

TREE BOARD
City of Prairie Village, Kansas

Minutes of May 1, 2024

Meeting started at 6:01 p.m.

Board members present: Kevin Dunn (minutes), Mark Kaufman, Mark Morgan, Rob Schmitz, Greg Shelton (Council Liaison), Lindsay Voitik (Chair) and Kirk Walters and Whitney Wilson

Other attendees: Bridget Tolle (Urban Forestry Specialist, Public Works)

1) New board member Whitney Wilson introduced herself. Whitney serves on the Water One Board, is a K-State extension Master Naturalist, and is active in Climate Action KC. She has backgrounds in health care and IT.

2) Kevin moved that the April 3, 2024 minutes be approved and Rob seconded.

3) Old Business

a. Volunteer Waivers – completed.

b. Arbor Day event – There was a good turnout for the Arbor Day event at Wassmer Park on April 27th including Laura Patton, wife of honoree Dennis Patton. Board discussed getting an article about the event in the July/August issue of the Village Voice. Mark Morgan said he would write up an article and submit two photos with it. Kevin offered to get more information about the Arbor Day honoree, Dennis Patton, who had died in March.

Lindsay attended the April 15 City Council meeting and presented information about Dennis after the Mayor had Greg read the Arbor Day proclamation. Lindsay expressed appreciation to the Patton family and introduced Laura Patton who was in attendance.

c. Minute Taking Assignments – With no one currently assigned to take the minutes for September and November meetings, Kevin suggested that names of new board member Rob and Whitney be drawn from a hat. Rob's name was drawn for September and Whitney's was drawn for November. (SEE MOTION MADE LATER IN MEETING TO CANCEL SEPTEMBER MEETING and hold the meeting in August instead.)

d. MARC Tree Canopy Aerial Imagery Update – Beth is still waiting to get the MARC tree canopy information for Prairie Village from Tom Jacobs who told her it should become available in late spring.

Whitney asked to learn more about the canopy assessment. Bridget elaborated about what exactly would be measured: both street trees and trees on private property. Kansas Forest Service provided the last canopy assessment in 2015 with Prairie Village at 60% coverage. Mark M said that this first measurement from MARC would help establish a baseline for the canopy. Greg discussed using Google satellite imagery as an alternative to MARC's measurement. He said that Overland Park has already registered as a city to get the Google canopy measurement. Whitney offered to work on getting Prairie Village registered for this. Rob talked about this work with getting a land use and vegetative cover map done for Kansas City.

e. Fall Tree Seminar – Board discussed potential speakers and topics for the Tree Board's fall seminar. Bridget tried to reserve the Birch Room at the Meadowbrook Clubhouse on

September 18th and found out that the date was not available so the seminar is now scheduled for September 25th.

Kevin said he has lined up Family Tree Nursery owner Jonah Nelson as a speaker for the seminar. Kirk has found another potential speaker from Ducks Unlimited who could talk about habitat reclamation projects for wildlife.

Board members talked about seminar topics such as the role of trimming in preventing storm damage, cultural practices such as tree cabling. Board settled on the broader topic of Resiliency. Speakers could talk about how tree selection and cultural practices could help trees better survive disease, pests, floods, droughts, etc.

Board talked about the need to secure four speakers to be on the seminar panel.

A motion was made to cancel the September meeting and have the meeting in August instead. The motion passed. Rob will take minutes for the August meeting, not September.

- f. Potential Event Partnerships – VillageFest will be held on July 4th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Greg who is also council liaison to the Environmental Committee, said the Tree Board could share a space with the Environmental Committee that is located near the basketball court in front of City Hall. Greg suggested that the Tree Board's topic could tie into the Environmental Committee's exhibit on Native Plant/Pollinator Gardens. Greg said that they have a sign-up sheet online for volunteers to take two-hour shifts: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Tree Board discussed an exhibit that would highlight different native trees that serve as hosts for different butterflies. Tree board members talked about activities for kids at VillageFest such as tree trivets or tree stones.
- g. Elm tree signage – The Tree Board discussed American elm tree signage at Bennett Park. Bridget said that Public Works can pay for new signage, but recommended not replacing for now.
- h. Prairie Village Tree map status - Bridget talked about updates to tree maps in several city parks. She said that Windsor, Weltner, Taliaferro and Bennett have already been updated – these updates can be found on the Tree Board's Google drive. Whitney said that Master Naturalists might want to volunteer to help collect data in other Prairie Village parks. Bridget said that Harmon Park and City Hall area are next up on tree updates.

5) New Business

- a. Tree Removal and ordinance – Bridget notified the Board that a Siberian elm had been removed for safety reasons from the city's community garden area in Harmon Park. Lindsay asked about whether creeping euonymus and other vines should be allowed to grow on city park trees. It was suggested that this would be a good topic for an article. Kevin asked about removing the invasive honeysuckle hedge that grows between the south boundary between Wassmer Park and a neighbor who lives on Roe. Native shrubs could replace the honeysuckle to serve as a screen.

6) The next Tree Board meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.