

**City of Whitewater
Urban Forestry Commission
August 28, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order: 4:35 p.m.

Roll Call: Karen Coburn, Anne Zarinnia, Jerry Schoen, Karen McCulloch, Brandon Knedler, Rose Mary Leaver, Sherry Stanek **Staff:** Brian Neumeister

Approval of Agenda: Stanek moved approval of agenda, McCulloch 2nd, unanimously approved.

Approval of June Minutes: Leaver moved approval of minutes (with correction to Leaver in Tree City report being changed to McCulloch), Zarinnia 2nd, unanimously approved. (No July meeting)

Treasurer's Report: Coburn checked with Treasurer Knedler to make sure he still wants to be treasurer and he does. Balance in UFC account as of 7/31/2017 - \$899.72. Coburn read the budget request letter she is submitting to the Common Council for 2018 for UFC. Reviewed how the \$500 2017 budgeted amount has been spent: four members went to an educational conference in Oshkosh and expenses for the Bird Fair, as well as plants and labels for the Clay Street Nature Park beds (in addition to the 60 or so donated plants that were planted there). UFC hopes to receive more than \$500 for next year in order to continue to educate the residents of Whitewater about birds and trees.

Staff Report: Brian reported that pruning is being done, dead trees in the city are still being removed and will be for some time, and that the ash trees that the city is treating are all doing well at this point. It may be possible to spread the treatments out a little farther as time goes by which will help with the high cost of this treatment.

Bird City/Bird Talk: Coburn reported that about 150 people attended our Bird Fair! People were very interested in what was presented and seemed to really enjoy the event and learned a lot. Discussion was held and all think it was a great success! Stanek will update the Bird City signs at the entrances to Whitewater. Coburn reported that the new criteria list for Bird City is coming. Future ideas were discussed including the Christmas Bird Count, Project Feeder Watch, distribution of Walton Oaks acorns to kids with directions for growing an oak tree, collecting Walton Oaks acorns and selling them for crafts and stuff as a possible fundraiser for the UFC.

Tree City/Tree Talk: Should 2018 be the Year of the Oak? Should we have a Tree of the Year to raise awareness of the incredible oaks in Whitewater and their importance to the entire ecosystem? How can we inform the citizens of Whitewater about the existence of Walton Oaks Park? All members were encouraged to research oak trees to learn things that can be shared such as the fact that flour can be made from acorns and other things the community may find interesting and increase their care for oak trees. Shoen reported that oaks are very important to migrating warblers. McCulloch will check into a possible story competition about oak trees in the schools. Zarinnia will check with Chicago restoration group to find out why they say Wisconsin oaks are so important. Coburn gave an update on Walton Oaks. Stanek reported that the redbud tree planted in the corner bed at Clay Street was split because it has so much foliage on such a slender stem, and will be attempting to repair it.

Main Street Festival: Coburn reported that members will have two spaces this year, one for our canopy and displays and one for Alt and his Migrating Bean Bag game and Stanek with her Snowy Owl cutout. This year the Festival is on Saturday, September 16th from 11 - 4. We will set up at 10 a.m.

Plan Board: Stanek reported on the insufficient landscaping at the Ryan Hughes property at Prince and Main Streets. Mr. Hughes will be adding plantings. Neighborhood Services Director, Chris Munz Pritchard reported that she and UFC members need to get back to finishing the update to Whitewater's Landscape Guidelines and also that she hopes to have a part time staffer check on plantings at developments to prepare a report confirming that plantings are as they were supposed to be according to approved Plan Commission plans.

Park Board: Knedler said that there was much discussion about the new Park Director's plans for the possible draining of Cravath Lake. Stanek said that the report is on the city's website if anybody would like to read it.

Arts Alliance: The Artrageous Bird Exhibit opens on September 7, 2017 and runs through September 17th.

Future Topics: Stanek requested that the Downtown Walking Arboretum be placed on the agenda for our next meeting.

Motion to Adjourn: Leaver moved to adjourn, McCulloch 2nd, unanimously approved.

Next Meeting: September 25, 2017 in City Manager's 2nd floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Stanek, Secretary