

Morgantown Tree Board (MTB)
Minutes, meeting of October 27, 2014

Present: MTB members Dan Brown, Dave Barnett, Vaike Haas, Secretary Jon Weems, and Chair Kara Hurst, and guest Dave Mitchell.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:38 PM in City Council chambers and noted that a quorum was present.

D. Barnett moved, and D. Brown seconded, that minutes of the 7/28/14 meeting be approved as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Weems moved, and D. Barnett seconded, that minutes of the 8/25/14 meeting be approved as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Barnett moved, and V. Haas seconded, that minutes of the 9/22/14 meeting be approved as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

1. Deckers Creek Trees at Marilla Park/ WV Radio Corporation. The city apparently has yet to hear back from WVRC. D. Brown evaluated the large sycamore using a formula widely accepted in the legal and insurance worlds and came up with roughly \$14,000. He subsequently indicated to City Manager J. Mikorski that \$10,000 would be a reasonable bond amount. J. Mikorski reportedly thought that figure too high. D. Brown has made himself available in case J. Mikorski had questions. It is up to J. Mikorski as the city's tree director to decide on the bond amount. D. Barnett suggested MTB might also plant \$500 worth of understory plants to help stabilize the bank. The Friends of Deckers Creek are expected to participate in the planting. It was decided that no MTB action is needed at this time.

2. Interest Group/Volunteer Coordination. Grad student Arathy Gowda, who is interested in this, may have been preoccupied with academic responsibilities lately. The phone number MTB had for her does not work. K. Hurst has sent her an email.

3. Bartlett Tree Experts/BOPARC. BOPARC is reportedly in agreement to share pruning costs with MTB for pruning trees at Jack Roberts Park. BOPARC will pay the \$2376 to prune the big sycamore, while MTB will take care of the other pruning in the amount of \$3168. [It was noted that MTB would also like to get a quote from Ben at Bartlett to prune the pin oak at the Farmers Market.]

4. Jack Roberts tree issue. There has been a complaint about a red maple tree near a light pole at the basketball court at Jack Roberts Park interfering with light. The complainant may want the tree removed. However, the tree is on Bartlett's \$3168 pruning contract, and MTB believes pruning should resolve the light issue.

New Business

1. Recommendation to City Manager for problem tree management in city right of way. During discussion, a consensus emerged that a phased removal and replacement with better trees is generally preferable to removal of all trees on a block at once.

2. MTB terms. K. Hurst said she had been notified that MTB membership terms expire in November. She will contact MTB members by email to see if they are willing to serve for additional three-year terms.

Open Discussion:

1. White Park. Citizens have expressed concern about damage to the vegetation at White Park from excessive, unmanaged mountain bike riding. Understory plants and tree roots have been damaged. Before a comprehensive management plan can be developed, a tree inventory and a trail map are needed. The WVU GIS lab is working on a trail map. The plan will likely aim to strike a balance to allow continued high-quality mountain biking while reducing erosion and damage to vegetation. BOPARC has reportedly agreed to close some problematic side trails. D. Barnett mentioned that Dave Light and other bike riders do a lot of volunteer work at White Park, but the area has a serious problem with invasive exotic plants, especially winged euonymus. V. Haas reported she has done some preliminary work on White Park vegetation and will present that work to BOPARC's Melissa Burch. D. Barnett noted that Wamsley is paying for a kiosk.

2. Downtown trees. There is continuing concern about tripping hazards downtown. One Pleasant St. tree is being removed. Two tree curbs are being removed on High St. K. Payne mentioned that three hawthorns at the South Park end of the Pleasant St. Bridge need some work.

The next meeting will be November 17 to avoid the holiday week, perhaps followed by a site visit with M. Burch to evaluate trees.

D. Barnett moved, and J. Weems seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously at 6:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted, _____ Jon Weems, Secretary