

Morgantown Tree Board (MTB)
Minutes, meeting of March 24, 2014

Present: MTB members Katherine Payne, Dan Brown, Dave Barnett, Greg Dahle, Secretary Jon Weems, and Chair Kara Hurst, and city employee Marchetta Maupin.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM in City Council chambers and noted that a quorum was present.

D. Brown moved, and G. Dahle seconded, that reformatted minutes of the 2/05/14 and 2/24/14 meetings be approved as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

1. Demonstration City Grant Contract Work. Consensus was that Bartlett did good work on the pruning contract. M. Maupin has sent the appropriate letter reporting Bartlett's completion of contracted work. M. Maupin indicated two trees (which will be replaced) have been removed for construction near BB&T, one linden near Pita Pit has been removed, and the zelkovas near the Garlow House, the last of the trees to be removed as part of the City's in-kind match for the Demonstration City grant, will be removed soon. While in Morgantown for the contract work, Ben from Bartlett looked at the problematic cherry trees along the rail-trail and agreed several should be removed. The soil may be too thin for healthy tree growth where the cherries are planted.

2. Walnut Streetscape Trees. Plans call for some tree planting in loading zones. Two bump-outs appropriate for tree planting are possible. The original plan has not been enthusiastically received and may be revised.

New Business

1. Garlow House Zelkova Replacement and Use. Some MTB members thought the three zelkovas soon to be removed near the Garlow House might yield a small amount of wood of interest to a local woodworker. However, concern was expressed about the legality of giving the wood away, even though the cash value would be very small, so it was decided not to give the wood away. Planting of a replacement tree would be welcomed by the Library Board as long as the replacement tree would remain small enough to avoid rubbing against the building. No decision was reached about what replacement tree to recommend.

2. Review of Gifts & Memorials Policy. MTB members agreed that the City's policy adopted 10/05/04 is a general document applying to many types of gifts, some of which need little maintenance, but memorial trees have important maintenance needs. D. Barnett suggested a possible 1:1 planting : maintenance donated dollar match for memorial trees. D. Barnett noted that section VII. 2. needs to be revised. The question arose, if maintenance funds are held, who would manage them? The City? Your Community Fund? Some other entity? K. Hurst stated that a consultation with the City Manager would be needed to help work through such issues. Concern was also expressed that a proliferation of memorial plaques is undesirable. Considering the many issues, K. Hurst urged a review of memorial policies of other cities, and perhaps a revision of a good one to make it particularly appropriate for Morgantown. The revised document could then be shared with the City Manager for his consideration before possible presentation to City Council.

The April meeting will be a “working” (field) meeting.

D. Brown moved, and K. Payne seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:44 PM.

_____ Jon Weems