

TREE BOARD

October 2, 2023

The Tree Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met for a meeting appearing on the 2nd day of October 2023, at 4:05 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Menzie and Members Ackmann, Barksdale, Fagin, Janaway and Roux
Absent: Members Buthod and Tedder-Loffland
Tardy: Member Spain
City Officials: Colin Zink, City Forester
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

ITEM 1, being:

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

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

YEAH: Chair Menzie and Members Ackmann, Barksdale, Fagin, Janaway and Roux
NAY: None

ITEM 2, being:

CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CITY OF NORMAN TREE STORY AND ART CONTEST

Member Fagin said Member Tedder-Loffland put together the online Tree Story and Art Contest application and Staff will put the application and information on the City website, the Parks and Recreation Facebook page and in the monthly City of Norman newsletter. Member Fagin said he would update the flyer and send it to Peach Jar and to City Staff. Staff will email the flyers to the other Board Members.

Member Spain arrived to the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

Chair Menzie introduced the newest Tree Board Member, Colleen Roux. Member Roux said she was excited to start serving on the Board and asked how long we have done the Tree Story. Member Fagin said the Tree Board has done the Tree Story Contest annually for many years. He said the Board had been discussing an annual Tree Photo Contest for several months and decided to pair the Tree Photo Contest with the Annual Tree Story Contest. Member Fagin said the Board felt that encouraging participants to include an art piece/picture to the Annual Tree Story Contest could possibly bring in more participation. There will be two categories; the first category will be 4th and 5th grades and the second category will be 6th, 7th and 8th grades and the contest will run from October 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024. Chair Roux said when the flyers are updated; she will pass them out to her neighbors and suggested the other Members do the same in order to encourage more interest.

Member Spain said, since the Tree Story and Art Contest applications are online submittals, it would be great to start sending automatic notifications each year to the *past* tree story participants to inform them of the annual contest.

ITEM 3, being:

UPDATE REGARDING THE URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN AND TREE INVENTORY PROJECT

Mr. Colin Zink, City Forester, said Staff continues to work with Davey Tree Service to complete a tree ordinance update. He said Staff and Davey Tree Service have discussed creating City of Norman tree zones and leave residential trees out of the ordinance for now. He said Staff Davey Tree Service will be submitting a proposal soon and Staff, including the City Attorney's Office, would look it over and determine whether it is enforceable.

Member Fagin said new residential construction requires the homeowner to plant one tree in the front yard in order to receive their Occupancy Permit; however, many homeowners do not replace the tree if it dies. He understands the tree is on private property (front yard) but wondered whether the new tree ordinance could require/enforce the homeowner to replace the tree. Mr. Zink felt the Home Owner Associations could enforce that requirement instead of the City. Member Barksdale asked if the new tree ordinance would give a definition for *legal tree* and Mr. Zink said yes, based on the diameter size, etc. Mr. Zink said the Planning Department issues the Occupancy Permits and they recommend a list of certain/preferred trees; however, a preferred list might not be the best option since tree farms are coming out with new tree varieties all the time. Member Fagin suggested the tree ordinance include language about the "right tree-right place" rather than recommending a preferred tree list. Member Barksdale suggested, if possible, the City offer homeowners a new tree if they removed a "bad" tree, i.e., Bradford Pear trees.

ITEM 4, being:

REVIEW "WALK IN THE FOREST" EVENT HELD SEPTEMBER 23, 2023

Mr. Colin Zink, City Forester, said approximately 400 people attended the "Walk in the Forest" held Saturday, September 23rd, 2023 at Ruby Grant Park. He said the Parks and Recreation Department collaborated with the Oklahoma State Forestry Division (OSFD) and the event included a 90-minute walk throughout the forest areas of the park where various informational stations were be set up. Mr. Zink said participants learned about erosion, dendrochronology, water quality, invasive species, wildlife and more! Member Fagin said the OSFD promoted the event through public radio and on their website and City Staff put the event on the City website as well as the Parks and Recreation Facebook page.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Member Spain asked if Staff was interested in having an "Ask the Forester" event and Mr. Collin Zink, City Forester, said yes. Member Fagin suggested Mr. Zink set up during the Second Friday Art Walk and answer questions and educate the public about trees. Member Janaway suggested putting it on the City website and issue a press release. Member Fagin said he would check about submitting a community event (including the Tree Story and Art Contest) to KGOU.

Chair Menzie said he will give the "Friends of Tree" recognition award to Grant Rieger at the October 5, 2023 Park Board meeting and invited the Members to attend the meeting if possible.

Mr. Zink said the City is having a Free Tree Giveaway on November 3rd at Griffin Park. The trees were paid for through a combination of gifts from OEC electric company and First United Bank, along with funds available through the Parks and Recreation Department and the Utilities Division of Environmental Resilience and Sustainability. The event will run from 9am to 4pm, or until all trees are given away.

Residents must bring some form of identification of them as a Norman Resident, and can choose from four different species (shumard oak, little gem magnolia, brandywine maple and prairie fire crabapple).

Staff reminded the Board there is not a November Tree Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

YEAH: Chair Menzie and Members Ackmann, Barksdale, Fagin, Janaway, Roux and Spain

NAY: None

Passed and approved this 4th of December 2023

Don Menzie, Chairperson


