

RSTC Minutes for December 21st, 2020

Meeting called to order at 1810 hours by Mr. Kissinger, Jr.

Special Notes:

- Meeting was held at Public Works in the lunch room with social distancing measure in place. All the necessary safety precautions were in place and all participants wore Mask.

1. Attendance:

- a. Lester Kissinger, Jr. – City Arborist, Shade Tree Administrator / Chair
- b. Robert Reimer – Member
- c. David Moodhart – Member
- d. Margaret Yevics – Member
- e. Thomas Ryan – Member
- f. Donna Reed – City Council - **ABSENT**
- g. Jeff Thompson – Support
- h. John Denick – Support, **ABSENT**
- i. Kyle Zeiber – Public Works Operations Manager

2. Presenters / Guests:

- a. None

3. Review of the minutes from November, 2020

- a. Motion to approve the November minutes made by Mr. Reimer, seconded by Ms. Yevics
 - i. All in favor. 4 Y, 0 N

4. Report of permits

- a. For November, 2020
 - i. Removals – 14
 - ii. Pruning – 10
 - iii. Planting – 0

5. Arborist Report

- a. Classes Attended
 - i. Taught basic pruning practices to RPA maintenance division
- b. Letters sent to Property owners
 - i. None for the month November
- c. Notice of Violations Issued
 - i. 5 for either hazards, pruning, removals or other violations for the month of November
 1. 1 – have be moved to citation
 2. 28 – still pending court since the start of the year
 3. 80 – cases have been closed

- d. Adopt-a-Tree
 - i. 0 – Adopt-a-Tree agreements for Spring of 2021
 - ii. 1 – Letter of interest for Spring 2021
- e. Invoices
 - i. 0 – to property owners
 - ii. 7 – for In House work during November totaling \$6,730.00
 - 1. This work consisted of a tree removal and planting
 - iii. 7 – Contractor Invoices for October totaling \$56,541.17
 - 1. These work orders consisted of work performed at Eglemans (ongoing), Front & Schiller, 6th & Amity, and 423 Schuylkill Av.
- 6. Request for Variance in having to replant
 - a. None
- 7. Review of Zoning Plans
 - a. 615 S. 16th & ½ - Residential property expansion. One tree from removal rear yard. Replanting suggested.
 - b. SALDO amendments
 - i. Thank you to Jeff for his assistance and comments
 - c. Sketch plan review – 401 Penn Street, Alvernia College, No Landscaping review required at this time
 - d. Sketch plan review – Reading Housing Authority, Oakbrook expansion, no Landscaping review required at this time
- 8. Old Business
 - a. Park Assessments
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the assessments continue.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states Egleman Park has been finished. He states 30 +/- trees have been removed along with extensive pruning work
 - b. Mr. Slifko – Memorial Stone
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the Centre Park Committee reached out about moving this forward.
 - 1. Updates to be provided at a later time. Awaiting a meeting date.
- 9. New Business
 - a. Budget:
 - i. Mr. Kissinger note no significant changes to the budget since last month's meeting. He provides an update to where things currently stand up to the end of November.
 - b. Spotted Lantern Fly
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states nothing new to report

- c. Capital Budget 2020
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the plan is to use the \$100,000 allocated in the Capital Budget for this year's work. He notes currently it looks like this amount will need to be rolled into next year as it will need City Councils approval once awarded.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states the assessment of the trees along 5th Street from Canal north to the City Line have been completed. He states the project went out to bid and was advertised on the City's Website. He states the bid opening was scheduled for today, November 16th at 3pm.
 - 1. Mr. Kissinger states only one bid was received in the amount of \$95,000 submitted by Nolde Pines.
 - 2. The commission agrees to move forward with the sole bid and looks forward to the work being completed early next year.
- d. Tree Care Contract 2021
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states contract extension / renewal for the next two years has been signed off on
- e. Pesticide Contract 2021
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states contract extension / renewal for the next two years has been signed off on
- f. Centre Park
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he and Kyle had a meeting with Mr. Lauter and a few committee members. He states the meeting went well. He notes the committee has concerns with the health of the trees around the center circle and seeks a plan moving forward to replace the 9 trees currently there.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states an agreement was made to phase out the trees over the next couple of years, 3 trees at a time until all are replaced. He notes they will start with the 3 trees currently missing and plant in the spring of 2021 with the cycle repeating after that until finished.
 - iii. Mr. Kissinger notes other replacements will also occur throughout the park as trees have come down and created some open voids. He states the Centre Park Committee would like to see some sort of flowering arrangements planted.
- g. Planting Projects
 - i. Mr. Kissinger notes the need to plan for next year's tree plantings. He states he would like to perform large planting projects in City Park, Centre Park, and Eglemans.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger explains he has chosen these parks due to the amount of trees either lost or removed over the last couple of years. He states he believes two dozen or more trees can be planted at each location.
 - iii. The commission agrees a planting project should be done of large scale and that this should be revisited for spring of 2021.

- h. EAB reimbursement
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he has submitted reimbursement for the 2020 treatment Ash Tree Treatment cycle to the state. He reminds everyone this is a 50:50 match. He states we should receive \$ 4,600.00 in reimbursement.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states the state accepted the request and will move it forward on their end for signatures.

10. Information:

- a. Mr. Kissinger states he continues working to address the commission concerns. He asked if anyone had anything new to present.
 - i. No one had any comments at this time.
- b. Mr. Kissinger states the next meeting is scheduled for January 19th, 2021 at 1800 hours.

11. RSTC Observations / Concerns:

- a. Schuylkill Ave Bridge check for branches hanging out over the sidewalk / railing on the west end south side.

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Yevics, seconded by Mr. Ryan at 1900 hours