



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

May 7, 2020

Park Operations

2529 High Country Ct, Grand Junction, CO 81501

Item 1: Meeting came to Order by Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Member, at 8:30 AM.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Kamie Long
Vince Urbina
Susan Carter
Mollie Higginbotham
Susan Carter
Paul Morency
Bennett Boeschstein

Absent Board Members:

Tom Ziola

Parks & Recreation Staff Present:

Rob Davis, City Forester & Open Space Supervisor
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

Item 3: Forestry Updates

h) Due to a previous engagement Vince updated the board about ISA testing dates and COVID Impacts.

- Test scheduled for July 1, 2020
- Students will wear masks
- Spacing is already required between test-takers
- Scheduled at the B.5 road facility
- The only unknown is if that facility will be re-opened on July 1.

Item 2: Approve Minutes from March meeting

- Kamie Long made a motion to approve minutes, with the spelling of Kamie Long's name corrected (add e throughout). The motion was seconded by Mollie Higginbotham and carried unanimously.

Item 3: Forestry Updates

a) COVID-19 Impacts on Forestry

- April Board Meeting Canceled
- Southwest Arborfest Canceled
 - Lost interactions with the schools
- FT Positions that have been vacated are frozen
- Seasonal positions are frozen or filled with staff from other areas (lifeguards) that are already hired
- Pulls staff away from forestry duties for other duties such as playground sanitation, riverside park construction, trail reconstruction, and spring cleanup
- Implement fee for planting and ROW trimming permits.

b) Tree seedling Distribution

- Originally the communication team anticipated 5 days of promotion, closed after 5 hours with hundreds of requests
- 10 Recipients who tagged City on social media with pictures of planting seedlings received a containerized tree.
- Facebook Stats: Reach: 28,030, Engagement: 4,800, Shares: 188
- Instagram Stats (Smaller audience than facebook): 2,777 reach on six posts
- Next Door Stats: 2,603 Impressions and 13 "Thank You" clicks (Likes)
- Arbor Day Foundation waived event requirement for Tree City USA.

c) Tree Planting

- 118 Trees planted, 30 to go focusing on Las Colonias, Duck Pond, Riverside, and the planting at Canyon View
- Some of the Canyon View planting have not survived. The Bald Cypress, in particular, are struggling and just may not grow well in Grand Junction
- The area still looks really good and has drawn people to a part of the park they weren't previously accessing.
- Las Colonias River Park area behind the amphitheater came together well, shade trees planted.

d) Tree Maintenance

- Calls are coming in for maintenance
- 160 pending requests for work, dating back to June of 2019.
- People are understanding and staff works on requests as much as possible, but are never caught up

e) CAO and discussion over ROW versus Private Property Trees

- Rob has been examining whether trees are actually on private property or Right of Way and has determined that some trees historically maintained by the City are actually private property trees.

- Have reached out to the City Attorney's office to determine the City's legal responsibility to continue maintaining them, or can the responsibility be returned to the owner.
- f) Concept review for Grand and 1st Street CDOT Construction project
- The north median is going away, the southern is staying, in part though is planned to look more native
 - Rob submitted comments regarding trees in the median – the established trees will likely suffer. CDOT's requirements is 1:1.
- g) Spruce ips and tree losses
- 5 Spruce trees down from ips beetle
 - i. 3 large trees at the Orchard Mesa Cemetery
 - ii. 1 in Lincoln Park area
 - Ips target old mature trees, and once in the neighborhood, unless the trees are removed, the ips move throughout the area
 - Elm Seed Bugs are beginning to show up this year also
 - i. People request removal of Elm trees in an effort to mitigate the bugs
 - ii. Previous Forestry Board has declined to remove healthy trees
- h) ISA testing dates and COVID impacts
- Rob envisions COVID as an excuse for companies who fail to get an arborist ISA certified
 - Also envision companies who struggled during shut down will push back harder against certification requirement
 - Board members reiterated that companies have had three years to meet this requirement.
- i) Grand Falls Drive (near 28 Road)
- Project began by trying to repair sidewalk under trees. HOA was notified that repairs would result in tree loss which prompted further discussion because sidewalk connects to nothing
 - Determined the greatest public benefit would be to keep trees and eliminated the sidewalk (an idea proposed by the Public Works Department.)
 - Rob is attending and HOA meeting this evening to further discuss with residents

Item 4: New Business

- a) Updating recommended tree list
- Use botanically correct common names
- b) Weed Abatement
- Wayne is on Public/ROW/Open Space Abatement, Jason is handling Code Enforcement for private lands
- c) Tree Pollen
- Really high – have planted lots of male trees to reduce seeds and berries, but males are responsible for pollen so the count is up
- d) Grand Valley Canopy Website

- Tree page will include the recommended species and the developer suggests making it more searchable
 - i. Scale up over time
 - ii. Make sure the information reflects code requirements
 - iii. Does increase the cost of development and maintenance
- e) Arbor Day /Demo Day
 - Plant Sale scheduled for second Saturday of October. Schedule Demo Day in conjunction?
 - Board decided to concentrate on spring, since things continue to be uncertain in the wake of COVID-19.

Item 5: Public Comments: No Public Comments

Item 6: Adjourn: The meeting adjourned by acclimation at 10:00 a.m.

Item 7. Next Forestry Advisory Board Meeting: Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 8:30am via Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison Little