

St. Joseph Tree Board Meeting Minutes
6:00 p.m. – St Joseph MO City Hall.
February 17, 2022

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Attendance</u> (mtgs attended-mtgs absent)	<u>Term of Office</u>
Members present:	Mechelle Cox, Chairperson	5-2	January 13, 2023
	Gregg Mrkvicka, Co-Chair	11-2	January 3, 2023
	David Ball	13-0	
Staff present:	Peggy Shaw, Code Enforcement Clerk		
	Carol Flury, Neighborhood Services Coordinator		
Visitors –	Martha Clark, Arborist		
	Matthew Schwend, Community Forester with MO Conservation Dept.		
	Shelley White		
	Mary Jo Harris		

Quorum established with three members present.

Mechelle Cox called the meeting to order.

Cox asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mrkvicka made the first motion and Ball seconded the motion. All others aye.

Old Business:

Cox asked everyone to go around the table and introduce themselves to the visitors, Shelly and Mary Jo from the Sustainable Energy Action Committee (SEAC).

Cox thanked Schwend for the presentation on pruning he hosted back in November of 2021.

New Business:

The Arbor Day Celebration is Friday, April 29, 2022

The Board needs to decide on which school they would like to have the Arbor Day Tree Planting at. The last planting, prior to COVID, was Oak Grove School.

Ball will contact Dan Hegeman at Evergy to see about their usual donation of a tree for Arbor Day. Ball will also speak with someone at City Hall about flying our Tree City USA Flag in the month of April.

Cox suggested we pick 3 different schools to narrow down and decide on which school will have the Arbor Day Event. Mrkvickia suggested St Francis School. It is a smaller school. Clark mentioned that a tree was previously planted by the Day Care Center at St. Francis School. Generally the Arbor Day Event is held at schools to educate the children in all aspects of trees. Since the event doesn't technically need to be held at a school, Cox questioned if any new Businesses might need trees for landscaping.

The 3 schools decided upon were:

1. St Francis School
2. Carden Park School
3. The Bartlett Center Day Care

Clark will drive by all three places and check for adequate and appropriate places to plant the tree,

Generally, the 4th grade students receive seedlings they may take home to plant. Schwend will see if the Conservation Department nursery has any available. Usually what they have leftover is more like shrubs.

Cox would like to meet again before Arbor Day. Visitor Mary Jo Harris suggested the next meeting of the Tree Board be in March. Shelley Harris, another visitor, asked why the Board does not meet on a monthly basis. Cox responded that due to scheduling conflicts it is difficult to meet monthly. It was previously discussed that meeting quarterly would be the best fit for everyone.

Clark said there are many things that the Tree Board can step up to do. One of them is strategic planning for the City of St Joseph. Clark currently has the inventories, but no one seems to follow up on them. Shelley mentioned that with the new infrastructure plan that recently passed, there is a funding source in it called Healthy Streets. This is to funnel money to cities through a grant process to plant trees in the low income areas. Eco-justice receive a \$25,000 grant and will be starting on this soon and may need some guidance on a few things. Shelly agreed with Clark that the tree inventories need looked at and there should be a long range plan in doing work with the trees. Harris and White are interested in joining the current Tree Board. The Sustainable Energy Action Committee would like to partner with others in the planting of trees.

Flury will give the City Clerk White and Harris' info regarding becoming Tree Board members. Ball plans to be sworn in next week.

Ball mentioned a chainsaw education program with Schwend at the Conservation Department. Schwend will check on these classes. Ball would like to continue with more education after the Arbor Day Event.

Flury suggested once the trees leaf out, that any dead street tree should be reported to Property Maintenance.

White asked if there had been any changes to the ordinance on which trees are allowed to be planted and the do not plant trees. Flury provided White and Harris with the new do not plant list.

Clark has a strategic plan for trees. It is from the Pennsylvania State Extension Committee tree plan for planting trees. Schwend said there is also online classes about Tree Boards and what their duties are. Clark mentioned there are books available for this also.

Harris commented that there will be funding available and the Tree Board should be ready to act upon it. She believes it doesn't look good for a Tree Board to only meet quarterly. A strategic plan needs set up to increase credibility of the Tree Board. Clark says that when the public sees things happening, they become more proactive in doing things on their own.

Cox thanked Ball for keeping the Tree Board going throughout the Covid Pandemic. The Tree Board is open to suggestions, but having time to do things may be a concern for the 3 members. Cox said there is a possibility some things the visitors mentioned could be put on the agenda, but I may be best to speak with Flury first. Flury mentioned with a new Mayor and City Council coming in April, the Tree Board should bring any issues to them. Harris said she believed it was best to ask people before they are elected to office. Flury mentioned that Harris Kemper, Olde Town and Museum Hill will be having the candidates for Mayor and City Council at a forum at the East Hills Library Media Room on March 15, 2022. Olde Town will have a meeting for the Judicial candidates on March 8, 2022 at 7:00pm to 8:45pm. The new Litter Campaign will be there to answer questions also.

Flury mentioned that Kansas City has declared the climate change as an emergency. Flury would like to see a campaign where everyone plant a tree this year to combat it.

Cox said that the Forrest Relief Trees are available for orders.

The 5-way stop at Ashland and Noyes Boulevards would be a good spot for the Tree City USA flag placement. Flury will get with Keven at the Streets Department about putting up a flag pole at this location.

The Sustainable Energy Action Committee is hiring someone to take an overview of the tree canopy.

Cox went over everyone's follow up duties. Thursday work the best for meeting times for everyone.

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 24, 2022 at 6pm at City Hall.. This date should work for everyone.

The April meeting will be April 7, 2022 at 6pm at City Hall.

April 29, 2022 is Arbor Day. Flury has agreed to do photos.

Cox asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ball made the first motion and Mrkvicka seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Shaw, Recording Secretary