

**City of Whitewater  
Urban Forestry Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, May 22, 2012**

**Call to order** by Chairperson, Tiiu Gray-Fow.

**Roll call:**

Members present: Tiiu Gray-Fow, Karen McCulloch, Karen Coburn, Andrew Crone, Brandon Knedler, Jay Craggs,

Absent: Bev Stone

City staff present: Brian Neumeister,

**Approval of Agenda:**

Motion by Karen Coburn, second by Andrew Crone,

Discussion:

Gray-Fow suggested moving citizen comments re: issues not on the agenda right after the agenda items. A motion was made by Karen Coburn to move citizen comments as suggested, seconded by McCulloch. It was unanimously approved.

**Planning and Architectural Review Committee Report:**

Coburn stated that a plan brought before the board failed to follow the landscape guidelines by identifying all trees on the property. The landscape guidelines state all trees over 4 inch in diameter to be removed, and those to remain on property, must be marked. The landscape guidelines are determined by city ordinance. Therefore, the plan was referred to city staff for correction.

Also, the UFC was not notified in time in to review the plans.

**Parks and Recreation Board Report:**

Knedler reported that a retention pond wall will be created to hold drainage off of Clay Street. There will be a pier soon at the Nature Park on Clay Street. Neumeister added that the park was to be cleaned up for use.

**Review of UFC operating documents, i.e. mission statements/ "administrative rules":**

Several members suggested there be a yearly calendar stating when activities by the city forester re: the urban forestry program, such as tree selection, will take place. This will enable the Urban Forestry Committee to schedule meetings to provide its required reviews in a timely manner.

It was also discussed that this committee is responsible for broad policy suggestions such as a review of tree selections. However, it appeared to be the consensus that the committee is not responsible for supervising the details of how the policies are carried out by city staff. It was noted that the committee's recommendations are recommendations and the city forester maintains discretion on their implementation.

Any violations of policies approved by the city council should be directed to the City Forester, the Parks and Recreation Board, the City Manager or the City Council. The committee would still entertain general concerns and suggestions from citizens regarding the Urban Forestry Program and policies.

Committee members seemed to suggest that citizens who are uncomfortable talking directly with a city employee may ask a committee member to suggest ways to best address their concern.

It was also discussed that it is ultimately up to the chair of the committee to decide what items will make it into future agendas. These future agenda items are open for discussions at meetings, but a vote is not required. This issue was important to the committee because members felt that too many agenda items allowed for too much time for comments, leaving little time for committee members to fully address all the agenda items without the meeting going on too late.

Finally, the committee discussed a previously planned agenda item to allow citizens to have thirty minutes at an upcoming meeting to discuss tree pruning and tree selection. The Committee decided not to schedule such a meeting at this time.

No motions were made on this agenda item.

#### **Tree Cuts/Tree Pruning:**

Neumeister stated that there was not much happening regarding pruning at this time of the year. He stated that often the policy is not always written in a way that makes pruning decisions clear and he needs to make a judgment call on what he believes the intent of the policy would suggest in that situation.

It was brought up that the Urban Forestry Management Plan requires that variance from the pruning standards should have specific City Forester input.

#### **Future Agenda items:**

1. Update on bird city
2. Discussion of Downtown Design Committee and which trees are doing well and which trees might be removed. The committee would like to invite members of the Downtown Design Committee to a future Urban Forestry Committee meeting.

**Motion by adjourn:**

by Karen Coburn, to approve. Second by McCulloch

Unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted:

Andrew Crone

Secretary, Urban Forestry Committee