

City of Charlevoix
Shade Tree & Parks Commission Regular Meeting minutes
Thursday, August 11, 2022 - 10:00 AM
2nd Floor Conference Room, 210 State Street, Charlevoix, MI

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Hodgson called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

Chair Perry Irish Hodgson

Members Present: David Bertinelli, David Levy, Jennifer Muladore

Members Absent: None

City Staff Present: Sarah Dvoracek, City Clerk; John Griffith, Electric Department Director; Pat Elliott, Public Works Superintendent

2. Approve Minutes of April 14, 2022

A. Draft Minutes for April 14, 2022

Motion by Levy, seconded by Muladore to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022 meeting as presented.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

3. Old Business

A. Status of Edgewater Resources Management Plan Development for Ferry Beach

Mr. Elliott stated that he and Kent Knorr, the Recreation Director, met with Edgewater and toured the parks and facilities. They discussed other potential recreational activities. Mr. Elliott stated Traver Wood (from Site Planning Development) would provide his expert opinion but he recommended hiring a contractor to complete an entire tree inventory. Discussion was held regarding removing the willow trees from the park and other options were discussed, such as other species of trees to plant in the area.

B. Status of Lake Michigan Beach Park Improvements

Mr. Elliott stated the goats have finished and overall the program is very successful. The City hopes to continue to bring back the goats next year.

Mr. Elliott stated the beach park improvements are underway. The view corridor trimming has been completed. However, there are enough funds in the budget to trim more of the area and Drost agreed to return before winter and finish.

C. Update on 2022 Right-of-Way Tree Planting

Chair Hodgson asked Mr. Elliott to provide any updates on the Right of Way Tree Plantings. Mr. Elliott responded he had only received one response from a resident stating they didn't want a tree. The DPW is on target for fall planting, the bid will be published soon. Chair Hodgson suggested a follow-up letter recommending that residents water the trees. Muladore stated other cities have provided a water credit or incentive to water plants and trees there are planted in the ROW. Mr. Elliott suggested recommending to residents that only 10 to 15 gallons of water a week would help the tree thrive and that would not increase their water bill by a substantial amount.

4. New Business

A. Tree Removal Request: 112 Belvedere Avenue

Chair Hodgson stated the Commission can request the homeowner pay for the tree removal. The homeowner would be required to plant at least two trees at the choice of the Commission, including the location. The homeowner is requesting the tree removal to improve the view from their home. The Commission discussed the request and the overall tree health in the area and along the corridor. Mr. Elliott suggested several types of trees for possible replacements, such as kousa dogwoods, tulip trees, locusts, or lilac trees.

Discussion was held regarding suggesting a plan to methodically plant shade trees along the corridor and to methodically plant trees that will not potentially block homeowners' views. The Commission requested City staff communicate with the homeowner and the state that the Commission is taking their request under consideration and a decision will be made at their next meeting on September 8th.

B. Electric Line Clearance Specifications

Mr. Griffith explained the Electric Line Clearance Specifications and he stated he had received guidance from MSU. Mr. Griffith explained in past history that the Shade Tree & Parks Commission reviewed this policy. The policy includes best practices for tree trimming. The City Attorney still needs to review the legal language including liabilities.

The Commission discussed the chemicals to treat stumps and the portion of the policy that states 30% of trees will be trimmed. The Commission requested a map of the tree inventory which depicts which trees need to be trimmed and was completed by the Electric Department. Chair Hodgson requested that the City Manager or the City Clerk email the map to the Commission Members.

C. Invasive Trees at Depot Beach

Chair Hodgson stated that near the sailing school there are some buckthorns that need to be removed. Mr. Elliott stated that he would investigate.

D. Expand Right-of-Way Tree Selection

Chair Hodgson discussed the possibility of expanding the types of trees used on the approved tree species list. In recent years, there have been only five or six types of trees used and planted on the list. Discussion continued by utilizing more of the American Liberty Elm and the Kentucky coffeetree. Mr. Elliott also made some recommendations for using katsura trees and he mentioned that ginkgos are better in the long term. The Commission concurred to expand the utilization of different trees on the approved tree species list.

5. Public Comment

Member Levy thanked Pat Elliott and his team for weed whacking in the channel. The DPW team has done an incredible job at maintaining the gardens by the Welcome to Charlevoix signs. Chair Hodgson opened the item for any public comment, there was none.

6. Adjourn

Chair Hodgson adjourned the meeting at 11:20 am.

