

CITY OF OLNEY TREE BOARD
OLNEY CITY HALL
FEBRUARY 24, 2016
7:00 P.M.

AGENDA #1 “CALL TO ORDER” The meeting of the Tree Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 300 S. Whittle Ave., Olney, Illinois, with Brandy McKinney presiding.

AGENDA #2 “ROLL CALL” The following Tree Board members were present: Paige Abell, Bill Caulfield, Brandy McKinney, Chris Simpson and Kelsie Sterchi.

AGENDA #3 “APPROVE MINUTES OF TREE BOARD MEETING ON NOVEMBER 10, 2015” Mr. Simpson moved to approve the Tree Board minutes from November 10, 2015, seconded by Mrs. Abell. A majority affirmative voice vote was received to approve the minutes.

AGENDA #4 “PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS” This item was taken up after Agenda Item #5.

John Joyce and Ted Marshall, owners of J&J Trailer Court, were present. Mr. Marshall approached the Board to speak, and handed out a map of the current J&J Trailer Court.

Mr. Marshall explained that he and Mr. Joyce had recently purchased the trailer court. Among many improvements being made, they wished to see improvement of the green space for aesthetic, wildlife and privacy reasons. With this in mind, Mr. Marshall hoped that the Tree Board could provide recommendations and/or inform him of when tree purchases may be made so they could order in with the City.

Mr. Marshall noted a few things to consider which included a creek area, easements and the nearby railroad track. The trailer court encompassed approximately eight acres.

Mrs. Sterchi felt that the Tree Board would have no issue with providing a recommendation for the trailer court or even passing along useful information. Mrs. McKinney noted a few websites that could be useful for Mr. Marshall and Mr. Joyce. E-mail addresses and phone numbers were given for correspondence. Mrs. McKinney also added that a couple of the Tree Board members could do a walk-through of the area and/or meet with Mr. Marshall and Mr. Joyce along the way.

Mr. Marshall requested a tentative recommendation timeline of 30 to 90 days. The Board felt that could be accomplished.

AGENDA #5 “ELECTION OF A CHAIR” This item was taken up before Agenda Item #4.

Mr. Caulfield moved to elect Brandy McKinney as Chair of the Tree Board, seconded by Mrs. Sterchi. A majority affirmative voice vote was received. The motion carried.

AGENDA #6 “TREE PLANTING RECOMMENDATIONS”

6-A “Marilyn Holt Tree Planting” Mr. Caulfield had spoken to RCHS’ principal, Mr. LeCrone on the possibility of having a tree planted in honor of retired Superintendent Marilyn Holt. Mr. Caulfield reported that Mr. LeCrone had expressed great interest in the proposal.

Mr. Simpson was concerned that there did not seem to be a good location at the high school for placement of a tree. It was determined that the only feasible area would be at the southeast entrance of the school. Mr. Simpson also indicated that this area was, however, a low and wet area. He did feel that problem could be remedied. If planted, an ornamental tree should be considered.

Mrs. Sterchi asked if anyone knew of a possible donor for the tree and other necessary expenses, since it would be placed on property not owned by the City. Mr. Simpson suggested that ERFAE or the teachers’ union could be potential donors. He would research this further.

Mrs. McKinney and Mr. Caulfield felt that a cost of \$50.00 to \$75.00 would be expected for purchase of an ornamental tree.

It was questioned if a plaque would be placed in front of the tree describing the donation. Mr. Caulfield commented on his past recommendation of having the City provide a certificate for trees they plant in honor of someone. It was determined that since the Marilyn Holt tree would be planted on non-City property, that the donor could provide whatever they wished.

For quotes on trees, planting, mulch, tree guards, water bags, and stakes, Mrs. McKinney would be in touch with Runyon’s Nursery, Mrs. Sterchi would be in touch with Keller’s Landscaping and Nursery, and Mrs. Abell would be in touch with Green Acres Nursery and Landscaping. Krajec Landscaping had already provided Mr. Caulfield with a few quotes.

6-B “Appropriate Trees for Grassy Areas Downtown” In the past, interest had been expressed in helping the appearance of downtown by planting trees. It was suggested that the Tree Board could promote and aid in such planting for businesses that would like to have trees on their property. Since that discussion, it was determined that more opportunity was available on City right-of-way along Main Street. Main Street trees would not be a part of the sidewalk, nor should they be planted near sidewalk, curbs, or too close to intersections.

The Olney Municipal Code had a listing of appropriate street trees. Crape Myrtles had been discussed as options in the past, but were not listed in the Code. Mrs. Sterchi had asked Street Department Tom Umfleet if he had any issues with the Crape Myrtle being added to the Code, and he had no issue.

Mrs. Sterchi asked if the Board should consider a goal of five plantings to start with at specific locations. This way, something tangible could be presented to the Council for their approval.

Mrs. McKinney had been receiving pledges from those who would be interested in help funding such a project. Two donors pledged \$300.00, and another donor pledged \$500.00 contingent upon a total of \$1,000.00 having already been pledged for the project. Mrs. Sterchi added that \$1,000.00 of funds from the Park Department were still available for use of trees. She had spoken

with Park Department Supervisor Frank Bradley, and he had indicated that his department had no plans to make any expenditures out of that line item this fiscal year.

Mrs. Sterchi asked if the donors had any additional requirements such as specific placement or having their names near the trees. Mrs. McKinney replied that the donors' monies should only be used for tree planting purposes and never absorbed into the City's General Fund.

Mr. Simpson asked if there was any portion of Main Street that the City felt strongly that there should be no plantings. Other than near concrete, Mrs. Sterchi recommended not planting on W. Main Street for a year or so due to the upcoming W. Main Watermain Replacement Project. She also noted that if the City at any time needed to remove the tree to perform work or due to it being a danger or diseased, the City had the right to do that at its discretion.

Mrs. Sterchi then asked who would be planting the proposed trees along Main Street. Mrs. McKinney replied that volunteers had expressed interest in helping, and that members of the Tree Board could also assist. If planted by a landscaping company, a guarantee would be supplied for approximately a year. No guarantees would be supplied if planting by anyone but the landscaper. Mrs. Sterchi felt like there was enough money pledged to cover planting fees for a professional to perform the work. If the Council supported the project, she wanted to be sure the project was done the right way with the best possible outcome.

Mrs. McKinney recalled the pine trees that were improperly planted at Musgrove Park by a professional near Bridgeport. It was recommended not to use that company for any future City tree plantings. She also wanted to make very clear the Board's planting specifications to whomever would be planting the trees.

Different types of street trees were discussed by the Board for Main Street.

Mrs. McKinney moved to recommend that the City Council add the Crape Myrtle, Dogwood, and Redbud trees to the Code as approved street trees, to professionally plant five trees along Main Street per Code guidelines by choosing from Goldenrain Trees, Crape Myrtles, Redbuds, Dogwoods, and Flowering Crab Trees, seconded by Mrs. Abell. A majority affirmative voice vote was received. The recommendations would be made to the Council at the March 14, 2016, City Council meeting.

6-C "Finalize 2016 Proposed Plantings/Plans" It was determined that the proposed Main Street plantings would be utilized as the Spring planting plans. In discussion for the Fall planting plans, interest was still being received for the implementation of a Tree Identification Park for educational purposes.

6-D "Street Tree Replacement Program" Prior to the meeting, Mrs. Sterchi had e-mailed a proposed cost sharing tree replacement program that she had put together by using ideas and recommendations from other municipalities. The program would offer a selection of trees, through an application process, that could be planted along streets in City right-of-way. The general idea would be that if residents were interested in having a tree planted alongside their property, the City would reimburse them up to \$75.00 of expenses for the planting of the tree.

Mrs. Sterchi noted that the program did not need to be approved at this evening's meeting, but that she wished for the Board to note aspects they did and did not like in regard to the plan. The Board also held two vacancies and perhaps the new coming Board members should be able to review the plan before making recommendations to Council.

Reviewing the Code, Mrs. McKinney commented that she wished to eliminate "Street Department" in the proposed plan and replace it with "Tree Board" per Section 12.08.050 of the Code detailing responsibilities of the Tree Board. Recalling that the Tree Board had lapsed for a few years, Mrs. Sterchi felt that both the Tree Board and the Street Department should be listed. This way, if the Tree Board should have any issues along the way, the Street Tree Replacement Program could still continue. She felt that the Street Department would want to be consulted on proposed plantings, but that they most likely would be more than willing to have the Tree Board execute.

In the proposed plan, Mrs. Sterchi listed the small street trees that were shown in the Code. The Tree Board recommended removing the listing of any of the globe varieties of Ash, European Ash, Globe Blue Ash, and Globeheaded European Ash from the listing in the proposed plan due to the recent influx of risk concerning the Emerald Ash Borer.

AGENDA #7 "175th ANNIVERSARY"

7-A "Re-Consider Recommendation for City Flower" At the last Tree Board meeting, the Board wished to recommend naming the Knockout Rose as the official City Flower in honor of the 175th anniversary year. Since that time, Mrs. Sterchi had received some negative feedback regarding the upcoming recommendation from a couple of members of the community. They strongly felt that the City flower should be native to Illinois. With this thought in mind, Mrs. Sterchi wondered if the Board wished to reconsider their recommendation.

The Board did not mind reconsidering the recommendation. Many different Illinois wildflowers were discussed. Difficulty arose in choosing a favorite to recommend. Mrs. McKinney felt that polling the public using the Board's top favorites as options should be considered. From there, the public's favorite could then be voted on by the Tree Board for recommendation to the City Council.

Mrs. Sterchi would create various options for pollers to submit their vote on choosing from the following wildflowers: Butterflyweed, Garden Phlox, Blazing Star, and Purple Coneflower.

AGENDA #8 "GENERAL DISCUSSION"

8-A "Proposed Attendance Policy By-Law" A past Tree Board member had only attended one meeting during their time "serving" on the Tree Board. As such a lack of attendance is not productive or useful, the Board wished to consider establishing a by-law for attendance.

Mrs. McKinney suggested that Board members should attend at least 50% of meetings per year. At the end of the year, attendance could be evaluated to see if member contribution is sufficient.

Mrs. McKinney moved to add an attendance by-law for Tree Board members to attend at least 50% of meetings per year with an attendance evaluation at the end of the year, seconded by Mr. Simpson. A majority affirmative voice vote was received.

8-B “Vacancy Recommendations” The Tree Board came up with three names to recommend to the Mayor to choose to fill the two open vacancies. Mrs. McKinney noted interest of Andrea McDowell and Kathy Davis to serve on the Board. For the third recommendation, Mr. Simpson would be in touch with Mrs. Sterchi to confirm the person’s interest. It was hoped that the vacancies would be filled by the Mayor at the next Council meeting.

AGENDA #9 “SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE” The next meeting of the Tree Board would be held on March 23, 2016, at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA #10 “ADJOURN” Mrs. Sterchi moved to adjourn the Tree Board meeting, seconded by Mrs. Abell. A majority affirmative voice vote was received. The Tree Board meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Kelsie J. Sterchi
City Clerk