board Meeting
Minutes
1-4-24
Council Chambers

Attendance: Walt Widdis, Matt Wheeler, Tom Canape, Lynn Peterson, LuAnne by phone.

Guest: Sheri Steckler (DNRC Urban Forestry employee from Helena) Resource for Tree USA application and available grants

1. Public Input
2. General Items.
 - a. November Minutes – approved – No meeting in December
 - b. Michelle updated on Tree city USA application (almost finished) Hopefully the Application will stay in files at the city so we can easily file each year. Kurt always has done the application and grant. IF we are a Tree City we can apply for \$850 otherwise only \$350
 - c. Guest Speaker – Sheri Steckler – our contact for the DNRC grants. Sheri explained that there are grants (no match) \$10-\$25K available up to 2/15. We'd need a plan (such as Aaron's South Pond map or the Riverside map). Urban forestry covers trees & shrubs in public areas such as parks but may cover boulevards depending on the city codes. Who is liable if a tree falls on a boulevard? Michelle will email the city attorney, Michelle Braukmann to get more information. The city has traditionally stayed away from maintenance on boulevard trees, leaving it to the property owner. The big question for Sheri is whether these projects cover irrigation. It covers tree trimming but what about tree removal. She will get back to us after speaking with Jamie (DNRC coordinator)
 - d. LuAnne invited Sheri to our Arbor Day to represent DNRC. We will also have Lydia Hesel. Sheri seemed interested to do a presentation on Urban forests, tree trimming.
 - e. Tom asked what trees do best in Laurel. LuAnne explained that the mature trees were taken out with the paving of Main Street and smaller varieties like Amur Maples, Canadian Cherry replaced them. These are not the best since they don't clear the sidewalks and require too much care. Honey Locust is traditionally the best variety with grates for watering. We still have 8 good ones, but of course they are aging. We have a Brandon Elm doing well too.

Old Business

1. Arbor Day: Tuesday, May 7th noon – Kiwanis Park –
2. Theme: Trees – Beauty & Opportunity by artist Quinn Butler, grade 7, School of Life
3. Lynn Peterson – 117 4th graders in 7 classrooms. She is asking the teachers for advice on the lunch. Past years we've done hot dogs, croissant sandwiches, sloppy joes, sack cold lunch. Last year so many brought their own lunches and we had so much left over. We'll send a flyer explaining this year and educate about zero waste picnic. SOW would like to continue to be involved.

Lynn will contact Zada Stamper about the bussing that day.

4. Shirts – Orange with green lettering. LuAnne will send the graphic (Walt designed) to Dynamic to get pricing. We did 47 shirts last year. Banner can't go on the pool fence so we'll need to consider what to do about that.
5. MUCFA – LuAnne asked Sheri if she could let Patrick know we are trying to become a member but we need an invoice and after two attempts we haven't received one yet. The state MUCFA workshop is in March. Sheri will send us the information.

Meeting Adjourned

Notes by Michelle Mize

Next Meeting: Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024 4:30 Council Conference Room (unless otherwise advised)