

**Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2013**

In Attendance:

Dave Colteryahn, chair
Greg LoBuono, vice-chair
Veronica Craig, recording secretary
Becky Montag
Tom Nault
Rodney Spencer, Parks Board Liaison
Bob Schappacher, Parks and Recreation Representative
Dave Crouch, Public Utilities Director for the City of Fairfield

Absent: Brian DeRoo, Mitch Rhodus, Chuck Ullrich

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by chairperson Dave Colteryahn. The EC met at the Water Plant, at the invitation of Dave Crouch. Discussion and a tour followed the meeting.

Minutes: The minutes for the October 2nd meeting were approved with no corrections.

Standing Business

Correspondence/Articles: Bob shared an article from *The Wall Street Journal* which cited a link between home values and street trees. In 2010, it is estimated that a property's value was +1600 dollars higher if there were street trees. The urban canopy is important to homeowners.

EC Activity Hours: Dave/2, Greg/1.5, Tom/1, Veronica/4.

Adopt-a-Roadway: Veronica and her husband did the October clean-up the day before Halloween. They picked up two bags of trash -- mostly cans, paper and glass bottles.

Becky will do November's clean-up, and Tom will take December.

Parks Board Report

Rodney reported that the Fairfield Youth Baseball Association attended last month's Parks Board meeting. The FYBA explained that although expenses are up, enrollment is up, too. This popular program, run by volunteers, is self-funded and relies on registration fees, etc. to meet expenses.

The Parks Board officially approved the name for the Memorial Grove. The sign will read "Honor Grove at Creekside Park." Two other signs will identify the surrounding areas as "Creekside Park." Funds have already been appropriated for the signage through the CIP.

Parks Department Report

Website Update: Bob included last month's statistics in the meeting packet. The number of visits is about the same as it has been in previous months, averaging between 30 and 40.

Creekside Honor Grove: Lois is working on the design for the three signs. The irrigation system is ready to be installed, and quotes will be going to Council on Monday. It will only take a few days of work to do the installation.

Rodney and Veronica asked about signs with rules and regulations for this new park. Bob said that he has found that area residents have proved very responsible when using the other parks.

Those who have had trees planted in Harbin Park have felt an ownership to their tree, and some even help with its maintenance. Furthermore, residents, in general, are very respectful of our public lands and are good about picking up after their pets. There will be a “doggie depot” at the new park, with bags and a place to dispose of pet waste.

Natorps Tree Offer: Natorps Nursery in Mason has offered free trees to area communities. Bob applied, and Fairfield qualifies for 25 free trees. Many species are being offered, and the trees will be a good size for cities to use as street trees, etc.

Bob asked the Commission about allocating three of these trees to the new Honor Grove. The EC strongly supported his plan. Greg suggested that one of the trees could be planted in honor of the citizens of Fairfield. The EC was all in favor of this, and is very appreciative of Natorp’s generous, timeless gift.

Tree City Applications: The annual application is due December 6, and Ben will help Bob tally up this year’s points. It is possible that Fairfield may qualify for the Growth Award, which is based on dollars spent and program initiated on urban tree canopy improvements.

The awards luncheon will be held in April of 2014 in Tipp City, Ohio, north of Dayton.

Other Business

Woodbridge Blvd: Becky reports that many of the new replacement street trees along this stretch are doing poorly or are dead. Gator bags were not placed on them at planting, and the stress is now evident. Bob will follow through with Public Works, who has taken over tree maintenance. The trees are guaranteed for one year.

Scout Meeting: Wendi asked for a volunteer to talk to a local scout troop about trees. Dave, a former Eagle Scout, stepped up to offer his expertise. He met with the Webelos of Cincinnati Christian Academy, and explained why trees and other plants are so important to us, to wildlife and to our planet. He talked about how trees provide us with oxygen to breathe through photosynthesis, and that this is part of a cycle we need to survive. Thank you, Dave.

Meeting Change: The EC voted to not meet in December, due to the busy holiday season. The next meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2014.

Calendar:

Parks Board Meeting – November 19, 2013 at 6:00 pm, CAC

EC Meeting – January 8, 2014 at 6:00 pm, Water Plant, Groh Lane

Adjournment: at 6:45 pm