

FORESTRY ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES – March 19, 2019

In attendance:

Greg Zenker	Doug Prchal	Amy Sakariassen	Erik Dietrich
Stan Churchill	Brett Gurholt	Christy Ames-Davis	Doug Wiles
Steve Mullen	Dave Mayer	Carolyn Godfread	

Absent:

Mitch Becker	Mark Zimmerman
--------------	----------------

The meeting was called to order by Steve Mullen at 12:15 p.m.

Approval of the minutes from the September 18, 2018 regular meeting of the FAB:

Steve called for approval of the minutes. Brett Gurholt motioned to approve, Doug Prchal seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Forestry update:

- Street Tree Pruning Contract – Beaver Creek Tree Service began the first year of a potential 3-year contract in 2018. They were able to prune 578 trees. They were good to work with and it was agreed to continue on for the 2nd year of the contract. This year they have begun work in the area between North 19th Street and North 26th Street and East Divide Ave and Interstate 94.
- Stump Grinding Contract – Kappel Tree Service began the first year of a potential 3-year contract in 2018. We had a budget of \$7,000 which allowed for grinding of 40 stumps averaging 36 inches per stump. Kappel has agreed to continue with the second year of their contract and will start this spring. The budget for 2019 stump grinding is \$14,000.
- Partners In Planting (PIP) - \$6,350 was received in donations for 2018 and rebates for the year totaled \$19,938 (266 trees). The City will match up to \$10,000 in donations each year. We were able to reach into the PIP surplus we have to bring up the donated amount to \$10,000. Even with reaching into the surplus we ran out of rebate money in October and had to turn away requests from an additional 20 properties (61 trees).
The rebate for 2018 was increased to half of the cost of the tree up to \$100 per tree with a maximum rebate of \$700 per property. The tree does have to be planted a proper depth and be an approved species to receive the rebate. Rebate amounts will remain the same for 2019.
There was a brief discussion concerning builders receiving rebates and if a limit should be imposed on the amount of rebates one person or business can receive. The consensus was to continue distributing rebates on a first come, first serve basis. The idea of the program is to encourage boulevard tree planting and that goal is being achieved.
- 2018 Pruning & Removals – Approximately 2,700 street trees were pruned in 2018. This is 300 trees short of our annual goal. Forestry lost one full time arborist in 2018 and have been unable to fill the position due to budget cuts. With the additional full time arborist our goal would have been achieved. 181 street trees were removed in 2018.
- 2018 Park Work - Parks and Recreation pays 20% of Forestry's operating budget (less contracts) in exchange for 20% of our time working in parks. 887 tree were pruned, 659 trees were removed, and 72 stumps were ground on park properties in 2018.

- Tree Risk Assessment - In 2018, Forestry initiated its Tree Risk Assessment Program. Every 3 years Forestry staff will inspect each boulevard tree to determine if there are any hazards/risks present in Bismarck's Urban Forest. In 2018 staff inspected 6,182 trees between Washington St and 12th St.
- 2019 Crew Update – So far this year street tree pruning has been going very slowly due to extreme cold. It will be difficult to get out of current pruning zone this year for this reason. Elm Firewood inspections will begin within the next several weeks, once the snow has melted enough to make stored firewood visible. In addition, our crew have helped street department quite bit this winter with sanding and hauling snow.

2019 budget items:

Not much has changed with the Forestry budget for 2019. We are currently looking ahead to the 2020 budget. Most needed budget items are hiring of a 4th full time arborist, a new boom truck and 2 pickups. The City's fleet manager handles the specs for new vehicle purchases and is also looking at other options for purchasing new or used vehicles.

Cathedral District Elm Trees:

Elm trees in the Cathedral District are suffering from Scale. One of the most visible symptoms is black sooty mold growth on the tree that gives it an overall black appearance and there is visible decline/dieback in the upper canopies of the trees. One treatment for scale is a trunk injection. This treatment can be quite expensive averaging \$100 per 30-inch diameter tree. The Forestry Division does not have the resources to treat all the trees and it would be difficult to choose which trees to treat.

Doug W. asked Amy and Stan, who both live in the neighborhood, to consider getting neighbors together to treat their boulevard trees. Amy mentioned that the elm trees in the neighborhood are on the historical register and volunteered to look into grant opportunities to help with the cost of treating the trees.

2019 NDSU Forest Service Grant Ideas:

Doug W. presented an idea for a future grant project to the board. He would like to plant a variety of elm cultivars and other large shade trees along the boulevard strip between University Dr. and Basin Ave. This area is currently lined with Green Ash trees. The area is quite wide so additional trees could be planted offsetting the existing trees. He estimates there would be space for approximately 100 new trees along that strip. It is also possible there would be room to plant trees behind the sidewalk along the south side of University Dr. in the same area. The goal of the project would be traffic calming and beautification of a major arterial. Doug Prchal moved to go ahead with applying for a grant for this project. Erik Dietrich 2nd the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Arbor Day 2019:

Christy gave an update on Arbor Day planning. This year 2 individuals will be recognized, Carl Hokenstad (retired Director of Community Development) and Bill Wocken (retired City Administrator). The event will take place on Friday, May 3rd at 1:30 p.m. The location for the event is being finalized, but will likely be at Jaycee Park on Century Ave. Highland Acres 5th grade class will participate in the event. Partners In Planting sponsors for 2018 will be recognized and Appleseed Awards will be given for beautification efforts on public property in 2018.

The Arbor Day committee will meet right after this meeting.

FAB Member Terms Expiring:

Amy Sakariassen and Mitch Becker's terms expire at the end of March. Doug Prchal made a motion for Amy to stay on the board for another term. Carolyn Godfread 2nd the motion. Amy agreed; all were in favor and the motion carried. Mitch was not in attendance at the meeting so Doug W. will contact him to see if he wishes to continue for another term.

Committee Reports:

No committee reports. Brett suggested we review who is on which committee and what each committee is responsible for. Doug W. or Christy will provide that information as soon as possible.

Other Items:

Dave Mayer stated the Bismarck Parks was awarded an ATB grant for 2019. The grant will be used to plant trees throughout the Tom O' Leary golf and tennis court properties. Parks will be able to use the entire \$10,000 grant and was even able to add @60 trees to the original plan due to lower bids than expected for plant material. Total trees to be planted will be @185.

There were no other items for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.