



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
February 4, 2020**

Commission Present: Pierce, Healy, Hurley, Todd, Traverse and Barlow

Staff Present: Wight, Comai and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:34 p.m. by Pierce

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Healy, second by Barlow, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Todd read aloud the consent agenda into the record, motion was made to approve the consent agenda with the included motions by Todd, second by Barlow, motion carried.

Tree Team Update, BTVStat Presentation

Comai introduced himself as the City Arborist and explained that the Commission role is also the Tree Board, said the State of the Urban Forest is very good compared to other municipalities that are losing a lot of tree canopy yearly. Approximately 10 years ago the city employed technology to map out canopy and found 40% of land mass was covered by trees, invested a year ago in a study and found 4% increase, the fact that cared for and grown well has helped, lose trees on an annual basis but trending upward.

Added 476 trees to inventory in the last year for a total spending of \$44,047. Goal was to plant 360. Starting to address potential loss to Emerald Ash Borer, plan to keep at this pace. Showed a map of all the new planting's and current trees, planting in between existing ash so that will already be trees started. Removed 283 trees, 219 were natural attrition. Predecessor had different approach, some trees in a severe case of decline and needed to be removed, unable to maintain. Number of removal included ash removal and infrastructure upgrades as well as natural decline, vandalism, vehicle damage and storm damage. Have just short of 12,000 trees and in order to keep on a 5 year maintenance cycle, need to be at 20 percent maintenance per year, since came on board been able to maintain maintenance, went from 6 percent in 2014 to 21 percent in 2019. Ash Borer update plan; total in inventory is 1,160, 10 percent, 950 in street, 216 in parks, started year ago new north end in Strathmore development planting, fall before, planted 130, to date 180 replacements before any removal, planting another 238 which brings up to 44%. Will plant Ash replacements before take down any of the current Ash. By fall will be over 60%. Explained went before Mayor and others for BTVStat and was approached and asked if received funds for carbon credits and found two places and entered into a contract with approval from Mayor and City Council, bundled a plan and a portion is supposed to go back to the City for funding planting and maintaining trees, waiting to see how exactly it comes back to the City.

Comai showed several maps where there was lots of canopy and where there was potential for more tree canopy. Showed comparison of trees planted from 2018 to 2019 and the addition of acres acquired by the City and the work with the conservation group and how areas are maintained with trees and planting's versus mowing and how the land has reverted back to forest land.



Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00PM)

Public forum opened at 6:14 p.m. by Pierce.

Seeing nobody from the public the forum was closed.

Public forum closed at 6:14 p.m.

Maple to College Street Realignment

Wight stated she was asked to present an update on the Greenway between Maple and College. She said that DPW is taking the lead and the primary contact on the project with Vermont Rail, CEDO is the primary contact with Pecor and Echo. The City has been served termination papers for the right of way of the greenway in this area. Should begin doing work around March or April and will no longer be able to go through the path. Will not be able to have any traffic through the area and will need to create a detour. VRS and VTrans is handled by DPW as it is a larger project now and all inquiries can be directed to them. Wight will continue to update as she learns more and as the project moves forward.

Parks 5 Year Capital Plan

Wight gave three handouts, FY20-25 projects, FY26 plus and project outside current capacity for different reasons. She began with explaining the FY20-25 projects plan, stating PFP monies include impact fees as well.

Explained several projects that are outside the capacity or inaccessible to PFP or PIF funding and unable to be funded with specific monies. If the city goes to bond we would ask for funding.

Todd asked about the potential for funding of the Perkins marina and other waterfront funding and how and when PIAP opportunity might happen again and Wight stated unknown, had a very lengthy process many years ago and since additional private marina slips were created to fill the void that was originally needed, priority on the waterfront is dredging, repair or replacement of boathouse and replace Lyman building.

2020 Commission Meeting Location, Schedule, Dates, Topics

Wight pulled up dated and locations of upcoming meetings and asked if anyone wanted to do anything different, suggested September meeting possible at Schmanska if the barn is ready for use, thought of having the August meeting combined with the volunteer event and have on August 2nd at North Beach, meeting at noon and 1pm the social. May 5th City Hall, with tour of City Hall Park, Room 12 instead of Cemetery and do April at the Cemetery and tour the chapel. Wight suggested Commissioners post on personal pages etc. where the meeting will be held and Todd suggested the host post and promote when the commission meeting will be held at their location. It was suggested to have November meeting at YMCA, Wight will look into availability. Wight updated the schedule and Putzier will send out the updated schedule to the commission. Barlow stated if the meetings could be a bit later might get better attendance. Will wait on changing time until see how location changes go.

Wight went over items for future meetings and asked if anyone wanted to add or make any changes, all were in favor of the proposals.



Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours

Putzier asked the Commission if they had any additional hours for the month of January in addition to the commission meeting. All had the retreat on January 24th to add.

Director's Items

Wight excited about online registrations for gardens working on getting parking passes on-line, waitlist for marina payments will be on line also, Morris went to maintenance training and was floored by the professionalism and very excited about making changes, Winter Bash on Saturday, 12 -3pm at Miller Community Recreation Center, complete park matrix all acres and money will be able to compare to other communities, electric bike has been ordered will be able to add a trimmer and mower and bike to get around.

Todd asked about the Farmers Market and if they will be coming to City Hall Park or not, Wight said speaking with them and said market is asking for follow-up meeting, might want to put an RFP out for whomever wants to be in the park. Todd appreciated and thanked Wight for that opportunity.

Commissioner's Items

Traverse said that he and Hurley both have children in Itty Bitty skating at Leddy, and it is an awesome program.

Healy said she will miss March meeting and might miss the May meeting as well.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:33p.m. by Todd, second by Traverse, motion carried.