

**Environmental Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
October 1, 2014**

**In Attendance:**

Dave Colteryahn, chair  
Greg LoBuono, vice-chair  
Veronica Craig, recording secretary  
Adam Sackenheim  
Becky Montag  
Tom Nault  
Gwen Ritchie  
Chuck Ullrich  
Bob Schappacher, Parks and Recreation Representative  
Rodney Spencer, Parks Board Liaison

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by chairperson Dave Colteryahn.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes for the September 3, 2014 meeting were approved with no corrections.

**Standing Business**

**Correspondence/Articles:** Dave noted that California has just passed a bill outlawing plastic bags. Becky supplied additional information and a discussion followed.

**Hours Spent on EC Activities:** Dave/4, Greg/2, Chuck/1, Tom/1, Adam/1, Veronica/2

**Adopt-A-Roadway:** Dave will be doing October's clean-up, and Adam will do Nov./Dec. Bob will have a sign-up sheet available for EC members to choose a two month slot for 2015.

**Parks Board Report**

Bob reported for Rodney that the 2015 Parks Budget was a main topic of discussion. There is an increase of \$300K for next year because of health care costs and union raises.

Mark Conter reported that the City is ready to begin the second phase of work on Marsh Lake when the area next to it becomes City property. At that time, after the current owners, Martin Marietta, wrap up their mining operation, work will begin that more than doubles the size of the lake. A larger lake will open up activities such as boating, in addition to fishing and walking trails with fitness stations.

**Parks Department Report**

**Website Update:** The stats are gradually rising, which the EC found very encouraging.

**Creekside Tree Legacy:** An additional 7 new trees have been purchased from the 119 on the master plan, and they will be planted in the next month or so.

The bronze plaque has arrived, and its stone base is being built. Twice yearly, the master plaque will be updated as new purchases are made.

The irrigation system was completed, but has not had to be used due to the excellent weather.

Within two weeks, the gravel walkway will be extended. A honeycomb grid keeps the gravel in place but allows for proper drainage, as stipulated by the grant.

**Harbin Park:** The City is feeling the effects of the EAB infestation. Bob reported that he has marked 26 ash trees to be removed from the park this fall, and an additional 25 to 30 more next year. These ashes were either at least 50% dead or are a danger because they overhang parking areas. Public Works will lend a hand by hauling the logs to a holding area to be ground in the tub grinder.

This culling process will open up some spaces for legacy trees at Harbin Park. Discussion followed. Rodney asked if there were any restrictions on tree species to replace the ones that are being removed. Bob responded that residents could choose any approved tree, thus assuring more diversity in the future.

The question was raised as to whether any ash trees are surviving. The unfortunate answer is that only those trees which have been treated seem to remain uninfected.

**New Tree City Sign:** The sign celebrating Fairfield's Tree City status was placed by the Golf Course near Today Homes. By November, a second sign will be installed at Cincinnati Financial.

**Izaak Walton Tree Planting:** Bob reported that this fall's planting will be held on October 16<sup>th</sup>. Tom, a league member, explained that this year 80 fourth graders from Central Elementary will be participating. In groups of two, they will plant 40 hardwoods at Marsh Lake. McDonalds provides lunch for the event. This bi-annual planting has helped offset the EAB loss of our urban canopy.

### **Commissioner Reports**

**November Meeting:** The agenda for next month's meeting joint meeting with Hamilton was discussed. There will be many topics to cover, so preparation is essential for a successful exchange of information. Hamilton's liaison, Mark Murray, has thanked the Fairfield EC for inviting them, and feels that both groups will benefit from the meeting. Greg will e-mail Mark to ask how many members are expected to attend and topics/issues they would like to address.

Adam felt that it is a priority that each group be given time to share their accomplishments and their goals for the future. Discussion followed, with a decision to spotlight each City's tree projects for the past decade, and highlight a five year plan for upcoming projects. Dave would like to see tree maintenance plans discussed. All EC members agreed that the above information would provide opportunities for cooperation between our cities.

Bob asked EC members to decide on details such as foods and beverages, and about the actual meeting agenda. Members complied.

### **Other Business**

**Tree Markers:** Dave helped Ben tag unmarked trees at Huffman Park. They were able to place about 80 stakes, leaving 15 trees as yet untagged. Gwen, a master gardener, said that she could try to identify some of the remaining species, although some may prove difficult.

Unfortunately quite a few trees are in rough shape. Dave was able to prune some of them, but others need to be staked or protected from deer with black flexible tubing around the trunks.

He stressed that a maintenance plan is important, and suggests a larger mulch area around each tree and a dose of fall fertilizer.

Bob said that the City will be planting wildflower seeds in the top portion of the central area to attract butterflies next year. Milkweed will also be sown, and that seed has been procured.

**Project Volunteers:** Adam, who has worked with the Institute for Environmental Sustainability, feels that graduate students would be an excellent resource for the EC in upcoming projects such as the tree inventory. Gwen said that she has helped Hamilton with their tree count. Since some projects require a lot of time, knowledge and people-power, using qualified volunteers makes a lot of sense. The EC concurred, and Adam has offered to contact the IES director.

**Calendar:**

Tree City Academy – October 6 & 7, 2014 from 9 am to 3:30 pm, Colligan Lodge, Hamilton, OH

Izaak Walton Tree Planting – October 16, 2014 at Marsh Lake

Parks Board Meeting – October 21, 2014 at 6:00 pm, CAC

SW Ohio Urban Forestry Conference – October 22, 2014 from 9 am to 3:00 pm, Mason OH

EC Fairfield/Hamilton Meeting – November 5, 2014 at 6:00 pm, CAC

**Adjournment:** at 7:19 pm