

SMITHFIELD CITY TREE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

Attending: Jeff Barnes, Deon Hunsaker, Marion Murray, Kayo Robertson, Jennifer Clark, Jack Greene Excused- Diane Despain No contact info for Diane Brown (We now have this information from our city recorder Justin Lewis)

1. Review Tree City USA status- **Jeff has been diligent in completing the annual reports to maintain our Smithfield Tree City USA status. He is willing to continue writing the annual report.**
2. Tree Inventory- tree management plan for Tree City USA- **Jeff and others have kept detailed records on both trees added (including residential), and trees removed. This is required for the Tree City annual report. Jack commented on the excellent Tree Management Plan written by arborist Ben Harris. He would like to get a digital copy on the City's website on Tree Committee link. Jeff said it's time to update the Tree Management Plan written in 2017.**
3. Review Requests to remove trees along city streets- **this generated considerable discussion regarding private ownership and responsibility for "Street Trees", those planted in the city owned right-of-way along city streets. Deon explained residents are responsible for caring for these trees, including pruning and removal. The tree committee is responsible for issuing the permit to the property owner regarding tree removal. One property owner has made a request, who will be visited before deciding on removal, or pruning the trees for tree health and property safety.**
4. Review Trees on grant application. **Jeff announced the grant he wrote has been awarded to the City. This generated considerable excitement- a busy fall ahead getting trees in the ground. Kayo will join Jeff to review the 26 trees that have been selected. The list may be altered depending on tree availability and suitability. Kayo inquired about tree size and survival rate. We will be purchasing smaller (1 ½-2" caliper) trees. Also, concerns regarding a warmer, dryer climate.**
Jeff and Jack will meet tomorrow afternoon to begin detailing desired locations and schedule for planting, recruiting volunteers, and parsing out committee assignments. Several city staff will be involved in the process- especially parks, recreation, and public works directors. Deon mentioned the need for shade trees along the west end of Forester Acres.
Jennifer mentioned "Just Serve" as a volunteer recruiting tool.
Kayo thought it may be worth exploring the possibility of establishing a tree nursery given the high cost of purchasing trees.
Jeff hopes to establish better communication between the Tree Committee and the Council. One example, a row of honey locust has been removed by the City without consulting the tree committee. Better communication and awareness of the many values trees offer to the city and its residents may improve this relationship.
5. Budget- How much, how spend? **\$1500 is currently in our Tree Committee account. Jeff mentioned in the past \$150 has been given to the elementary schools for the Arbor Day**

poster competition plus about \$500 for a tree to be planted by the schools. Marion suggested purchasing some items for the Smithfield Health Days booth.

6. Memorial trees need care- drip system- **tabled**
7. Plans for Arbor Day- **tabled**
8. Plan for 2023 Arbor Day Poster Contest with Elementary Schools. **Tabled**
9. Health Days booth? Parade? **Tabled**
10. City Newsletter column on healthy tree tips, or include short message on monthly utility billing. **All agreed we should pursue this with the Council, including Deon. Deon had written an article for the newsletter on water use- unsure if it was printed on the City Facebook or elsewhere.**

THANKS TO ALL FOR A VERY PRODUCTIVE AND ENJOYABLE MEETING (AND DEON FOR WORKING OVERTIME AS A COUNCIL MEMBER!)