

TREE BOARD
May 1, 2017

The Tree Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Study Session Room on the 1st day of May 2017 at 4:00 P.M.

ITEM 1, being:

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Guistoizzi, Huffman, Janaway, Lavastida, Spain and Winegardner

Absent: Member Grisso

City Officials

Present: Councilmember Hickman, Ward 4
Councilmember Karjala, Ward 2
Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation
Karla Chapman, Admin Technician IV

Others Present: Rebecca Bean, Representing "Save Our Trees"

ITEM 2, being:

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 3, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

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

YEAH: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Guistoizzi, Huffman, Janaway, Lavastida, Spain and Winegardner

NAY: None

ITEM 3, being:

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Member Winegardner made the motion and Member Huffman seconded to approve the agenda. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Guistoizzi, Huffman, Janaway, Lavastida, Spain and Winegardner

NAY: None

ITEM 4, being:

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Menzie said Tree Tips have been uploaded to the City website and requested Staff to bring the 8 or 10 announcements so the Board can update them.

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Member Fagin reminded the Board about the 2nd Friday Art Walk and said he will be setting up a booth at the event next week to hand out literature and give educational information. He said the booth will possibly be behind Stash and welcomed the other Board Members to join him.

Member Huffman said the Board can select a Norman neighborhood and designate it as a Tree Legacy neighborhood. He said the neighborhood can be an older addition with established trees or a newer neighborhood that has planted or is planting a lot of trees. Member Huffman asked if Member Janaway would assist him and Member Janaway said yes, stating some of the new additions are typically empty and should be encouraged to plant trees in order to preserve 35% tree canopy in Norman. Chairman Menzie suggested designing and obtaining a new sign for the Tree Legacy neighborhood; one that is similar to the Cambridge Addition.

ITEM 5, being:

EARTH DAY

Earth Day was held on April 23rd at Reaves Park and everyone agreed it was a huge success. The weather was great and there was a lot who came out for the event. Member Huffman planted a sycamore tree in the Arboretum with the help of Girl Scout Troup #303.

ITEM 6, being:

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Chairman Menzie said he would accept the Arbor Day Proclamation on behalf of the Tree Board at the April 11th City Council meeting. Member Janaway asked whether there was a tree inventory for City parks and Chairman Menzie said such inventories are very expensive. Member Fagin said University of Oklahoma students may want to assist with a tree inventory.

Councilmember Hickman requested the Tree Board to look at the current tree ordinance and determine whether any amendments should be added. He said this is an important topic and suggested the Board “think outside of the box” in order to come up with different solutions for the various ongoing tree issues, i.e., utility companies trimming and/or cutting large trees while the City is trying to maintain and preserve the tree canopy.

Chairman Menzie said citizens need to be educated about what type of tree(s) should be planted under powerlines as well as have the mindset if they remove a tree a new tree could be replanted in its place. He felt if utility companies as well as Home Owners Associations (HOAs) would trim, prune, and/or remove trees on a five-year rotation it would be less of a visual impact on the community. Chairman Menzie said likewise, bad pruning can kill a tree.

Jud Foster said Staff would email the current tree ordinance to the Board before the June meeting so they will have time to look it over and bring back any amendments.

Councilmember Hickman said trees can co-exist in an urban area and felt the tree canopy in Norman needed to be maintained. He felt whether a utility company and/or a citizen

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removed a 28 inch diameter tree they needed to replace the tree with something other than just a sapling. Councilmember Hickman said Geographic Information Systems (GIS) could be used to identify and register trees. He said one possibility is to require homeowners wanting to remove a large and/or historic tree to obtain a permit before removing the tree. Chairman Menzie felt a City Forester was needed and Councilmember Karjala agreed. She felt the existing tree ordinance needed to be improved and said the City could put tree ordinance information on the website. Councilmember Karjala said the momentum of the recent tree removals could be used positively. She said any recommendations brought forward by the Tree Board would first go to a Council Committee and then to full Council for consideration. She felt the entire process might take three to four months.

Rebecca Bean felt that OEC and/or OG&E should be brought into the discussions and requested that we look at other cities to see how they handle this issue. Member Fagin felt there are a lot of gaps as to who can do what in the public right-of-ways.

ITEM 7, being:

ADJOURNMENT

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

YEAH: Chairman Menzie and Members Fagin, Guistozzi, Huffman, Janaway, Lavastida, Spain and Winegardner

NAY: None

Passed and approved this _____ of _____ 2017

Don Menzie, Chairperson
