

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
September 5, 2023**

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

Members

Present: Erik Injerd, Forester, Consumers Energy
Brian LaBelle, Forestry Supervisor, COK
Anthony Ladd, Public Works Division Manager, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK
Tom Palumbo, Senior Civil Engineer, COK (interim member)

Absent: Gail Walter, Environmental Concerns Committee (ECC)

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Rachelle Hughes-Nilsson, OCBA Landscape Architects

A. CALL TO ORDER

Interim-Chair LaBelle called the Tree Committee Meeting to order on September 5, 2023, at 2:05 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Interim-Chair LaBelle completed roll call and determined the aforementioned members were present.

C. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Interim-Chair LaBelle introduced the following guest:

- Rachelle Hughes-Nilsson - OCBA Landscape Architects

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (September 5, 2023)

Committee Member McVerry, supported by Committee Member Palumbo, moved approval of September 5, 2023 Tree Committee Agenda. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (July 11, 2023)

Committee Member LaBelle, supported by Committee Member Palumbo, moved approval of the July 11, 2023 Tree Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

a. 128 E. Frank Street – Tree Removals – Abonmarche Byce

Representative from Abonmarche Byce was not present to introduce the request.

b. 2156 Race Street – Southside Park Improvements – Tree Removals – OCBA Landscape Architects

Interim-Chair LaBelle opened discussion for the tree removals at 2156 Race Street for the Southside Park Improvements by OCBA Landscape Architects.

Ms. Rachell Hughes-Nilsson, with OCBA Landscape Architects, stated they are doing renovations and improvements for Southside Park. They plan to turn the upper portion of the park to a parking lot. This will remove the soccer field and play field that is in that space now and move it to the eastern side of the park. They plan to remove the existing non-compliant playground, basketball area, and a portion of the walk to fit in the new playground area. They will be putting in a larger basketball court in the southwest corner. A multi-sport field will be in the center and a new playground area in the northeast corner. The multi-sport field will need to be regraded to 2% maximum slope. They need to remove the eight existing trees to renovate the slope area. One of the trees is half dead. The southwest tree has a massive crack down the middle of the trunk. There is a tree in the middle of the area where the sports field will go. The evergreens have some dead limbs and are not in the best of shape. The trees to be planted will be in the park but not in the ROW. Sidewalks will be installed that will not allow for trees in the ROW. They plan to replace with 16 trees.

Interim-Chair LaBelle reviewed the list of replacement trees. He suggested using an American Hornbeam instead of the Zelkova trees. Zelkova is a non-native tree.

Committee Member LaBelle, supported by Committee Member Palumbo, made a motion to allow the removal of eight trees with replacement of 16 trees. He recommends the Zelkova replaced with a different tree. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

- a. None

H. ACTION ITEMS

Interim-Chair LaBelle reports on the following:

- a. Action Item from 9/1/20 - 448 Burdick St - Gospel Mission
- Sent email to Clay Stull with AVB on 7/15/22, with no response. He is still working on this one.

- b. Action Item from 10/6/20 - Blakeslee Tank – COK
 - The tree has not been removed and the trees have not been planted.
- c. Action Item from 10/28/20 - MDOT I-94 Project
 - Project still in progress.
- d. Action Item from 4/6/21 - Haymarket Plaza - Tree Removal – Treystar
 - Trees have been removed. Planting of four trees needs to be done. He needs to get them to remove another tree. He gave them proposed planting sites. He will touch base with them again.
- e. Action Item from 4/6/21 - Parkview Avenue Project - Tree Removals – COK
 - Replacement tree to be planted this fall.
- f. Action Item from 5/4/21 - New Edison School on Lake and Russell (entire block) – TowerPinkster
 - Trees have been planted. Project has not been completed.
- g. Action Item from 11/2/21 – Austrins Family Dentistry – 437 Stone St. –
 - tree has been removed. Brian to contact them and get tree planted.
- h. Action Item from 11/2/21 - KNHS Home Ownership – 1010 N. Rose Street –
 - houses have not been built yet but the trees have been removed. Brian to follow up.
- i. Action Item from 2/23/22 – Stadium Drive Culvert – Tree Removals and Replantings – COK
 - Brian LaBelle reports: These trees are planned for planting this spring. Completed
- j. Action Item from 3/11/22 – 105 Walbridge Street – Trim Trees - Adams Outdoor
 - The trees were removed. Locations for plantings have been submitted. They are planning to plant this fall or in the spring of 2024.
- k. Action Item from 7/5/22 – 3101 E Michigan, Water Station Reconstruction Project – Tree Removals and Replanting - COK, Anna Crandall
 - Trees to be planted this fall or in the spring of 2024.
- l. Action Item from 7/5/22 – Angling Road Project – Tree Removals and Replanting – COK, Tom Palumbo
- m. Action Item from 8/2/2022 – 114, 118, and 120 Burr Oak – Tree Removals and Replanting – KNHS – Matt Milcarek
 - Project not started.

- n. Action Item from 8/2/2022 – 1601 and 1616 E Main Commercial Corridor Project – Tree Plantings - OCBA Landscape Architects – Rachel Hughes-Nilsson.
 - Project not started.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

J. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Chair Ladd stated they have finished the Draft Tree Ordinance language with Davey Resource Group and City Staff. Sent to attorneys for language review. Will provide updates as he gets it. Does not anticipate anything until later this year.

Chair Ladd stated the City Tree Manual is being worked out. One of the items this manual will be used for is the ROW permits that we issue for the protection of the trees during construction for non-City and City projects. He will update the Committee as he gets new information.

Interim-Chair LaBelle stated most of the contracts have been completed. They will continue to work on Emergency Tree removals. Tree plantings will start in a couple of months.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member Palumbo made a motion to adjourn the Tree Committee meeting, supported by Committee Member McVerry. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 P.M.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____
Recording Secretary

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Staff Liaison