

RSTC Minutes for September 22nd, 2020

Meeting called to order at 1805 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. Frank Denbowski – Mayor Chief of Staff
 - i. Frank took time to introduce himself. Frank let the Commission know the Mayor's office is here to help. He notes the Mayor is supportive of the Commission. He states if any help is ever needed don't hesitate to ask.
 - ii. Frank states the Mayor is big on community events. He notes the Mayor's office would be interested in helping when it comes to the Adopt-a-Tree program. He expressed the belief a community event of that sort would be good for the community in giving back to the environment.
 - iii. Mr. Reimer took the time to thank Mr. Denbowski. Reimer states he appreciate Mr. Denbowski and reminds everyone that years ago the commission would not have a budget if it was not for him.
 1. Denbowski thanks Mr. Reimer for his comments

3. Review of the minutes from August, 2020

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

4. Report of permits

- a. For August, 2020
 - i. Removals – 11
 - ii. Pruning – 9
 - iii. Planting – 0

5. Arborist Report
 - a. Classes Attended
 - i. Pesticide update for Spring and Summer 2020
 - b. Letters sent to Property owners
 - i. None for the month August
 - c. Notice of Violations Issued
 - i. 15 either for hazards, pruning, removals or other violations for the month of August
 1. 3 – have be moved to citation
 2. 24 – still pending court since the start of the year
 - d. Adopt-a-Tree
 - i. 0 – Adopt-a-Tree agreements for Fall of 2020
 - ii. 1 – Letter of interest for Spring 2021
 - e. Invoices
 - i. 0 – to property owners
 - ii. 4 – for In House work during August totaling \$11,732.50
 1. This work consisted of land clearing along River Rd & Spring St, Tree Removals at Bernhardt and Schlegels, and Varies storm work
 - iii. 5 – Contractor Invoices for August totaling \$34,324.74
 1. These work orders consisted of work performed at Centre Park and Pendora Park
6. Request for Variance in having to replant
 - a. None
7. Review of Zoning Plans
 - a. Reading Soda Works – Tree placement, species selection per plan Tilia tomentosa ‘Wandell’
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he had no objections and issued approval
 - b. 18th Wonder Project
 - i. Reviewed the construction documents with the Commission. He noted this project will take place on Hancock Blvd / E. Wyomissing Blvd. from Lancaster Av to Museum Road
 1. Mr. Reimer asked were the funds were coming from? Mr. Kissinger states Grant money from the state.
 2. Mr. Thompson expressed concerns with the proposed Orchard trees due to the extensive maintain required to maintain them.
 - ii. Mr. Kissinger states this is just the preliminary review and will provide updates as things move forward. He notes he will send the colored PDF out for review.

8. Old Business

a. Park Assessments

- i. Mr. Kissinger states the assessments continue to go well. He notes Nolde Pines has recently finished Centre Park and started Pendora Park.
- ii. Mr. Kissinger notes once finished at Pendora the contractor will be moving to Egleman Park. He states 30 +/- trees have been flagged for removal along with extensive pruning work to be formed

b. Downtown Tree Work

- i. Mr. Kissinger states nothing new since last month meeting. He notes he did speak with the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and that Aaron Gantz is now leaning more towards a fall / winter project.
 - a. Updates to follow.

9. New Business

a. Budget:

- i. Mr. Kissinger note no significant changes to the budget. He provides an update to where things stand up to the end of August.

b. Spotted Lantern Fly

- i. Mr. Kissinger states SLF is active but not as bad as in the years past. He states he has received some calls questioning there life cycle.

c. Capital Budget 2020

- i. Mr. Kissinger states there is \$100,000 to work with this year.
- ii. Mr. Kissinger states he performed an assessment of the trees along S. 5th and N. 5th from Canal to Bern Street. He states 3 Contractors were solicited to provide quotes.
 1. He notes of those 3 only 1 submitted a bid. That bid total being \$96,000.
 - a. The other two contractors did not respond
- iii. Mr. Kissinger asked the Commission how they wanted to proceed. He reminds the Commission of the City's purchasing policy and notes this will have to go out for formal bid through the purchasing office due to price.
 1. Mr. Reimer makes a motion to move forward with getting the work done. Mr. Ryan seconds the motion and express the need for this work to be completed.
 - a. All in favor: 4 Yes, 0 No

d. Tree Care Contract 2021

- i. Mr. Kissinger advises he will be renewing the Contract with Nolde Pines. He reminds everyone that this is a one year contract with the option to renew for 2 additional years, one year at a time.
- ii. Ms. Yevics asked if things were going well with Nolde Pines.
 1. Mr. Kissinger states yes, there are no major concerns.

- e. Pesticide Contract 2021
 - i. Mr. Kissinger advises he will be renewing the contract with Ehlich for year two. He notes this contract is set up the same way the tree contract works. One year with the option to renew up to two additional years.
 - ii. Ms. Yevics asked about the satisfaction with this company.
 - 1. Mr. Kissinger notes there was some problems but this was their first year doing the work. He expresses hopefully those issue will be fixed going into year two.
- f. Centre Park
 - i. Mr. Kissinger states he had spoken with the Centre Park committee. He notes they would like to plant more trees in the park. He reminds the commission of the concerns in the past with too many trees and not enough light. He also expressed that a couple years ago tree planting was not an option since it didn't meet the Centre Park Master Plan.
 - ii. Mr. Zeiber expresses that the Centre Park Committee submit their request in writing. He notes the need to meet with the committee to review tree placement, species selection, and a total. He expresses the need for commitment in assisting in planting the trees. He asked Mr. Kissinger reach back out.

10. Information:

- a. Mr. Kissinger states he continuously works 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 October 19th, 2020 at 1800 hours.
- c. Mr. Kissinger states the EAC would like to plant a tree in remembrance of Mr. Molteni. He states the tree will be planted in Eglemans park next spring, species selection will be Mr. Molteni tree of choice, that being a Sycamore tree.

11. RSTC Observations / Concerns:

- a. Mr. Moodhart provides the following list.
 - i. 103 S. 3rd Street - Hazard
 - ii. 402 Douglass Street - Stump
 - iii. 10th and Washington – Pruning concerns
 - iv. 1100 Perkiomen Ave – Dead Ash

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Yevics, seconded by Mr. Moodhart at 1915 hours