

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
August 2, 2022**

Water Reclamation/Wastewater Treatment Facility
1415 N. Harrison, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
Conference Room: WREC A

Members

Present: Erik Injerd, Forester, Consumers Energy
Steve Skalski, Water Superintendent & Asst. City Engineer, COK
Gail Walter, Environmental Concerns Committee (ECC)
Brian LaBelle, Forestry Supervisor, COK

Absent: Anthony Ladd, Public Works Division Manager, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Al Halbeisen, OHM - Advisors
Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, OCBA Landscape Architects
Matt Milcarek - KNHS

A. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Member Skalski called the Tree Committee Meeting to order on August 2, 2022, at 2:00 pm

B. ROLL CALL

Committee Member Skalski completed roll call and determined the aforementioned members were present.

C. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Committee Member Skalski introduced the following guests: Al Halbeisen, OHM – Advisors, Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, OCBA Landscape Architects, Matt Milcarek – KNHS

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (August 2, 2022)

Committee Member Skalski requested to add a new Item C, under New Business - Tree Removal at Schipper Lane by OHM.

Committee Member LaBelle, supported by Committee Member Injerd, moved approval of August 2, 2022, Tree Committee Agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (July 5, 2022)

Committee Member LaBelle supported by Committee Member Skalski, moved approval of July 5, 2022, Tree Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

a. 114, 118, 120 Burr Oak – Tree Removals – KNHS

Mr. Matt Milcarek, with KNHS, requested to remove two trees on Burr Oak Street. He stated the way the new homes are lined out and where the driveways need to be, one tree is nearly squarely in the middle of the driveway and the other is on the edge of the driveway. This project is part of the City's FFE project with housing. The only other place to put a driveway has a utility pole there. He noted they are willing to replace the trees elsewhere on the block.

Committee Member Walter stated one tree is a ginkgo and the other is a red maple. She stated the red maple has grown into the power lines. Committee Member Skalski asked if we could transplant the smaller tree and Committee Member LaBelle responded it would be expensive.

Committee Member Walter stated the larger tree is destined to be chopped up due to it growing into the power lines. She noted it is not the right tree for this spot and will need additional trimming in the future.

Committee Member LaBelle asked Committee Member Injerd what kind of trimming would be needed for the tree. Committee Member Injerd responded it is a triplex and they would trim anything that would put pressure on it. Consumers will trim when limbs growing into the primary as their standard maintenance. He stated over time as the tree grows it would become an issue and need to be trimmed.

Committee Member Skalski stated he is not sure there is room to plant replacement trees in this area. He asked if a 2-1 replacement of small trees would fit. Committee Member LaBelle stated it is doable.

Committee Member Skalski, supported by Committee Member LaBelle, made a motion to allow removal of the two trees, replace with 2-1 ratio from the small tree list the City has, with final approval by the Forester, Brian LaBelle. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

b. 1601 and 1616 E. Main Commercial Corridor Project – OCBA Landscape Architects.

Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, with OCBA Landscape Architects, stated they have two projects on E. Main, 1601 E. Main and 1616 E. Main. These properties are across the street from each other.

Ms. Hughes-Nilsson stated they are working with the Zoning Board. In regard to 1601 E. Main, the building is on the lot line and there is no room to plant trees on their property. They are requesting to plant trees in the right-of-way. Per the Zoning Ordinance they have to have four trees along E. Main within the right-of-way, one for every 35 feet for the length of the road.

In regard to 1616 E. Main, Ms. Hughes-Nilsson stated they are combining properties at this location. They will be planting 3 trees in the right of way. It is the same situation; the building has to be on the lot line so they will need to plant the trees in the right-of-way. Discussion ensued.

Committee Member Skalski asked if they have the tree species identified. Ms. Hughes-Nilsson stated they are listed on the site plan. On the south side zelkova, on the north side they have ginkgo. Since there is a sharp turn in the road, they are paying particular attention to being able to see around the corner and making sure they plant the right tree.

Committee Member Skalski asked if the trees will thrive in the space provided. Committee Member LaBelle stated he was not sure about the ones at 1616 E. Main. He stated the trees at 1601 E. Main should be fine as long as they get watered. Ms. Hughes-Nilsson stated they would have the gator bags on them for the first year while they get established. The space is narrow, only five feet. Maples will be planted by the parking lot. Due to overhead wires on Edwin, Committee Member LaBelle stated they should not plant maples on Edwin. Discussion ensued.

Committee Member Skalski, supported by Committee Member LaBelle, made a motion to change the maples to zelkova on Edwin and approve the tree plantings at both locations. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

c. **Schippers Lane – Tree Removal – OHM**

Committee Member Skalski opened discussion for the tree removals at Schippers Lane by OHM. Mr. Al Halbeisen, with OHM, stated there are three trees that need to be removed. Two of them are dead and one is not doing well. Committee Member LaBelle stated the trees are in a swamp area and the two trees are dead and one is in bad shape.

Committee Member Skalski stated since the two trees are dead, and one is in hazardous condition there is no motion required. He stated to Mr. Halbeisen they can take out the trees.

G. OLD BUSINESS

Committee Member Skalski stated there is no Old Business for today.

H. ACTION ITEMS

Committee Member Skalski asked if there was an update on the Action Items. Committee Member LaBelle stated we sent out contacts to some of the ones on the list. Most of the projects on the list have not been completed yet.

- a. Action Item from 9/1/20 - 448 Burdick St - Gospel Mission
 - i. Brian Labelle reports: I will have to do more research.
- b. Action Item from 10/6/20 - Blakeslee Tank – COK
 - i. Brian LaBelle reports: The tree has not been removed and the trees have not been planted.
- c. Action Item from 10/28/20 - MDOT I-94 Project
 - i. Brian LaBelle reports: I will follow up on this project.
- d. Action Item from 4/6/21 - Haymarket Plaza - Tree Removal – Treystar
 - i. Brian LaBelle reports: Trees have been removed. Planting of four trees needs to be done.
- e. Action Item from 4/6/21 - Parkview Avenue Project - Tree Removals – COK
 - i. Brian LaBelle reports: Project started this year. The tree has not been removed.
- f. Action Item from 5/4/21 - New Edison School on Lake & Russell (entire block)–TowerPinkster
 - i. Brian LaBelle reports: Trees have not been removed. He will follow up.

- g. Action Item from 6/1/21 – 1151 Royce Ave – Joshua Sortland
 - i. Brian LaBelle reports: I will follow up on this

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Hughes-Nilsson stated she was on Princeton Street at Princeton Park and noticed there are lines rubbing on a tree and making a loud noise and a squeaking noise. It is very loud. It is located at Princeton and Lulu Street.

Ms. Hughes-Nilsson asked if there are any plans for the Millwood neighborhood silver maple trees. They are shedding limbs, and causing power loss, on a weekly basis. The trees are very mature, and limbs continue to fall. Committee Member LaBelle stated they have removed a number of them. He noted they had a survey done last year and are using that as a guide for their work. He stated they have removed 30-40 trees in that neighborhood in the last couple of years and will keep working at it.

Mr. Al Halbeisen stated they are working on the Inkster Bridge, that goes over Bronson Blvd. A few years ago, they removed several trees on the south side. There were a couple of trees left and one is right on the curb. He noted this tree will most likely be impacted by the construction. Committee Member Injerd stated Consumers did a lot of trimming last winter and in the spring. Committee Member LaBelle stated they will have to discuss it as they get closer. Committee Member Skalski stated when they have plans, bring it to the Committee and we will discuss it at that time. He noted he is not sure the tree is a City tree.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Committee Member LaBelle stated the planting contract went out for the second half. With the previous contract this will be a total of approximately 400 plantings not including the trees they have already planted. He noted they received \$100,000.00 for emergency tree removal.

He stated they received confirmation that Block Burning will be starting. The goal is to touch every City tree every nine years for routine maintenance. He explained the idea behind Block Burning is they block off the City into sections, set a budget for each section, and the plan is to do routine maintenance in that section, every nine years. Ideally, they would like to touch every tree every 7 years.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member LaBelle made a motion to adjourn the Tree Committee meeting, supported by Committee Member Skalski. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 P.M.

Submitted by: Karen Ruthford
Recording Secretary

Date: 9-6-2022

Approved by: [Signature]
Staff Liaison

Date: 9/6/22