

RSTC Minutes for January 9th, 2023

Meeting called to order at 1710 hours by Mr. Kissinger, Jr.

Special Notes: No meetings were held during the month of December. Commission held the annual Holiday Diner get together.

1. Attendance:
 - a. Lester Kissinger, Jr. – City Arborist, Shade Tree Administrator / Chair
 - b. Robert Reimer – Member - **ABSENT**
 - c. Vacant – Member
 - d. Margaret Yevics – Member
 - e. Thomas Ryan – Member
 - f. Pamela S Gockley – Member
 - g. Donna Reed – City Council – **ABSENT**
 - h. David Moodhart - Support
 - i. Jeff Thompson – Support - **ABSENT**
 - j. Kyle Zeiber – Public Works Operations Manager / Acting Director - **ABSENT**
2. Presenters / Guests:
 - a. None
3. Review of the minutes from November, 2022
 - a. Motion to approve made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mrs. Gockley
 - i. All in favor, no objections
4. Report of permits for the calendar year 2022
 - a. Removals: 98
 - b. Pruning: 29
 - c. Plantings: 200
 - d. Treatment 1
5. Arborist Report
 - a. Classes Attended
 - i. EnerGov – on going
 - ii. Identifying and managing toxic plants - November
 - iii. PA Pest Management Conference - November
 - b. Letters sent to Property owners for the months of November and December
 - i. None
 - c. Notice of Violations Issued
 - i. 72 for either hazards, pruning, removals or other violations for the calendar year of 2022
 1. (28) moved to Citation

2. (5) for re-inspection coming up
 3. (6) Cases open pending Court for the year of 2022
 - d. Adopt-a-Tree
 - i. 0 – Adopt-a-Tree agreements for Spring of 2023
 - ii. 0 – Letter of interest for Spring 2023
 - e. Invoices for 2022
 - i. 0 – to property owners
 - ii. In House work totaling \$44,899 for the year
 1. Recent work being storm clean up:
 - a. Storm Related
 - b. 300 S. 14th St
 - c. 1610 Hampden Blvd
 - d. Oak Ln and Lorraine
 - e. 1102 & 1104 Allegheny Av
 - iii. Contractor Invoices totaling \$200,856 for the year
 1. Most recent jobs:
 - a. Hillside Pool
 - b. Centre Av pruning – Oley to Spring
 - c. 6th and Canal - Removals
 - d. Elm St and N. 12th
 - e. First Energy Stadium
 - f. Heritage Park removals
 - g. Angelica Creek removals and pruning
 - h. Drenkle Field removal
 - i. BAMBA trail restoration
6. Request for Variance in having to replant
 - a. None
7. Review of Zoning Plans
 - a. RSD High School Academy
 - b. Albright College
 - c. 416-420 Walnut St
 - d. Oakbrook
 - e. 625 McKnight St
 - f. RSD Stem School
 - g. Bern Carwash & Storage
8. Old Business
 - a. Park Assessments
 - i. Mr. Kissinger had nothing to report

- b. Capital Budget 2022
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states Skyline Overlook clearing project has finished. He notes the project did not exceed the budget.
9. New Business
- a. Budget:
 - i. Mr. Kissinger reviewed the final numbers for 2022.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger spoke briefly on the 2023 budgets but notes he has not received the official budget yet.
 - b. Planting Projects
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he will be working with Larry Lloyd and Berks Nature for plantings in the spring at Schlegel Park and Reading High
 - c. Arbor Day 2023 will be the City's 38th year participating
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he will be working with Reading High to host the ceremony.
 - d. Contracts
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the tree contract expired at the end of the year. He notes the 2023 contract is out to bid.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states the weed and vegetation contract has also expired. He notes the 2023 contract is out to bid.
 - e. Ordinance
 - i. Fees.
 - 1. Mr. Kissinger states currently there are no fees associated for trees. He notes the fee schedule is listed under the city's codified ordinance 212-143, Ordinance No. 42-1973.
 - 2. Mr. Kissinger states if the commission is looking to enact a fee schedule it will require an ordinance amendment. He notes the commission would need to decide what fees would be associated with this section.
 - a. Mrs. Gockley states there should be a fee for the permit. She tossed around the idea of \$25.00. She also liked the idea of a fee associated with the plan reviews.
 - 3. Mr. Kissinger states he will work on a draft to present at the next scheduled meeting. He states at that time a review of the draft can occur and if everything looks good he can then move it forward to present to City Council.
 - 4. The commission supports the idea of a fee schedule. Mrs. Gockley states she believes the fee schedule will help raise awareness that the commission is engaged in prompting proper healthy tree care. She notes with having a fee it is hopeful that it will engage the responsible party who applies for the permit more accountable.

10. Information:

- a. Mr. Kissinger states the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 13th, 2023
 - i. He notes he will be away at a conference at the time the February meeting would have been scheduled.
- b. Mr. Kissinger provides a brief update on the MP3 initiatives with regards to the trail feasibility study and forester management plan.

11. RSTC Observations / Concerns:

- a. None

12. Adjournment:

- a. Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Gockley, seconded by Mr. Ryan at 1830 hours