



## *Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes*

*August 4, 2022 - In Person and held digitally*

**Meeting called to Order** by Susan Carter, at 8:32 AM.

### Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Susan Carter  
Bill Cooper  
Mollie Higginbotham  
Dan Komlo  
Kamie Long

Chuck McDaniel

Board Members Absent:

Bennett Boeschenstein  
Vince Urbina

Guests

Rich Edwards

Parks & Recreation Staff Present:

Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor, Forestry and Open Space  
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

### **Approve Minutes**

Dan Komlo moved to approve the minutes of the July meeting. The motion was seconded by Mollie Higginbotham and carried unanimously.

### **Public Comments**

None. Board members noted Tanya Travis is still working on arboretum, though is out of town so needs some help. Seven trees need new videos. Board will help with new descriptions for folks to record. Tanya Marchun has sent the QR plate and identification information to the Trophy Case for fabrication.

### **Forestry Updates**

Rob updated the board on public tree maintenance. There are 14 pruning requests outstanding; two from May, three from June, and eight from July. The additional arborist and giving them the opportunity to grow their skills has really benefitted department efficiency. Equipment remains an issue, one chipper and the stump grinder continue to be out of service. Trimmings have been taken to the Mesa County compost site (because they can't be chipped for the pile). There is increased cost associated with the compost facility and it is closed on Monday and Tuesday. Board

members wondered if there was space at the Cemetery for forestry to drop trimmings and create a department compost pile.

Status of tree removals: 23 requests from the public for removal of ROW trees. Additionally, 218 trees tagged for removal generated from inspections; 21 carried over from 2021 and 197 tagged after inspection. Trees have been painted this year; blue dots indicate treated, green dots were treated last year and are 'wait and see' trees this year. Additionally, there are currently 67 stumps waiting to be ground.

Staff is moving towards aluminum tree tags for the trunk injection program. Trees have been treated at the Cemetery and staff are working towards treatments in the core of the city. There are 119 trees on this year's injection list. Per the label, the treatment works best when sun is out but before 90 degrees outside. Rob wonders if longer term the City should be considering dropping the DBH to 18 - 20" (from 25") to try and protect more trees? 8" is the minimum allowed per the label. Rob is aware that the City of Chicago treated trees 8" and larger, Denver's treatment minimum was 12" and Madison Wisconsin treated trees 10" and larger.

Rob Davis gave the board an update on the private ash treatment program. So far there have been 368 requests for service. 370 trees have been treated for a cost of \$44K (City portion). \$16K remains of the original budget. There are also 47 properties inspected and approved on the list for treatment and 18 new applications received and in process for inspection. The treatment timeline hinges on the customer committing to payment of the other half, putting their dog in the house, getting backyard gates open, etc. Board members wondered if it would be helpful to collect "How did you hear about the program" information in the future. Recently Kody Gentry did a spot on KAFM talking about the treatment program.

Rob shared with the board that there are a few wildland fire mitigation projects planned. The projects are grant funded (for mitigation only, not for revegetation). Mitigation efforts are planned at Las Colonias on the island south of the River Park, at Dos Rios, and under the Broadway bridge. As the Board is revisiting the code perhaps the language in the tree work license section could be revised to include a Special Project Tree Work Permit (for fire mitigation or invasive species within naturalized open space properties or general contractors for removals and grubbing).

Susan shared with the Board that the Landscape Code is moving to "high desert" as the recommended standard and has removed the incentivization that halved the tree requirement. Additionally, HB1151 is a State of Colorado lawn replacement incentive. The program is scheduled to be developed by July 1, 2023 and is supposed to inspire voluntary turf replacement for home owners, and local governments. Objections to that program center around rock landscapes increasing temperatures and exacerbating evaporation. The Board hopes the plan highlights native or climate appropriate plants as an important component of lawn replacement.

The Landscape Code has defined significant trees as 15" and larger though cottonwoods have been excluded from the category. The Board strongly opposes the removal of cottonwoods from the significant tree definition. Cottonwood is the only native species here in the Grand Valley.

**The Board unanimously voted to object to the removal of cottonwoods from the significant tree list.** Rob will send the latest draft of the Landscape Code out to the Board. The development code (in total) is being revised. Likely the landscape code will not be adopted before the development code revisions are completed.

### **Chapter 8.32 Code Update**

The Board talked about changes to the code including suggesting:

That the City Manger designates the City Forester whose powers/duties are laid out by code. This sets up ONE person as the ambassador for trees (as apposed to “designee” which means that different departments end up acting as designees but no one person is really designated to be the ambassador of the trees).

Fixing definitions of trees maintained as in ROW (versus planting strip which isn’t always accurate).

Board members talked about the watering requirement which is currently not enforced in anyway. There are concerns about how to enforce across different income levels, and for owner-occupied versus property management companies, versus development. Board members wondered if watering could be contracted and forwarded to the home owner?

### **New Business**

Board members wondered about adding Arbor Day events such as nominating trees for State Champion awards.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned by acclamation 10:08

**Next Forestry Advisory Board Meeting - Thursday, September ,1 2022 at 8:30 AM.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist