



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

*March 11, 2021
held Virtually*

Meeting called to Order by Mollie Higginbotham, at 8:32 AM.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

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

City Staff Present:

- Jamie Beard, Assistant City Attorney
- Rob Davis, City Forester & Open Space Supervisor
- Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

Approve Minutes for February 4 Forestry Advisory Board Meeting.

Vince Urbina made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 4 meeting. The motion was seconded by Bennett Boeschstein and approved unanimously.

Forestry Updates

- a) October 2020 storm and tree damage
 - Rob appraised trees which were on City property and lost or damaged because of the storm. The City has received a \$26,000 insurance settlement to replace and mitigate the loss of those trees.
- b) Canopy Assessment with PlanIT Geo
 - Rob has been talking with a Tree Canopy assessment company that will do some analysis on our canopy and also provide a forward facing website that highlights the benefits of the canopy. The data can be sorted a number of ways to help staff focus planting efforts or provide other useful information. This company will also create fact sheets about the benefits of trees and the canopy in general. It is designed to be a higher level view that can help with public education.

Bennet Boeschstein made a motion to proceed with PlanIT Geo to secure a tree canopy assessment. The motion was seconded by Tom Ziola and carried unanimously.

c) Winter Tree Removals

- The forestry division has removed 128 trees so far. 164 feet (1969 total DBH) removed. It would take 985 2" caliper trees to replace the DBH removed.
- 60 of the pending removals are 8" or smaller.
- About 45% of the removals are ash trees. The board would like to know the breakdown of the removals.

d) On-Call Contract for Tree Pruning Services

- Rob put out a request for bids to contract out tree services. This not only allows the City to choose to contract certain services but also to demonstrate the cost benefit of the services provided by our staff. (To be able to say "X project would have cost \$X to contract out.")

e) Contract from Town of Paonia Tree Board

- Kamie has been working with the Town of Paonia which has trees that are growing too big for their planting space. The trees are causing significant sidewalk damage. Rob shared some information with their Town Administrator regarding care and maintenance of right of way trees as well as emphasizing their important role in the green infrastructure of a community.

f) Hiring New Urban Forestry Intern

- Kiley Barber is back for this season in a seasonal position to give her a more well-rounded, full season experience. As such, a new Urban Forestry Intern is being advertised. The position closes on March 14.

New Business:

a) Tree Service: Requesting consideration for ISA certified tree worker qualification

- A tree service company, licensed in the past, will not have enough years of experience to meet the ISA Certified Arborist testing requirements until July of 2022. They have requested the Board accept the Certified Tree Worker license from ISA in lieu of the Certified Arborist.
- Jamie Beard of the City Attorney's office advised the board that the most legally defensive position is to stick with the certification requirements that have been advertised for the past three years. Additionally, she advised the board that they have no responsibility to make accommodations in this case. Finally, she reminded the board that if they decide to accept the Certified Tree Worker in lieu of the Certified Arborist License; that accommodation needs to be made available to all tree service companies, not just as a single accommodation.

Susan Carter made a motion that the Board require ISA Certified Arborist Licensure as the only option for licensing tree service companies that operate in the City Limits of Grand Junction. The motion was seconded by Bennett Boeschstein and carried unanimously.

b) Arbor Day 2021

- Rob informed the board that the Official Proclamation is set for Saturday, April 24. Staff plans to open the seedling request on social media on April 15 with distribution between April 20 and 23.
- Additionally, staff have planned Arbor Week videos to create and debut on social media covering a variety of topics.
- Bennett Boeschstein has contacted Chipeta and East Middle school who are interested in tree plantings.
- The Xcel Foundation grant had an emphasis on street tree planting and would be a good Arbor Week Activity.

- Staff will be canvassing the core of the City with right of way tree planting flyers for houses that have ideal spaces, encouraging them to submit their addresses for planning of a street tree.

c) Unintended Circumstances

- Susan talked with the board about coming up with a campaign to help prevent unintended consequences from occurring as a result of xeriscape conversion, drought, and improper watering.
- Tom reminded the board that last year the Beacon newspaper printed a proper watering article and hopefully would again this year.
- This could be a topic addressed by the Arbor week videos to bring heightened awareness to proper watering of mature trees.

Public Comments: No Public Comments

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned by acclimation at 9:35 AM.

Next Forestry Advisory Board Meeting: Thursday April 1, 2021 at 8:30 AM. In light of the short amount of time between the March and April meeting, the April meeting will be held on April 7, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist