

**Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2013**

In Attendance:

Dave Colteryahn, chair
Greg LoBuono, vice-chair
Veronica Craig, recording secretary
Mike Lane
Becky Montag
Mitch Rhodus
Chuck Ullrich
Bob Breen, Parks Board Liaison
Ben Strickler, Parks and Recreation Representative

Absent: Brian DeRoo and Boyd Miller

Guest: Jim Montague, Lakeview Garden Center and Bob Schappacher, Facility/Operations Manager for the City of Fairfield.

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by chairperson Dave Colteryahn.

Announcement: Ben announced that the Parks Department has been restructuring staff duties. It will be more efficient to have someone more closely connected to the Environmental Commission's focus. Therefore, Bob Schappacher, who oversees maintenance and parks, will replace Ben (the special events coordinator) as the City's staff liaison. This transition will be gradual. They will work together for the next couple of months, and by March, Bob will take over the responsibilities. Because he oversaw the EC in its early years, Bob is already very familiar with the EC's agenda and projects. Ben has included Bob's e-mail and phone numbers in a new contact list included in this month's meeting packet.

Memorial Grove Design: Member Chuck Ullrich asked Jim Montague of Lakeview Garden Center if he would attend this month's EC meeting and give the Commission some direction about planning the Memorial Grove. Because of his extensive horticultural knowledge and longtime connection with the community, the EC eagerly welcomed his input.

Jim's first question...Where's your water source? Will you be using gator bags, or is there a water main nearby? Since this was originally a residential area, there is a water source at the front of the property that can easily be tapped. New plantings must have a dependable water source if they are to survive. Jim will help the EC with a "quick coupler" irrigation system. Ben and Bob will start working on details with the City.

Dave explained that the Commission would like the Memorial Grove to be "horticulturally impressive." Jim agreed and explained that with wise planning through a multi-step approach, the Grove could be spectacular -- a source of pride for our

community. Jim has access to hardy, attractive trees for specialized plantings. Groupings of unique and carefully chosen species will insure a Memorial Grove that is spectacular in every season. EC members were enthusiastic that Jim has agreed to help make their longstanding vision a reality.

Minutes: The minutes for the November meeting were approved with no changes.

Standing Business

Correspondence/Articles: Veronica shared an article about the difficulties of eliminating the highly invasive species honeysuckle.

EC Activity Hours: Dave/2, Greg/4, Mike/1, Chuck/1, Veronica/3.

Adopt-a-Roadway: Greg and his nephew did the Dec/Jan cleanup. Most of the trash was plastic bottles and aluminum cans shredded by mowing. Ben included the sign-up schedule, which runs through May, in the meeting packet. Brian and Dave will do the next clean-up.

Parks Board Report

Bob reported that there was no meeting because of the absence of a quorum.

Parks Department Report

Website Update: Ben included stats for the past two months. Website visits were down for November and December, probably due to the holidays.

Ash Grant Update: Thanks to an ODNR grant which provided \$10K in matching funds (giving the City \$20K to deal with EAB damage), 61 ash trees along Woodbridge Blvd. have been removed. Stumps will be ground as weather permits, and bids for replacement trees will be taken this month. The upcoming planting will be done in mid-March since all work must be completed by the April 15th deadline specified in the grant. Ben and Dave Butsch evaluated the planting slots and decided that 30 to 35 trees, of various species depending on space and overhead power lines, will be planted.

Tree City USA: For the 18th year in a row, Fairfield has qualified for Tree City status. This year the appreciation luncheon will be held on Friday, April 19, hosted by the City of Greenhills. The invitation will be arriving soon, and Ben will discuss the details at the next EC meeting.

Miscellaneous: Terms for three EC members will expire in March. Mike Lane, Becky Montag and Boyd Miller will need to reapply if they wish to continue to serve on the Environmental Commission.

Ben reported that dead spruce trees planted on Winton Road, at the west boundary of Hannah's Farm, will be removed. The City has received permission from the homeowners to cut them down. These trees have already been replaced once, and there are no plans to replant at this time.

Seedling Giveaway: Ben included a list of species choices for the upcoming Home Expo seedling giveaway in this month's meeting packet. Dave asked for members' input. After discussing various options, the Commission chose two species: the ever-popular redbud, and for residents who prefer a larger, slower growing tree, the red oak. Ben will place the order.

Commissioner Reports

Izaak Walton League: Greg spoke with John Zehler about area children planting a tree with the EC for Arbor Day. The EC also hopes that the League will encourage children to become involved in spring and summer activities at the new Huffman Educational Park.

Calendar:

EC Meeting – February 6, 2013 at 6:00 pm, CAC

Parks Board Meeting – February 12, 2013 at 5:30 pm, CAC

Fairfield Home Improvement Expo – Saturday, April 13, 2013 from 9 am to 3 pm, CAC

Tree City USA Awards Luncheon – Friday, April 19th, 2013, City of Greenhills

Arts Fair – Saturday, May 11, 2013, CAC and Village Green

Adjournment: at 7:17 pm.