

RSTC Minutes for March 15th, 2021

Meeting called to order at 1807 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.

Note there was no meeting held in February 2021

1. Attendance:
 - a. Lester Kissinger, Jr. – City Arborist, Shade Tree Administrator / Chair
 - b. Robert Reimer – Member - **ABSENT**
 - 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 January, 2021
 - a. Motion to approve the January minutes made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Yevics
 - i. All in favor. 3 Y, 0 N
4. Report of permits
 - a. For January, 2021
 - i. Removals – 2
 - ii. Pruning – 6
 - iii. Planting – 0
 - b. For February 2021
 - i. Removals – 4
 - ii. Pruning – 1
 - iii. Planting – 0
5. Arborist Report
 - a. Classes Attended
 - i. Urban Forestry Health, Insect, and Disease Updates – In Jan.
 - ii. Ornamentals Update – In Jan.
 - iii. Online PennDel Shade Tree Symposium
 - iv. Tree City USA Online Conference

- v. PA Insect & Disease Update
 - vi. Strategies to Prioritize Treatment
 - b. Letters sent to Property owners
 - i. None for the month January or February
 - c. Notice of Violations Issued
 - i. 6 for either hazards, pruning, removals or other violations for the month of January and 1 for the month of February
 - 1. 3 – have be moved to citation
 - 2. 14 – still pending court or listed as open since the start of 2020
 - 3. 10 – cases pending inspection or court
 - 4. 1 – has been closed for year 2021
 - d. Adopt-a-Tree
 - i. 0 – Adopt-a-Tree agreements for Spring of 2021
 - ii. 1 – Letter of interest for Spring 2021
 - 1. Have not heard back from the person
 - e. Invoices for January and February 2021
 - i. 0 – to property owners
 - ii. 6 – for In House work during January and February totaling \$43,750.40
 - 1. Keffer Park fence clearing,
 - 2. Tree Removal Penske Drive
 - 3. Grubbing of Rock @ Pagoda
 - 4. Landscaping @ City Garage
 - 5. Removal of tree obstruct Traffic
 - iii. 4 – Contractor Invoices for January and February totaling \$23,472.88
 - 1. These work orders consisted of work performed at:
 - a. Oak Lane – Finished up
 - b. 500-600 Centre Av
 - c. 800 N. 4th St
 - d. 300-400 Spring St
 - e. Cul-de-sac off W. Buttonwood
6. Request for Variance in having to replant
- a. None
7. Review of Zoning Plans
- a. Reading Skate Park – 601 Canal St
 - i. No Changes
 - ii. Contractor did inquire about adding evergreens for screenings. No objections presented
 - b. Hemmingbird Hill – 1375 Pershing Blvd
 - i. Grading Concerns
 - 1. Landscaping not affected
 - c. Reading Housing Authority – 1001 Scott St
 - i. Specie selection around parking area approved
 - d. Reading Soda Works – 614 Gregg Av
 - i. Specie selection around parking area approved

- e. Medical Arts Building – 200 Block N. 5th
 - i. Concerns awaiting a revision and response
- f. Hope Rescue Mission
 - i. Specie selection approved. No concerns presented

8. Old Business

- a. Park Assessments
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states all the major parks have been finished
 - ii. No work currently scheduled for any parks
- 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.
 - 2. Nothing new to report

9. New Business

- a. Budget:
 - i. Mr. Kissinger reviewed the budget for 2021 up to the end of February. No majors changes or expenditures presented
- b. Spotted Lantern Fly
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states nothing new to report
- c. Capital Budget 2021
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the plan is to use the \$90,000 allocated in the Capital Budget for the 5th Street Pruning project. He states the administration will need to move \$5,000.00 to cover the rest of the cost as the project was awarded at \$95,000.00.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states the work is expected to start any day now but was slightly delayed due to weather (snow) and on hold due to a parking sign cost increase not anticipated when the project was bid out.
- d. Planting Projects
 - i. Mr. Kissinger notes the need to plan for this year's tree plantings. He states he would like to perform large planting projects in City Park, Centre Park, and Egglemans.
 - 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 this year.
 - 1. Pending CoVid-19 this will be considered for Fall 2021

- e. EAB reimbursement
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the fund has been reimbursed received \$ 4,600.00 in reimbursement from the state.

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 April 19th, 2021 at 1800 hours.
- c. Mr. Kissinger states paperwork has been submitted for Arbor Day 2020 recognition
- d. Mr. Kissinger states he has begun planning for Arbor Day 2021
 - i. He notes from the last meetings discussion that a tree planting would occur in City Park
 - ii. He states there is plenty of open space and is considering planting 8 trees in clusters of 4.
 - 1. Kyle recommends Shade Trees and Ornamentals
 - iii. Mr. Kissinger states he will also plant 3 new trees in Centre Park to which he has already agreed to do at the Centre Park committee request.
 - iv. Mr. Kissinger mentions he received a call from the Met-Ed Forester who has funding for Arbor Day. He notes the Forester states there is about \$1,500 to be spent.
 - 1. Mr. Kissinger will continue to work out the details and have an update at next month meeting.
- e. Mr. Kissinger states the focus of this years contracted work will be along the City Right of Ways. He expressed there are many trees requiring work along the sweeper routes and upon approaching intersections with line of site issues. He states this work would be done at random based off complaints and visual observations made while out inspecting.
 - i. The Commission has no objections.
- f. Mr. Kissinger states he had a meeting at 401 Penn Street. He provides brief updated on the proposed landscaping changes to be more in line with Alvernia Vision.
 - i. He states he has another meeting coming up and additional information will be provided at a later meeting
- g. Mr. Kissinger provides a brief update about the unpredictable tragic accident that occurred on the Lindbergh Viaduct last Thursday evening (3/11/21).

11. RSTC Observations / Concerns:

- a. None

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Yevics, seconded by Mr. Moodhart at 1905 hours