

**Environmental Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
September 3, 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

**Absent:** Rodney Spencer

**Guests:** Wendi Van Buren, ODNR Regional Urban Forester; Chad Oberson, City Council

Meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. by chairperson Dave Colteryahn.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes for the last meeting, June 4, 2014, were approved with one addition – a note that the scheduled August meeting was cancelled due to the lack of a quorum.

**Guest Speaker Wendi Van Buren:** The EC invited Wendi, SW Ohio's Urban Forester, to attend this meeting. Members were appreciative that she took the time to come and speak about issues and upcoming events in our region. She passed out business cards with her contact numbers, and quick-reference cards with information about the Asian Longhorned Beetle and Thousand Canker Disease.

Wendi passed around an ALB specimen, the first many members had seen. She explained the difficulties with the test tree process. The ODNR chooses 2 to 6 trees per site around Memorial Day. There is a one-month window for the hatching larvae, but there is only a one-day opportunity to trap the new hatchlings on a given tree before they bore into the tree, thus evading early detection. As yet, the outside edge of the ALB infestation, which has affected over 10,000 trees, has not been located.

Thousand Canker Disease is a fungus carried by the small walnut beetle, and it is attacking black walnut trees in our area. The ODA is looking for test trees to set up traps for these beetles, however, as this is a relatively new disease in our region, there is no federal funding available for monitoring its spread. A stressed tree shows signs of early canopy yellowing, often difficult to identify, especially in this season. Butler County is under quarantine, both for this fungus and EAB. No wood should be moved out of our county.

Wendi discussed her upcoming Southwest Ohio Urban Forestry Conference on Wednesday, October 22 at the Mason Municipal Center. One of the key topics will be "Storm Planning and Preparedness for Communities." FEMA rules and responses will be discussed. Ten years after a tornado swept through Montgomery, their City Arborist will share what they have learned about replanting their urban canopy. All individuals involved in tree care are urged to attend this event.

Hamilton will be hosting Wendi's two-day Tree City Academy on October 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>. She passed out a syllabus for the "freshman year." City employees and residents who are interested in the urban canopy are encouraged to sign up. EC members Tom and Veronica will be attending.

The Tree City Luncheon will be held this year in Wyoming on Friday, April 17. More information will follow after the first of the year.

**Guest Speaker Chad Oberson:** As a Councilperson, Chad feels an effort must be made to plant additional trees in our community. With the loss of so many ash trees, there are areas that are lacking any street trees. He expressed a desire to find funding to help replant Fairfield's depleted canopy. The benefits would be both environmental and aesthetic. Reaching out to the EC, Chad hopes to have help identifying areas of our community that have lost trees and to design a plan for replanting. Wendi Van Buren offered her help with the project, stressing the importance of dead/diseased tree removal and the maintenance (care and pruning) of our remaining trees. Finally, replanting should be staggered over several years so they all do not reach maturity at the same time. Diversity is also a key. The EC is committed to the care and improvement of our urban forest, and shares Councilperson Oberson's desire to replace lost trees.

### **Standing Business**

**Correspondence/Articles:** None this month.

**Hours Spent on EC Activities:** Adam/2, Chuck/2, Tom/3, Greg/3, Dave/3, Becky/2, Veronica/4

**Adopt-A-Roadway:** Tom did the July/August clean-up – twice—and reported it was in good shape. The schedule for the rest of the year is as follows: Sept./Oct. – Dave; Nov./Dec. – Adam.

### **Parks Board Report**

Bob reported for Rodney that the Master Plan for the assessment and needs of City facilities is almost complete. Indiana University's final report is forthcoming next month.

Fairfield's recreational facilities and parks were evaluated by the NRPA. One of only 100 or so communities across the country to receive this accreditation, Fairfield scored 140 out of a possible 144 points. This makes us one of only 9 or 10 cities in Ohio to earn this honor.

### **Parks Department Report**

**Website Update:** The stats for June, July and August are included in this month's meeting packet. June, the busiest month, had 60 sessions, 40 users and 374 pageviews

**Master Plan:** The finished report by Indiana University will be completed by the end of October. It will then go to Council for review and approval.

**Creekside Tree Legacy:** September 15<sup>th</sup> is the last day to purchase legacy trees for this fall's planting. Already 12 or 13 trees have been chosen and will be in the ground before winter.

The irrigation system is complete, with couplers placed every 100 feet for easy watering.

The large plaque is being shipped. It will rest on a limestone base, and ultimately will list all the legacy trees and whom each one honors or memorializes.

**Huffman Park:** Local milkweed seed has been donated to attract monarch butterflies to Huffman Park. The bulk of the seed will be sown this fall, with a smaller percentage reserved for a spring planting. The seed requires cold temperatures for successful germination.

**Miscellaneous:** Sara Fehring, Fairfield's naturalist, provided EC members with brochures spotlighting upcoming Fall activities at the park, which is specially designed for children.

## **Commissioner Reports**

**Tree Commission Academy:** Wendi's TCA will be held next month in Hamilton. Tom and Veronica will be attending. The City will reimburse them for the registration fee.

**October Meeting:** The agenda for next month's meeting was discussed. Hamilton's Tree Board will be attending Fairfield's November meeting, and Greg stressed the importance of using next month's meeting to plan for the event. There will be many topics to cover, so preparation is will be essential to a successful exchange of information. EC members were encouraged to have ideas ready for October's planning session.

## **Other Business**

**Tree Markers:** Ben has asked for the EC's help in identifying trees that have lost their tags at Huffman Park. Members will meet there at 3:30 pm on Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. It should only take a half hour or so, but it must be done before those trees loose their leaves.

### **Calendar:**

Tree Marking with Ben – September 13, 2014 at 3:30 pm, Huffman Park

Parks Board Meeting – September 16, 2014 at 6:00 pm, CAC

EC Meeting – October 1, 2014 at 6:00 pm, CAC

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

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

**Adjournment:** at 7:57 pm