

**Berkley Tree Board
Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 27, 2023**

Present: S. Young, K. Karlis, B. Lathrop, T. Losey, M. Leneway, L. Fritsch, D. Hennen, L. Price, M. Grassa

Absent: H. Tylenda, S. Bard

Additional visitors: L. Sobson

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes –Jan 23, 2023 meeting minutes approved.

Review and Approval of Agenda –The agenda was approved as proposed.

Public Comments- none

Urban and Community Forestry – Lawrence Sobson from the DNR was present. He is in a new position representing Southeast Michigan. He will be handling Tree City USA designations from now on. His position encompasses all things relating to public trees. L. Sobson mentioned he is also available to help with community outreach, and would be glad to do a presentation at the library in the future. Mr. Sobson provided feedback regarding the city's tree ordinance and recommended list of trees. He recommended that we add a tree care standards appendix to the ordinance. There is a pdf available from the USDA "Tree Owners Manual"

https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5368392.pdf

L. Sobson also recommends that we adopt a policy that when sidewalks are replaced a minimum half-inch (preferable 1 to 2 inch max) of substrate is applied before the concrete. This will prevent roots from reaching up to the sidewalks and heaving them. The gravel will provide them with the air they are searching for and if they go beyond it, the roots will dry out and desiccate.

L. Sobson told us that he recommends every city have and learn to use an air spade to do some maintenance on our trees. He said 90% of tree problems are abiotic, not disease, and could be solved with the use of this tool. Mr. Sobson recommended adding the following trees to the prohibited list due to their invasive qualities: Golden chain tree, Golden rain tree, ornamental pears, Norway emerald queen maple, Crimson king maple, and Japanese barberry. Lawrence recommended more planting of the Kentucky coffee tree (Espresso cultivar). It is highly salt resistant and would be good to use for climate change adaptation. He is currently in negotiations to bring in six new cultivars of Elms to the state which we may be interested in planting. He told us about the 10/20/30 rule, having no more than 10% of one species, 20% of one genus and 30% of one family in the canopy.

Mr. Sobson also asked the board to consider in the coming year projects that we may want to take on using the Inflation Reduction act funds the State will be getting. Put together a small proposal possibly. Consider joining with a partner; other communities, or groups such as the Oakland Conservation District.

Update from DPW– S. Young gave us an update on our Arbor Day plans. We have a few trees to plant from Marine City around the 11 mile and Cass/Mortenson area. We also have 16 residents that will be getting street trees in the spring planting. There will be a fall street tree planting flyer going out with the water bills to residents soon.

Street Tree Diversity- T. Losey wanted to discuss the issue of climate change, and the need to consider street tree diversity issues for the future. L. Sobson had mentioned the 10/20/30 rule in urban forestry. T. Losey found some information about recent calls for a higher standard by using a 5/10/20 rule to help mitigate the effects of climate change. She compiled a list of resources regarding tree selection and diversity and climate change considerations.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10X2wOkjwTyX8DzRSxEUmxo-3wImcZJpxHq-E39NKnDc/edit>

The board can review some of the information on the doc and we can discuss at our next meeting. L. Sobson mentioned trees such as hackberry, and to consider trees from southern Ohio and northern Kentucky for the future. By 2100 those climates are expected to be what we will experience in our region.

Residential Tree Give Away Program – T. Losey informed the board that a subcommittee had been formed with the purpose of researching a residential tree giveaway program. She did some initial research on potential places the board could obtain the trees. The issue of funding and fundraising would need to be considered and decided through the subcommittee. This program most likely would not be ready to implement until next year or the fall possibly at the earliest.

Communications “March is “maple syrup Season” - K. Karlis reminded that Board that last year we reviewed the City ordinance regarding not hanging items on City Street trees and discussed if this should be enforced. J. H. Hart advised that it was not recommended to allow tapping the street trees for maple syrup. But we discussed this after the tapping had already begun, and Code Enforcement notified some residents to discontinue the practice.

So this year, K. Karlis asked Torri Mathes to help communicate this “Don’t” to inform our residents in advance. Torri has developed a visual reminder and will include in the City’s communications.

Other Topics not on the agenda – no other topics were added to the agenda.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for March 27 (2nd Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Building).

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.

DID YOU KNOW?



Spring is on the way and some Michiganders look forward to tapping maple trees for syrup. As a reminder, residents may do so for the maple trees growing in their own yards.

However, this is a reminder for residents to NOT tap public trees. Especially those trees growing in the easements between the sidewalk and the street. These “street trees” are especially vulnerable to disease and insects, and tapping these trees can harm them.

For this reason, the city prohibits tapping public trees.

Reference: Ordinance 130-41 (b): Tree maintenance and protection

