



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

November 3, 2022

Meeting called to Order by Susan Carter, at 8:33 AM.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Susan Carter

Bill Cooper

Mollie Higginbotham

Dan Komlo

Kamie Long

Vince Urbina

Board Members Absent:

Bennett Boeschstein

Chuck McDaniel

City 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 October meeting. The motion was seconded by Vince Urbina and carried unanimously.

Forestry Updates

Though here are a handful of plantings, including aquaponic trees, remaining for 2022, staff time has been spent mostly on Christmas lights since the last meeting. A concerted effort has been made to involve staff from the whole department. This has shortened the process from 4-5 weeks to 3 weeks. 110 trees have been decorated including tight-wrapped honey locusts, sycamore chandeliers, star falls and snowflakes. Staff still receive “there’s not a tree in front of my business” feedback, however since the lighting is placed based on a plan which staff hopes will be approved by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) so that this will be the adopted design moving forward.

DDA pays to rent the extra boom lifts, and the City has bought extra lights (because every year the trees get bigger). Staff hours, including prep, are about 1400 hours. It’s quite an investment. When soft and hard costs are calculated it’s almost a \$60K project. Jamie Boda has done a great job of taking it on, organizing it, and creating a high level product.

NATS (North American Training Solutions) training scheduled for this week is rescheduled (due to illness) to the week of Thanksgiving. The training covers electrical hazard awareness, aerial

rescue, chainsaw maintenance and proper use, as well as proper notches, felling, plunge cuts, and so forth.

There are over 200 removals pending. These are not trees where property owners have asked for removals, so they will be posted a couple blocks at a time. Staff attempts to update the inventory with a picture during the growing season so that we can show folks who might have thought their trees were 'fine' when we remove them in the winter.

NEW BUSINESS

Board and Commission Appreciation Dinner – December 5, 5pm at the GJ Convention Center. Rob has provided some pictures about what the Forestry board does including general forestry work, plantings, and seedling sorting.

CSU Extension – Ash Fact Sheet

The board reviewed the fact sheet created by Susan and the CSU Extension office refining the language for the general public. Susan will add pictures of the insects, and add links to the Root for your Trees program. Kamie shared a document that includes species names and some pictures to give folks a visual for options other than ash.

Green School Professional Applications

2022 Master Gardener volunteer applications are closed. The Green School Professional program is the professional version of the Master Gardener program. Once the certificate is earned it can be listed on a resume, advertised on a company website, etc. There are 14 areas of study included. The Tri-River Extension offers about 5 local labs. Registration is discounted through the end of November. It's approximately a four month program with reviews on Wednesday night or Thursday mornings.

Requests for public information on Tree Watering

There is a group of residents who are invested, especially in the downtown corridor, in maintaining the canopy. They are interested in a door hanger type flyer that would inform folks their trees are stressed and give watering tips.

Nursery Stock

Staff was required to put all nursery stock out to bid. McKay Nursery was selected as one of the primary vendors. The pricing of the trees including transport came in lower than Valley Grown. A vendor staff had used in the past, Super Trees, really increased price per inch when transport needed to be included.

CTC Grants

Though the grant application isn't open yet, staff is looking for ideas. Board members wondered about expanding the arboretum to Main Street, and how those trees might get tagged/identified (since they are often in tree grates). Board members wondered about reaching out to the GJ Art Commission for creative, artistic ways to combine art and tree labels.

Once trees are labeled a tree walk with Lincoln Park, Main Street (trees and art), the Botanic Gardens, and the CSU Extension Arboretum could be created.

Development Code Landscape Regulations Update

Felix Landry sent comments about the Development Code Landscape Regulations.

The irrigation certification standard will be required 3 years after adoption. Instead of having a “prohibited” list which really only defines trees which are not significant, they have been added to the suitable plant list but listed as “excluded” from the significant tree list. Currently cottonwoods are included as significant but Siberian elms are excluded. There is a new planting status column. There are trees that are prohibited, limited, or preferred and some with no designation. A particular percentage of preferred trees must be planted, the rest can be filled from species on the list which are undesignated.

Review of Chapter 8.32 Code Update

The board continued discussion of the Code Update including discussion around the Forestry Board’s responsibility to create an approved street tree list. Board members discussed whether or not the code should indicate there is also a prohibited list for increased clarity around prohibited species. Rob advised that the code really addresses right of way trees which are protected differently from private property trees.

The board discussed a provision that would require a permit for any activity (planting, removal, pruning) in the right of way. The code would further require mitigation for lost canopy unless the tree is dead, or in poor health, unsound or dangerous structurally, infested, a low-value species, or has been impacted by an unavoidable event (weather, emergency utility repair, not within the control of the applicable responsible party).

Other Business

Susan Carter updated on the board on an instance of Mountain Pine Beetle found in the Grand Junction area in a bristle cone pine. It would likely have traveled in on firewood and is attacking a tree that normally would not be susceptible to this pest. The Extension is waiting for the pathology lab to confirm.

Vince Urbina shared that Western Slope Emerging Pests will start back up in March. Currently, no in-person Certified Arborist exam is scheduled.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by acclamation 10:13 am

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist