

MEETING MINUTES
FRANKLIN TREE COMMISSION
CITY OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE ROOM
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2015 – 5:00 P.M.

Committee Members

Alderman Brandy Blanton, Chair	P
Beth Adams	P
Scott Harrison	P
Skip Heibert	P
Kim Hoover	A
Michael Johnson, MTEMC	P
Justin Stelter	P

Other Attendees

Todd Snackenberg, Arborist	P
Linda Fulwider, Board Recording Secretary	P

1. CALL TO ORDER

Alderman Brandy Blanton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Skip Heibert moved to approve the October 26, 2014 minutes as presented. Seconded by Scott Harrison. Motion carried unanimously.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Kyle Brukl, a Boy Scout earning his Merit Badge for Citizenship and Community, and his father Eric Brukl were introduced. Also observing the meeting, Alan Sims, a new resident looking for opportunities to volunteer and get involved in the community.

4. ARBOR DAY – 2015

Mr. Snackenberg reported he is receiving confirmations from previous participants that will participate again this year: He continues to book others. The Parks Department plans to contact a woodworker about demonstrating his skills as well as bringing finished pieces to sell.

Alderman Blanton related that sponsorships/partnerships are now allowed for events and those setting up booths may sell their items.

Arbor Day - Saturday, April 18, 2015, Pinkerton Park from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

5. USE OF TREE BANK FUNDS

At the last meeting, the possibility of adding the use of Tree Bank funds to purchase equipment for the City's Tree Crew and/or fund staff for the Tree Crew was discussed. Mr. Snackenberg subsequently presented the idea to Vernon Gerth, ACA Community and Economic Development. Mr. Gerth recommended looking at the average of funds received and then determine an appropriate percentage to set aside for the proposed use.

Average receipts since the Tree Bank was established in 2007 = \$50,471.42 per year:

- 10% \$ 5,047.14
- 20% \$10,094.28
- 30% \$ 15,141.42
- 40% \$20,188.56
- 50% \$25,235.71

Currently, there are three part-time workers on the Tree Crew. In the upcoming budget, The Parks Department will request two of the three part-time positions be replaced with two full-time positions, with the one part-time position retained for the three-man crew. The difference in salary and benefits is estimated to be \$16,000 per year (\$8,000 each) for the two full-time workers. Mr. Snackenberg proposes Tree Bank funds be used to partially fund the \$16,000 difference. Designating 35% (approximately \$17,665) should be sufficient. Mr. Snackenberg noted that since forming the Tree Crew, Parks have the manpower to trim neighborhood trees. One resident sought him out to thank him for the excellent work the crew did trimming the trees correctly. Discussion ensued on the proposal.

Skip Heibert moved to recommend to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen that 35% of Tree Bank average receipts, not to exceed \$20,000 annually, be allocated to partially fund two (2) full-time Tree Crew workers in the Parks Department. Seconded by Michael Johnson. Motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Blanton will talk with City Administrator Eric Stuckey regarding the proposal and the intent to amend the Ordinance(s) pertaining to the Expenditure of Tree Bank Funds.

6. CHESTNUT TREE PLANTING PROJECT

The American Chestnut Foundation (ACF) has chosen the City of Franklin as one of its communities to plant 10 Chestnut seedlings. These seedlings could potentially be used in restoration efforts throughout the Eastern United States. The seedlings would be monitored and studied by City staff and representatives from the ACF.

Dr. Weaver, who presented a lecture on the American Chestnut last year, is involved in this restoration program. By 1950 a fungal pathogen that causes chestnut blight had killed an estimated 4 billion trees in the U.S. The goal of the Foundation is to restore the American chestnut. They use a method called “backcrossing” to incorporate the best characteristics of blight resistant chestnut species.

The cost to undertake this project would total \$1,400 (\$500 for posts, fencing, interpretive signage; \$900 staff cost for initial planting and maintenance –watering first two growing seasons). The City would be required to sign an agreement stating the City would not give any seedlings to anyone else, and the seedlings remain the property of the ACF. Mr. Snackenberg thought an open area at Winstead Hill would be the ideal place to plant the seedlings.

Justin Stelter moved to approve \$1,400 from the Tree Bank be used for the American Chestnut Restoration Program, and forward recommendation to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Seconded by Scott Harrison. Motion carried unanimously.

7. ARBORIST REPORT

Lecture Series:

Mr. Snackenberg would like to book at least three lectures beginning in May. He was given information on a speaker from the University of Delaware who spoke in Chattanooga about the use of native trees versus non-native trees and the number of species of different trees. Mr. Snackenberg will contact the speaker to find out about fees and travel costs involved.

Justin Stelter suggested a program on the Emerald Ash Bore as that blight is heading south and is now reportedly in Cincinnati, Ohio. Alderman Blanton thought local experts should be booked as well as non-area speakers.

Tree Farm:

Plan to plant 50/50 canopy and understory trees in February.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting:

Scott Harrison moved that the commission meet in February as well as the scheduled March meeting to give more time to planning Arbor Day. Seconded by Skip Heibert. Motion carried unanimously

Next meeting scheduled February 23, 2015.

8. ADJOURN

Mr. Heibert moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Harrison, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned @ 5:40 p.m.

Brandy Blanton, Chair

Minutes prepared by Linda Fulwider, Board Recording Secretary, City Administrator's Office – Updated 2/19/2015 12:44 PM