



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

January 9, 2025

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Joseph Chandler
Bill Cooper
Mollie Freilicher
Dan Komlo
Kamie Long
Earl Perry
Tanya Travis

Board Members Absent:

Scott Beilfuss

City Staff Present:

Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor, Forestry and Open Space
Jamie Beard, Assistant City Attorney
Sarah Kennedy, Communications Specialist
Allison Little Administrative Specialist

Meeting called to order by Kamie Long at 8:32AM.

Approval of the December Minutes

Tanya Travis noted a typo in the second paragraph of the Licensing Section (you should be your). Joseph Chandler made a motion to approve the minutes of the December meeting. The motion was seconded by Bill Cooper and were accepted by acclamation.

Public Comments – None

New Business

Sustainability Letter of Support

Jenny Nitzky talked with the board about the City's sustainability plan. The consultants are seeking letters of support from groups adjacent to the plan but not part of its creation. The letter of support would indicate that the planning process went well and that the outcomes align with the goals of the Forestry Board. Jenny highlighted specific strategies and actions around tree canopy and water-wise plantings in the plan that are most salient to the Forestry Board. The Board agreed that the plan does align with the goals of the board and agreed to authorize Rob to sign off on a letter of support that specifically calls out the strategy and action mentioned.

Chapter 8 Update

Jamie talked with the board about changes to Chapter 8. Workers Compensation is a State Concern issue. Because there are also local concerns, the City could have a more strict definition of what is required. However, there is no existing legal precedent where the court has upheld the more strict

definition of what is required. The City declines to be the first municipality to litigate this, were a case to be brought forward, and the City Attorney will advise Council similarly. Therefor making changes more stringent than State requirements to the current code could cause Council to decline to adopt the changes. The Board felt there has been a lot of discussion around this particular issue and thought that perhaps there should be more discussion in the Chapter 8 subcommittee. The subcommittee will meet on 2/21 at 10am.

Jamie also talked with the Board about adding auto insurance into the code, she is looking at it more closely and will bring that information to the subcommittee meeting. She also mentioned that when someone submits information to the government for licensing like this, if they lie they can be prosecuted for fraud. We can include that language on the application and she will bring that information to the subcommittee meeting as well.

PHC on Licensing List

Since Cities don't control licensing, we have moved away from publishing licensed spray companies. Currently the State website is fairly confusing, and challenging to use and there are so many types of licenses available, just publishing the web link is also problematic. There was talk of defining the categories of licenses on the website. Board members expressed concern that citizens aren't even checking for insurance and licensing to begin with. They see a company online or get a recommendation from a neighbor and call that company. The extension office already makes a list of licensed spray operators, perhaps we could utilize the resource that the extension already makes.

Board members wondered if we should put a blurb at the top about what homeowners should be looking for and why they should use someone on this list or link to the information about "How to hire an arborist". They would also like to remove the email and add designations for large tree, small tree, and plant health to indicate what kind of work they do.

Tree Planting Class

Board members wondered about offering a tree planting class to help ensure proper planting techniques for landscaping companies (as tree planting is not covered by the ordinance), to promote successful plantings and healthy trees. Since the goal of the board is outreach and education, the board feels like starting a tree planting class would be a good place to start. Board members talked about marketing to landscape companies, and working up a video that could be loaded to YouTube for reference.

Rob Updates

Rob showed the board some functions of the PlanIt Geo tree canopy software and how to visually see changes in tree canopy. As well as how to look at Street View past year images. The Tree Canopy software is updated about every 2 years.

Rob shared the list of nursery stock that has been ordered as well as the Arbor Day seedling order for the Forestry division in 2025. Additionally, the Forestry Contracted Services work is beginning with the elms along the golf course on Gunnison.

The Western Colorado Community Foundation reached out to see if they could donate trees. The trees they were speaking about are free Arbor Day foundation seedlings, so that is not a tree that the City can really use. Rob shared they may be interested in supporting trees in other ways.

Tree Topping Incident

Follow up on tree topping - Rob shared that he had talked with the company that topped the trees along the east side of 26 road. There was some pushback from the company about doing what the customer wants, but Rob reiterated that they put their license at risk by tree topping as they agree that they will not top trees when they apply for their license each year.

IRA Grant Update

Rob updated the board on grant progress, have contracts for nursery stock, planting, but are awaiting the irrigation contract. Rob has reached out to Chipeta Elementary about an Arbor Day program, and will be working on setting a time with the Library to be a part of their summer education program.

Adjourn by acclamation 10:50pm

The meeting adjourned by acclamation.

Next Meeting – February 6, 9:00 am

Respectfully submitted,
Ali Little, Administrative Specialist