

CITY OF OLNEY TREE BOARD
OLNEY CITY HALL
APRIL 17, 2014
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 Chairman Greg Eyer presiding.

AGENDA #2 “ROLL CALL” The following Tree Board members were present: Greg Eyer, Bill Caulfield, Brandy McKinney, Chris Simpson and Kelsie Sterchi. Ms. McKinney exited the meeting at 7:03 p.m. She returned to the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

AGENDA #3 “APPROVE MINUTES OF TREE BOARD MEETING ON NOVEMBER 19, 2012” Greg Eyer moved to approve the Tree Board minutes from November 19, 2012, seconded by Brandy McKinney. A majority affirmative voice vote was received to approve the minutes.

AGENDA #4 “PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS” No one from the public was present.

AGENDA #5 “OLD BUSINESS” The board was not aware of any new business that needed addressed.

AGENDA #6 “DEVELOP LIST OF POTENTIAL BOARD MEMBERS TO BE APPOINTED BY MAYOR” The Tree Board wanted to put the board at full strength by having another two members appointed. The Code allowed for seven members on the board.

Brandy McKinney suggested Paige Abell and Audrey Jensen. Ms. Jensen was only 15 years old but was a frequent visitor to local parks and Mrs. McKinney felt that Ms. Jensen could provide good information, as she would physically be out in the areas often. Kelsie Sterchi was unsure of an age restriction for boards and commissions. She would check with City Manager Taylor to see if there were any limitations. If the Council was unsure about appointing Ms. Jensen, she could still attend the meetings, but as a member of the public, to give opinions and participate in some discussion.

Chris Simpson suggested Bill Page. Greg Eyer thought Mike Leaf would be a good fit as he was in the tree service business. Mr. Eyer also thought William Alexander might have interest in being a part of the board.

Tree Board members gave the contact information of the suggested members to Kelsie Sterchi who would be in contact to see of their interest. The names of those interested and/or those who were able to be contacted would be considered for appointment by Mayor Vaughn.

Mike Leaf - Tree Service in the phone book
William Alexander - 838-0799
Paige Abell - 838-0065
Audrey Jensen - 393-6200

The board received an affirmative voice vote to accept the list of names provided for potential appointment to the Tree Board.

AGENDA #7 “DEVELOP MISSION STATEMENT FOR TREE BOARD” The Tree Board wanted to have an official statement easily depicting their purpose and goals. Discussion would be had at the meeting, but Mr. Eyer requested that members bring stronger ideas to the next meeting.

Mr. Eyer asked each member on the board why they wanted to be a part of the board. Mr. Eyer recalled that the Tree Board originated when a grant was applied for that specified the need for a Tree Board. Mr. Eyer then volunteered to be a part of the needed Tree Board. Additionally, Mr. Eyer had seen the deforestation of Olney, especially along Main Street, and wanted to see the issues improved.

Mr. Caulfield was curious about Ameren. Trees around power lines needed to be trimmed. He wondered if they would contribute financially to a tree planting mission if the trees planted would not be invasive to power lines. Mr. Eyer thought it would be prudent to contact other communities to see if Ameren worked with them in that way.

Mr. Caulfield was also curious about how the board could receive revenue to plant trees in a way that would not be a burden to taxpayers. Mr. Eyer replied that in the past he had found that people were more than willing to donate trees. There was a gentleman who had donated \$6,000 for Musgrove Park trees. That same gentleman would like to contribute more money if the trees would be planted properly moving forward. The contributor wanted to remain anonymous.

Mr. Caulfield went on to say that he wanted to be a part of the Tree Board because he would like to see more trees planted. A community full of trees seemed to be more inviting and attractive. Mr. Eyer volunteered that an inviting downtown was a significant way to promote businesses and to have people spend their dollars downtown. It seemed Olney had become more vacant and barren. It was understood that the planters in front of the businesses were up to the businesses to maintain. It seemed some were ignored, but Mr. Eyer thought that was something the Tree Board could offer to help with.

Mr. Eyer understood that being a part of the Tree Board was first an administrative function, but he was more than willing to be a “worker bee” in the community. Additionally, he felt focus should be taken on Musgrove Park because the area was mainly athletic fields. He wanted to see more green space. Trees could line Silver Street. There were no power lines in that area. The new drainage and retention areas at Musgrove Park would also be an ideal spot to plant some beautiful willow trees to help stabilize the soil.

Chris Simpson had noticed that pine trees had been planted near the area between the pond and residential area. He would like to see more hardwoods and native species of trees as it seemed Musgrove Park was almost exclusively basswoods and lindens.

Mr. Eyer suggested that based on Olney’s reputation as “Home of the White Squirrels,” it would be nice and would make sense to have a nut tree grove planted at some time.

Brandy McKinney stated that she wanted to be a part of the Tree Board because trees were of interest to her and as a parent of three active children, she saw a need for more trees in the park areas. There is lack of shade at Musgrove Park that made sitting through sporting events a struggle, especially during the summer months. During the heat, playground equipment also got very hot. She felt that people should enjoy being comfortable when out with their families.

Chris Simpson explained that his interest in participating on the Tree Board stemmed from his time spent in the field of biology. He was interested in seeing education put back into the community in regard to foliage. He mentioned that he had visited the campus at Eastern Illinois University and the trees there had name plates with a tri-fold brochure that noted the tree's common and scientific names as well as a description of the tree. Mr. Simpson would also be interested in seeing a walking tour established at the City Park. It would be his goal to create an interest in trees and having people be able to understand more about the different species and even to have more people be able to identify different trees. Mr. Eyer felt that the focus of education should be included in the Tree Board's mission statement.

AGENDA #8 “DISCUSSION: DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY OF TREE BOARD” The Tree Board wanted better understanding of their duties, responsibilities and authority. Kelsie Sterchi provided the board with a copy of Section 12.08 of the City of Olney Municipal Code that dictated some of those specifics. The Park Department would act as support. Mr. Eyer was worried about time that the Park Department would be able to give to help support any needs. Mrs. Sterchi made the board aware that there had been a recent creation of a Parks and Recreation Board. The Parks and Recreation Board along with the Park Department would be a good starting point for additional support. Mrs. Sterchi also worked at City Hall and would easily be able to seek the advice of the City Manager. She also suggested that a copy of meeting minutes go to the Parks and Recreation Board and Park Department. She would also suggest that a copy of the Parks and Recreation Board's minutes come to her for the Tree Board to view.

Brandy McKinney felt that some of the information in the Code could possibly be outdated. For example, she was not sure why an evergreen would not be permissible as a street tree. Mr. Eyer suggested highlighting areas in Section 12.08 of the Code that would need clarification or that would be suggested for potential adjustment.

Bill Caulfield offered that if he saw any problematic trees while on his mail route that he would note and evaluate it. He said that he had offered that to the Council in the past. After Mr. Caulfield noticed a tree in need of attention, the City would then follow up on it and if the tree was in fact a hazard, the City would remove it. The procedure Mr. Caulfield was told to follow was to fill out a tree evaluation and turn it into Belinda Henton at City Hall. The board was unsure how to revisit that procedure. Kelsie Sterchi would follow up on that and let the board know what she found out at their next meeting. Again, Greg Eyer offered to provide some man power, but Mrs. Sterchi was concerned with liability and would also ask the City Manager's advice.

AGENDA #9 “DISCUSSION: APPLICATION FOR TREE CITY USA DESIGNATION” Greg Eyer had mentioned a trip where he passed through Salem, Illinois and saw a very nice Tree City USA sign. The Tree City title seemed to be a point of pride that the community had. Mr. Eyer had spoken to Belinda Henton about how Olney could become a Tree City USA and at the time, the hangup was a requirement stating that there needed to be a two dollar per capita budget available

that Olney simply did not have. Since that time, Mr. Eyer found out that salaries of park workers would count towards that two dollar per capita requirement, so Olney was in good shape to meet that.

Additionally, Olney would need a Tree Board, a tree care ordinance and would need to have an Arbor Day activity and/or proclamation. Arbor Day was to be April 25 of 2014. The board needed to make a quick decision on an Arbor Day activity if they wanted to fulfill the requirements in 2014. Kelsie Sterchi offered to schedule an Arbor Day proclamation signing with Mayor Vaughn. Brandy McKinney offered to locate a tree that could be planted for Arbor Day. Mrs. Sterchi would also contact the Olney Daily Mail for both events.

Greg Eyer moved to schedule the Arbor Day activities, seconded by Kelsie Sterchi. A majority affirmative voice vote was received.

AGENDA #10 "NEW BUSINESS" There was no additional new business.

AGENDA #11 "ADJOURN" Greg Eyer moved to adjourn the Tree Board meeting and to schedule the next meeting to be on May 21, 2014, seconded by Bill Caulfield. A majority affirmative voice vote was received. The Tree Board meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.