



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

February 2, 2023

Meeting called to Order by Kamie Long, at 8:33 AM.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Bill Cooper
Mollie Higginbotham
Brandon Kanwishcer
Dan Komlo
Kamie Long

Board Members Absent:

Joseph Chandler
Vince Urbina
Chuck McDaniel

City Staff Present:

Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor, Forestry and Open Space
Lance Gloss, Planning and Community Development
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

Called to order by vice chair at 8:33am

Approve Minutes

Bill Cooper made a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting. The motion was seconded by Dan Komlo and carried unanimously.

Public Comment

NONE

New Business – Urban Forestry Management Plan

Lance Gloss talked with the board about draft components, survey results, and tree list. There will be a workshop for the public in about 3 weeks, to present information and talk about goals. The survey was available in English and Spanish. There were 529 respondents. This is five to seven times the number of responses in peer communities. Though it is not statistically significant, it is a great volume. The responses were light from the northwest and from Pear Park as well as from renters, so the survey doesn't adequately reflect the experience of those folks.

Shade is a top 3 benefit, while private trees are identified with property value, and public trees are identified with air quality. Challenges identified for private trees include pruning, pest and disease,

and adequate watering while challenges for city trees were assumed to be pests, drought, and loss due to lack of care. Respondents had concerns about tree canopy declining over the last 10 years, and indicated that sustaining trees during construction is important.

Another interesting response to the survey highlighted that there appears to be a gap in knowledge about the existence of municipal code regulating trees though most people rated themselves as having some knowledge of trees. This plan can (and should) set an agenda for ongoing education so that gaps can be addressed.

One of the tasks is to put together a tree list from the preferred species in the suitable plant list in the landscape code. This would create a shopping list/menu that will be attached to the plan itself. Ideally the list would include information such as height and spread, water demands, light requirements, and descriptions. Board members wondered if cultural considerations (susceptible to pests, has an average lifespan of X in this area) should be added. Lance noted that an economy of characters is necessary, but height and spread could be combined to create space for that kind of information.

Lance talked with the board about canopy coverage goals. American Forest recommends 30% cover in west. Currently plantable space is highest in areas zoned for single family homes and lowest for industrial/commercial zoning. The current tree population is 230,000. To achieve a 20% canopy cover goal would require 250,000 new trees (assuming 30ft spread and 4% mortality rate). Phoenix has 12% coverage and a 25% goal, Bozeman has 8% coverage and 33% goal, and Boulder has 16% coverage and wants to stay 16%.

Current core coverages are 28% downtown, 10% around Horizon Drive, 1% in the agricultural and northwest areas, and the river corridor is 33%. Trees every 40 ft of street would net the City of Grand Junction 25% coverage in the ROW. The City's canopy goal will be determined by the Urban Growth Area (not strictly city limits). Unfortunately, the highest potential for increase is the area of least influence.

Arbor Day

Rob talked with the board about Arbor Day. This year it will be April 22. Staff plans to continue the tradition of tree seedling delivery during the week before Arborfest. The form would go live on April 11 with delivery commencing April 19 and 20. Additional seedlings will be available at the Arbor Day Festivities. Kamie will talk to Molly at the Extension office about Master Gardner volunteer support for delivery.

In general Arbor Day will begin at 9am in the plaza area of Lincoln Park pool. The high school students will have a plant sale, T4 will be on site with an ash treatment information booth and the form will be open for sign up. There will be tree care information, seedling giveaways, the tree auction area, urban wood auction, a tree walk, and a planting demonstration.

Board members felt strongly that a tree planting demo must be required before folks take away their auction trees. Board members also wondered if larger posterboards with information about the Urban Forestry Management Plan would be a good display for the plaza area as well.

The CSU Extension office will be having a Demo Day on March 18. In the past Forestry has had a booth in the past to share tree care and Arbor Day information. Brandon and Kamie are available to help with a Forestry booth. Dan will check his schedule.

Forestry Updates

Rob updated the Board that staff have been directed not to pursue the environmental justice grant.

Rich Edwards dropped by some information, he is continuing to work on his website and wants to continue to promote the importance of trees/watering etc.

Marketing/Forestry Education

Kamie Long talked with the board about keeping education at the forefront of Forestry Board activities and priorities. Board members talked about ways to increase education opportunities including marketing around champion trees and using the “Root for our Trees” logo. Kamie will work on a Google doc the board can share for a homeowners welcome packet. Board members wondered about a realtor fact sheet that could be distributed.

Board members wondered about getting a table at the Farmer’s Market that could even be shared with other City departments, or have the master gardeners available to answer questions.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by acclamation 10:31 am

Next Forestry Advisory Board Meeting - Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 8:30 AM. Kamie has a conflict so Rob will send out a poll to reschedule.

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist