

RSTC Minutes for March 13th, 2023

Meeting called to order at 1610 hours by Mr. Kissinger, Jr.

Special Notes: None

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 January, 2023
 - a. Motion to approve made by Mrs. Yevics, seconded by Mr. Ryan
 - i. All in favor, no objections
4. Report of permits for February 2023
 - a. Removals: 10
 - b. Pruning: 2
 - c. Plantings: 1
 - d. Treatment 0
5. Arborist Report
 - a. Classes Attended
 - i. EnerGov – on going
 - ii. 34th Annual Design Symposium Landscape, Ecology, Culture
 - iii. Updates for managing Asian Longhorn Beetle
 - iv. Turf and Ornamental Conference
 - v. Penn-Del Shade Tree Symposium
 - b. Letters sent to Property owners for the months of February
 - i. None
 - c. Notice of Violations Issued
 - i. 1 for either hazards, pruning, removals or other violations for February
 1. (0) moved to Citation

2. (4) for re-inspection coming up, (3) still outstanding from 2022
 3. (5) Cases 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 2023
 - i. 0 – to property owners
 - ii. In House work totaling \$4,180 for the year
 1. Recent work being storm clean up:
 - a. 340 Reed Street, Homeless camp removal
 - b. 1426 Oak Lane, Tree from Mt Penn
 - c. 100 S. 5th at Library, light install
 - d. 1707 EcKert Av, tree blocking
 - iii. Contractor Invoices totaling \$0 for the year
 1. Most recent jobs:
 - a. None
6. Request for Variance in having to replant
 - a. None
7. Review of Zoning Plans
 - a. Albright College
 - b. 420 Walnut St
 - c. Oakbrook Daycare
 - d. 625 McKnight St
 - e. Holly Trinity Church
 - f. Bern Carwash & Storage
 - g. Berks Catholic Pavilion
 - h. Triple Duce Car Wash
 - i. O'Neill Storage
 - j. Tulpehocken St and W. Buttonwood Utility Project
8. Old Business
 - a. Park Assessments
 - i. Mr. Kissinger had nothing to report
 - b. Capital Budget 2023
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states the new utility truck is order
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states the Deer Management Plan will be renewed with USDA

9. New Business

a. Budget:

- i. Mr. Kissinger reviewed the 2023 budget.

b. Planting Projects

- i. Mr. Kissinger states he will be working with Larry Lloyd and Berks Nature for plantings at Schlegel Park. He notes 20 new trees will be planted this spring. Berks Nature is paying for 15 and Bartlett Trees is paying for 5 from a grant from the West Reading Rotary Club.

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. He notes 28 new trees will be planted in front of the High School.
- ii. Mr. Kissinger will share the press release.

d. Contracts

- i. Mr. Kissinger states the tree contract goes in front of City Council this evening, Monday, March 13th. The recommendation is to award the contract to Nolde Pines
- ii. Mr. Kissinger states the weed and vegetation contract goes in front of City Council this evening, Monday, March 13th. The recommendation is to award the contract to Bartlett Tree Experts

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, April 10th, 2023 at 1600 hours.
- 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. Mr. Moodhart reports there is tree debris at the corner of Centre and Windsor.
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he is aware and waiting to talk with the new owners.
- b. Ms. Gockley inquired about sending a letter to the editor to explain the importance of trees and that the Shade Tree Commission is here to help. She asked for permission to send it.
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he does not know the answer to that and will have to talk with the Operations Manager / Acting Public Works Director.
- c. Ms. Gockley states she is attending an event at the Vo-Tech on May 6th and will promote the Shade Tree Commission while in attendance.
- d. Ms. Gockley inquired about Earth Day and will we have a table. Mr. Kissinger states he will get back to her on that.
- e. Ms. Gockley states we should consider a welcome packet for new property owners. She states it could explain the importance of trees and how they play an important part in the community.
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he will look into it but was not aware of a packet that goes out.

12. Adjournment:

- a. Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Gockley, seconded by Mrs. Yevics at 1715 hours