

MOSCOW TREE COMMISSION



Deborah Kadlec
Commission Chair

Minutes

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**Tuesday
November 5, 2019**

5:00 PM

**Mayors Conference Room
206 E 3rd Street**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

PRESENT: Clark J Filip, Vice Chair; Lauren King (formerly known as Goss); Mary Jo Hamilton; David Rauk.

ABSENT: Daniel Cronan; Deborah Kadlec, Chair; Gina Taruscio, City Council Liaison.

STAFF Donna Howard, Staff Support; Dave Schott, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation.

1. Announcements

Clark J Filip will not renew his MTC appointment. Lauren Goss changed her name to Lauren King.

2. Approval of Minutes from September 3, 2019 (ACTION ITEM) - Filip

ACTION: Approve minutes with amendments to change MPC to MTC in three occurrences.

Rauk motioned and Hamilton seconded approval of the minutes with the requested amendments.

Acclamation vote: Ayes: Filip, Hamilton, King, Rauk. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Cronin, Kadlec. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment Period

Only for items not listed on the agenda, including responses to previous comments/questions from the public. There were none.

4. Presentation: City Strategic Plan and Climate Change – Kristin Haltinner (SEC)

The Sustainable Environment Commission is working on a proposal for the City's Strategic Plan regarding climate change. Kristin Haltinner with the Sustainable Environment Commission is requesting input from the Tree Commission but was unable to present at this meeting. Schott will update the commissioners when rescheduled.

ACTION: No action.

5. Pruning Practices within the City of Moscow (ACTION ITEM) – Schott/Rauk

The MTC continued their discussion on how to educate both tree contractors and the public on proper pruning techniques, especially not lion tailing trees within the city. Rauk was tasked with researching how other cities, similar to Moscow, handle preventing lion's tailing but has not completed the comparable report. He will bring this to a future meeting. Filip observed that the City's training could only be strongly recommended, not made mandatory for the licensed contractors to attend. Schott agreed but said the workshop offered by the Streets Department was well attended by the majority of tree contractors. He will ask the City's Public Works Department if we can contribute to their event. King asked about the test process; Schott explained once the test was passed and the certificate holder remained active in the City's registry it didn't expire. Should it not be renewed after a year the test must be retaken. Schott summarized what was discussed:

- 1.) Send letters to all of the current, licensed tree contractors from an educational standpoint with an easy to read, simple informative letter describing poor versus proper pruning techniques. *Rauk completed a draft of a letter to be sent to the contractors and will submit it to Schott.*
- 2.) Modify the tree exam to beef up the pruning questions. *Rauk will meet with David Schott to go over the existing exam.*
- 3.) Reach out to the public by sending information in the utility bill. *Rauk would like to see this topic included as soon as possible and added that this could be a future topic for a Farmers Market presentation. Schott will also submit it as a Facebook update and website item. Filip and Hamilton asked if this flyer item could be included in the Tree City USA Growth Award as public outreach and Schott will look into it.*
- 4.) Strongly recommend a 1-hour training session each winter to tree contractors regarding proper pruning practices.

ACTION: Review and approve actions to improve pruning within the City of Moscow or take other such action deemed appropriate.

Hamilton motioned and King seconded approving the four items above for implementation. Acclamation vote: Ayes: Filip, Hamilton, King, Rauk. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Cronin, Kadlec. Motion carried.

6. Report: October Monthly Utility Bill Insert - Filip

The Tree Commission provided information for the City's October monthly utility bill insert. Filip appreciated working with Assistant City Supervisor Jen Pfißner on the project. Howard added that there had been a few requests by citizens for the guide at City Hall and the HIRC as a result of the insert. Rauk was unaware it was coming in the bills but was impressed with it, commented that Filip did a great job, it was well written and flowed nicely. Future submissions should be made to Jen Pfißner by the 8th or 10th of each month to maximize this chance to share information about the MTC and the Street Tree Planting Guide with the public.

ACTION: No action, report.

7. Report: October 5, 2019 Farmers Market – Filip/Rauk

Some of the Tree Commissioners staffed a booth at the October 5, 2019 Farmers Market. Rauk reported that he and Hamilton fielded questions from the public; Daniel Cronan did an excellent job preparing the tri-fold display. The topic was tree planting, there were some people stopping by, Hamilton passed out a few of the planting guides. There was a discussion about different ways to present the material such as table banners and printed vinyl displays. Filip suggested it as an item for the next budget request.

ACTION: No action, report.

8. Report: Annual Report to City Council – Cronan

The Tree Commission presented the Moscow Tree Commission Annual Report to City Council on November 4, 2019. Filip attended and said Cronan did an excellent job on the presentation. The PowerPoint included lots of photos of Arbor Day as well as information on past and future classes. He felt Cronan knocked it out of the park and it was well received. Councilmember Sullivan asked about the heritage tree tour. Rauk was in the audience and felt there was a lot of interest in the cross country ski tree tour.

ACTION: No action, report.

9. Report: Winter Parks and Recreation Brochure – Schott

Schott gave an update on classes submitted and approved for inclusion in the winter Parks and Recreation Brochure out on December 1:

- The two fruit tree pruning classes will be offered on the same day in March in two different locations, Virgil Phillips Farm (pome fruit) and Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute (stone fruit).
- Filip's cross country ski tour, Trees of Moscow Mountain, is approved for the brochure but Filip still needs to coordinate the date with Greg Morrison. If the conditions aren't perfect for skiing Filip could switch to a snowshoe class, he has a source for borrowing the shoes. Filip hopes for a clear day to see the view of the forest from atop Moscow Mountain.
- Landscaping on the Palouse with Native Trees and Shrubs taught by Cronan, David Griffith and Iris Mayes. Filip will email Griffith and relay that the class was approved.

Greg Morrison reached out to David Benscoter but he was unavailable to do the apple tree class. Filip would still like to offer the bicycle tour in the future even though he will no longer be on this commission. Rauk thought a future class could involve tree cookies made from trees as well as baking or decorating tree shaped cookies.

ACTION: No action, report.

Open Discussion:

Rauk got the flyer for the City's vegetation management program. It was on his doorknob at home as his neighborhood is slated for inspection next spring/summer. He offered kudos to Tyler Palmer for changing the word trimming to pruning.

Rauk asked about advertising to fill the commission's vacancies; Schott will request a social media blast.

King reported that Don Regan had mixed results germinating the 2020 Arbor Day giveaway seedlings. The Cascara buckthorn and Limber pines germinated well but the Turkish filbert seeds were not successful. After discussing possible options, King offered to send a follow up email with what species could be substituted.

Schott has been working with Pfiffner on the Commission survey questions and updated the MTC on a slight wording change.

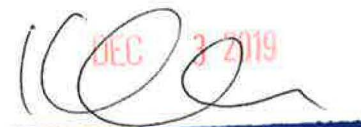
Schott also reported that he was contacted by Avista regarding a tree on private property which posed a hazard to a power line. As it was a healthy, beautiful, older tree, Schott asked if they could move the power pole instead of removing the tree and Avista agreed. Schott has also been talking to the Avista representative about their "Right Tree, Right Place" program and how it could help Moscow residents replace improperly planted trees. When trees in the right-of-way need removal the responsibility falls on the adjacent property owner and Avista might be able to help with respect to utility conflicts.

Filip said that the next MTC meeting will include officer elections, Schott added there will be budget requests for consideration and Rauk would like to get an update on the tree pruning contractor class.

Minutes Approved On

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58 PM.

Next meeting: December 3, 2019


Clerk/Deputy Signature

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