

Minutes - Blue Island Urban Forestry Board
March 24, 2011 - 7:00 p.m.
Board Room, Blue Island Public Library

Present: Voting Members: Perry Recker, Val Kehoe, Dan Lynch, Chris Buckner
Non-voting Members: Julie Sklom, Sandy Quinn, Barbara Recker.
City Advisers: Ken Stachulak. Guests: Sheryl Short

1. Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m. Perry introduced Cheryl Short who is interested in UFB as she is taking the Treekeepers course and has helped with the community garden.

2. Minutes of the meetings on Feb. 17, 2011 and Jan. 20, 2011 were approved, on motion from J. Sklom.

3. Organizational Policy, Structure, Business

A. Tree City Status

Ken said that when we get our plaque as a Tree City, we will have a celebration to let people know about it and have them become active participants in the process. Lots of work to do to keep our status. We have to apply annually. Illinois is a leader in Tree City cities.

B. Forestry Division: Mayor Peloquin has taken care of the last planting costs. Ken reported that the city now owns a rototiller. His crew will be working on the 119th. street berm. There is money in that TIF area and if we get any of it, new trees will be planted there. Other areas will be cleaned as time and weather permit.

4. Committee Reports

A-B. ME/VR: April 9, 8:00 a.m. - city hall and Blue Island Video spring cleaning and sprucing; April 16 8:00 a.m. - Vermont and Rexford, and then, 127th and Gregory. Need 12 volunteers tops. Ken will bring truck and shovels. Chris will send out email for RSVP to volunteer.

C. Community and Education Outreach

Dan reported on committee meeting held on March 8. At least one of committee member will attend all TGIFs (first one is June 10) this summer to answer questions and hand out information. The committee hopes to have some kind of brochure or other information before the picnics start. If the city hosts another Venetian Nights, the committee would like to plant a tree that night to demonstrate how to do it. Interviews will be set up with Greg Lochow for Channel 4. The interviewees will be Treekeepers, and the interview could be done onsite at a tree

planting event, i.e. Arbor Day. The committee will begin work on a powerpoint presentation for community meetings.

D. Urban Farming and Gardening

Committee has not met but are thinking about going in another direction with people who may not be interested in trees so much as gardening. Discussed a rain barrel promotion with a possible fundraising project to sell them. Perry cautioned that there are several companies that sell rain barrels, and rather than go with one company, we ought to check prices and do some research. Sandy reported on her blocks interest in starting alley gardening or front yard gardening. She suggested a web page: Treetures.com Sandy also submitted a blurb from the newspaper about a program in Evergreen Park that may eventually be something we would like to copy. The town offers biannual tree planting where the residents can choose a tree and have it planted with mulch and root hormone added for a low cost and a replacement guarantee.

E. No bylaw report

B. Val discussed her design for two sites, Veterans Triangle and Rexford/Gregory. No funding yet.

Ken showed pictures of a tree topping that was just done by a homeowner and a violation of the ordinance. He said we should devise a plan so that we can start fining people for violations. Perry said we need a proper form should a homeowner need a permit for tree trimming.

We discussed putting something in water bill that an ordinance exists and what the fines are if the ordinance is violated. We are a tree city and we can't allow tree topping. Ken will work to get this in place with permits.

Motion to publish a notice in the next water bill informing we are a tree city, celebrate arbor day and the board is starting to enforce ordinance not allowing tree topping and it will be enforced by Public Works. Permits can be picked up from Public Works. Dan motioned, Chris seconded. Passed.

Arbor day planting April 29 or April 30 depending on whether we can work in conjunction with a school Arbor Day celebration. Tree keepers will be interviewed by Channel 4.

5. New Business:

Need new board member to replace Mike as a voting member. Sandy no. Julie no. Sheryl Short will think about it.

Val reported that Mark D. will donate his time to update our tree inventory. Val will email him. Great experience for any of us, tree keepers, Ken's crew.

Adjourn 8:23

Next meeting April 14