

## TREE COMMISSION

October 19, 2020

The October 19, 2020 Tree Commission meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. in Council Chambers by Sara Lou Binau, Chairman. Tree Commission members present were Sara Lou Binau, Roxie Karg, Judi Lambrite, Bill Thornton, and John Walker.

Others present included: Scott Washburn, Mayor; Keith Niederkohr, Parks Manger; and Sarah Bennett, Clerk.

The minutes of the August 17, 2020 Tree Commission meeting, having been mailed to each Tree Commission member, were approved as received.

Tree Commission members again discussed a tree planting as part of the scheduled November 16, 2020 Tree Commission meeting in celebration of Arbor Day since the annual spring Arbor Day Program was cancelled due to COVID-19 (coronavirus). Mr. Niederkohr indicated that at this time he is unsure of the date that the nursery will dig the trees for fall plantings. The November Tree Commission meeting will be scheduled based upon this information.

Tree Commission members discussed a situation which occurred last week of a resident having a large street tree removed from the tree lawn without permission from the City. Mr. Niederkohr reported that Mr. Robin Schuster, 505 North Fifth Street, contacted him last year about the tree located in the tree lawn in front of his house and Mr. Schuster expressed concern about the tree splitting and noted that the tree blocked the view of vehicles backing out of his driveway. Mr. Niederkohr indicated that Mr. Bill Sowers, Sowers Tree Service, was hired to inspect the tree following the receipt of Mr. Schuster's concern, and Mr. Sowers found and documented no problems with the tree. Mr. Niederkohr noted that Mr. Ben Buckland, Law Director, was contacted regarding the tree removal and it was determined that Section 541.06 of the City's Codified Ordinances was violated by Mr. Schuster for cutting the tree down, and this action is a misdemeanor violation under this code. Mr. Niederkohr noted that the Police Department was contacted and an investigation was conducted and pictures were taken by the Police Department. Mayor Washburn indicated that he and Mr. Niederkohr met today with Mr. Schuster, and Mr. Schuster has agreed to replace the tree and grind the stump. Mr. Niederkohr indicated that he can prepare an invoice for a replacement tree. It was also suggested that the tree company that removed the tree be notified of the City's tree removal rules and regulations.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Thornton, to accept Mr. Schuster's reimbursement to the City for the cost of a new tree and labor to plant the tree, with Mr. Schuster to also address the removal of the stump from the tree which was cut down, in lieu of charges being filed. Upon Roll Call, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding the poor condition of the trees located in the downtown area. It was noted that the Ivory Silk Lilacs were planted in the downtown area in the 1990's. Mr. Niederkohr suggested the possibility of replacing these trees with thornless locust trees. Considerable discussion was held regarding types of trees appropriate for planting in downtown areas. Ms. Karg suggested Mrs. Stephanie Miller, Regional Urban Forester – Ohio Division of Forestry, be consulted for her suggestions. Mr. Niederkohr indicated he will contact Mrs. Miller. It was noted that there are currently four vacant planting locations in the downtown area from trees that have been lost. It was also noted that there is a possibility of obtaining grant funding through the community foundation to assist with this project.

Tree Commission members thanked Mayor Washburn for his support over the years.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned.

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Sarah J. Bennett, Clerk

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Sara Lou Binau, Chairman