

MOSCOW TREE COMMISSION



Ellis Eifert
Commission Chair

Regular Meeting
~ Minutes ~

David Schott
Staff Liaison

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Tuesday
March 2, 2021

5:00 PM

Mayors Conference Room
206 E 3rd Street

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM

WELCOME AND ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Daniel Cronan (virtual) (arrived at 5:03); Ellis Eifert, Chair; Mary Jo Hamilton, Vice Chair (Virtual); Zena Hartung (Virtual); Jeanne Leffingwell (Virtual) (arrived at 5:14); David Rauk (virtual.)
STAFF: Donna Howard (Virtual); David Schott, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation; Anne Zabala, City Council Liaison.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes from February 2, 2021 (ACTION ITEM) - Eifert

Minutes presented for approval.

ACTION: Approve minutes as presented; approve minutes with amendments; or take other such actions deemed appropriate.

Hamilton moved to approve the minutes as presented. Hartung seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Four (4). Nays: None. Abstentions: One (Rauk). Motion carried.

2. Public Comment and Response to Previous Comments (limited to 10 minutes)

Members of the public may speak to the Commission regarding matters NOT on the agenda or currently pending before the Commission. There were none.

3. Consideration of the 2021 Arbor Day Celebration (ACTION ITEM) – Rauk / Schott

The Tree Commission will discuss potential venues and themes for the 2021 Arbor Day celebration. Arbor Day typically falls on the last Friday of April each year, this year being April 30, 2021.

ACTION: Discuss and approve the Arbor Day celebration venue and theme; or take such actions deemed appropriate.

Schott said Arbor Day is not required this year for Tree City USA status due to the pandemic. The MTC agreed to hold the event with fifty attendees or less. Locations considered were Harvest Park, Milton Arthur Park (currently undeveloped), Lola Clyde Park and planting along the pathways. Lola Clyde Park was chosen and Schott will contact PCEI about including their Palouse Roots students in the celebration.

Leffingwell moved to celebrate Arbor Day at Lola Clyde Park and invite the Palouse Roots students from PCEI. Cronan seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Motion carried.

4. Consideration of the Pruning Education Utility Newsletter (ACTION ITEM) – Rauk / Schott

The Tree Commission will discuss and develop a do's and don'ts of pruning for inclusion in the City utility newsletter. The utility billing newsletter has a deadline of March 19th for inclusion in the April mailing. Text and graphics should be no longer than one page.

ACTION: Discuss and approve the pruning education utility newsletter; or take such actions deemed appropriate.

Schott said this is the last chance to work on the MTC's contribution of one column for the flyer the City inserts in the monthly billing statement. The purpose of including this information is to educate homeowners about proper practices and how to choose a good contractor. Rauk noted that many contractors will observe City Code with respect to pruning trees in the right-of-way but will top, lion tail and do other unhealthy cuts to trees on private property, where the City has no jurisdiction. Leffingwell would like to see the contractors re-certify and Rauk agreed. He added he would like the contractors to attend a one-hour, annual seminar covering best practices, ANSI and ISA requirements and other updates. Schott added that the City purchased twenty-five copies of two different ANSI pruning booklets and offered them to the licensed contractors. Leffingwell asked if all the contractors will receive the books. Schott replied, rather than mailing them to everyone unsolicited, he asked which contractors would be interested in receiving the booklet. He heard from three who were interested. All agreed letting citizens know to contact Schott when they have questions was an important component of this article. Cronan suggested including ANSI citations for the best practices. Schott will forward the rough draft to City Supervisor Jen Pfiffner and she will make any edits before it is printed.

Rauk moved to accept the revised version including Schott's contact information and the ANSI documentation. Hartung seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Motion carried.

5. Discussion: Heritage Tree Program - Schott

The Tree Commission will discuss the framework of what a Heritage Program might look like. The Commission will review past material and define what a Heritage Tree Program is.

ACTION: No action, discussion item.

Schott opened a discussion on the Heritage Tree Program which had been set aside for future consideration. The MTC members were interested in moving forward on this and Schott asked for their input on defining the program. Schott discussed including a tree on private property with the City Attorney, Mia Bautista. She recommended obtaining written permission from the homeowner including a signed waiver, a hold harmless agreement for the City recognizing the potential for damages, and require the homeowner to inform any future buyers should the property be sold. The public will be advised via a disclaimer to not trespass on private property when visiting tree sites. Any trees on private property must be visible from the right-of-way. Schott also shared how other cities have approached similar programs. Spokane requires homeowners to notify their staff if work will be done on a heritage tree. Coeur d'Alene accepts nominations from the public for trees to be included in their Historical, Unusual and Big Tree program. Hamilton suggested initially limiting the number of trees on the list to twenty-five. Rauk mentioned that about 30 years ago the MTC was printing tree bulletins as an insert in the Daily News. Each one focused on a tree care topic and had listed some large specimens as noteworthy for a heritage tree edition. Rauk has copies of them at home but is out of town. Rauk and Hamilton thought copies were also stored in the basement of City Hall. Eifert suggested formulating the criteria for inclusion at the next MTC meeting with an action item and requested the commissioners bring ideas to discuss; Hamilton would like the MTC to form a sub-committee for this purpose. Schott will begin coordinating this and add it to the next meeting's agenda.

REPORTS

Harvest Park Update – Schott

Schott shared lists of what was purchased for Harvest Park. This included cover crop seeds for peas, Idaho fescue grass, red and white clover, as well as apple, pear, plum, walnut, chestnut, cherry, elderberry trees and shrubs. The cover crops will be cultivated as soon as possible and the rest will be planted as they arrive and the weather allows. A discussion followed on the plants' grades and varieties. Hamilton wondered if there could be apiaries there as well; she referenced the recent, local pollinator summit and

hopes bees could be integrated in the plan. Schott wasn't sure but estimated it will be years before the bees could be put to use at the park.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / DISCUSSION

Cronan left at 6:02 PM.

Schott asked Eifert to put forth a good faith motion to add an action item.

REQUEST TO ADD ACTION ITEM: Choose dates for the MTC tabling at Farmers Market.

Leffingwell moved to discuss and choose the desired dates. Rauk seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Motion carried.

Schott would like to make sure the MTC is scheduled for May 1 to accommodate the annual Arbor Day seedling giveaway. All agreed this would be best. Schott asked for the commissioners to choose a second date and an alternate. After discussing, it was decided to sign up for July 10 and the alternate date of July 17 if the 10th were unavailable.

Hartung left at 6:05 PM.

Rauk moved sign up for May 1, July 10 and an alternate day of July 17. Leffingwell seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Motion carried.

Leffingwell gave an update on MTC classes for the spring Parks and Recreation brochure. She spoke with P&R Recreation Supervisor Greg Morrison and he's good with their ideas. She will continue to work with him on setting dates and finalizing the details.

UPCOMING EVENTS / MEETINGS

Next meeting: April 6, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:11 PM

Minutes Approved On
APR -6 2021
Dan L. Howard
Clerk/Deputy Signature