

Morgantown Tree Board (MTB)  
Minutes, meeting of January 26, 2015

Present: MTB members Dan Brown, Dave Barnett, Katherine Payne, Dave Davis, and Secretary Jon Weems, and City Manager Jeff Mikorski.

In lieu of a Chair following Kara Hurst's resignation, City Manager Mikorski called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM in City Council chambers and noted that a quorum was present.

City Manager Mikorski opened the meeting by noting that city code includes no provisions for MTB officers, unlike other city committees and boards. Council would need to vote to change this. Meanwhile, MTB may continue to operate with unofficial officers as in the past. City Manager Mikorski indicated his desire to attend MTB meetings more frequently, but all recognized that his schedule might not always permit this.

D. Barnett moved, and D. Brown seconded, that minutes of the 12/15/14 meeting be approved as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

1. Deckers Creek Trees at Marilla Park/ WV Radio Corporation (WVRC). City Manager J. Mikorski has yet to hear WV Radio Corporation's response to the city's proposal. WVRC has two options if they wish to proceed with tree reduction to improve satellite dish performance, up-front payment or bonding for a period of years.

2. Bartlett Tree Experts. D. Barnett said he has been in contact with Ben (Bartlett, out of Pittsburgh), who may come to Morgantown in February. City Manager Mikorski suggested the possibility of linking two possible Bartlett jobs together.

3. Tree Board Membership. The consensus was that the current, informal structure is working and should be continued pending possible formalization by Council action. Consensus was also reached that D. Barnett would act as Chair, K. Payne as Vice Chair, and J. Weems as Secretary.

4. Pleasant and Walnut Street trees. There remains a chance that the utility lines along Walnut may be moved underground. If this happens, Mon Power would likely begin at University and work all the way up to Spruce. Pleasant Street would not be affected. It was noted that there are many empty tree pits along Pleasant. There was general agreement to apply for a Demonstration City Grant (state money, maximum grant amount \$25,000) to plant trees along Pleasant.

New Business

1. City tree removal/replanting overview. City Manager Mikorski handed out the city's list of hazard trees removed (183 street trees so designated). Winter weather permitting, the remainder of listed hazard trees will be removed soon. City Manager Mikorski noted that WVU has a campus tree replacement policy, but the City does not have a similar plan at present. D. Brown concurred about the number of new trees planted on campus. D. Barnett thanked City Manager Mikorski for submitting the Tree City USA application for Morgantown.

2. City tree inventory. City Manager Mikorski raised the issue of updating the City's tree inventory. D. Barnett stated MTB member G. Dahle may have a Microsoft database suitable for integration of updated data. D. Barnett will contact G. Dahle on this issue. It was noted that having a City Arborist would help immensely with the important task of keeping the inventory updated. D. Davis said a graduate student might be found within WVU's Horticulture program, or elsewhere within the Davis College, to help update the inventory in the short term.

3. Replacement of City/neighborhood trees. It was suggested that each neighborhood council could match City funds for buying and planting trees. MTB would oversee site, choices of trees and planting. Local neighbors would participate in planting and site designations. City Manager Mikorski will pursue discussion of each Ward's interest in tree planting via the City newsletter and Council meeting. This city-wide activity would take place in October 2015 as the City Arbor Day celebration.

**Open Discussion:**

The property for the new Sheets on University Blvd. is reported to have a landscaping plan.

The possibility of signs on Foundry Street indicating the underpass for safe access to the Rail/Trail was mentioned.

City Manager Mikorski gave a brief update on the South University hydroelectric power plant project.

Discussion proceeded concerning Milan Roh's offer to a flowering tree planting at the entrance to the City. K. Payne will contact J. Cumming for an update of Mr. Roh's interest in the project, which could be completed in designated areas safe from future construction.

Motion to adjourn made at 5:36 PM by D. Brown, seconded by D. Davis. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted, \_\_\_\_\_ Jon Weems, Secretary

With special thanks to Katherine Payne