

Tree and Landscape 2024 February Minutes

Attendance			
Jessie Wagner	1	Ralph Weber	1
Gulizar Baggson	1	Jeannie McIntire	1
Ashley Harris		Mark Lankford	
Nathan Lembke	1	Holly Hook	1
Geoffrey Braga	1	Emily Kroll	1
Taylor Allen	1	Shellie Kerr	1

Guest: Chris Earl (with the Compost Facility)

I. Open Meeting

- a. Meeting opened at 10:02 by Jessie Wagner.
- b. Changes for clarity made to January 2024 minutes. Nathan Lembke motions to approve the changes, Gulizar Baggson seconds. Vote is unanimous.

II. New Business

- a. Spring Tree Giveaway: Conversation ensued regarding the proof of residency requirements for the Giveaway. After debate on the merits of a Driver's License or a Utility Bill, it was decided that a Utility Bill was the most accurate method of proving residency in Bentonville. All advertising around the event should include that information. On the question of how many trees could be distributed per vehicle, it was decided that two trees would be allowed per utility bill, allowing neighbors who may carpool to each receive trees.
Chris Earl from the Compost Facility presented on the logistics of this year's giveaway and how the facility could address traffic concerns from years past. The proposal is that the trees will all be stored in one central location because there is no pre-registration, so traffic will be able to be directed in one route through the facility. This will funnel cars efficiently and reduce congestion. The proposal was also made that all traffic to drop off compost materials would be diverted to a different route through the facility, so Tree Giveaway traffic and compost traffic would not intersect. Signage would be displayed at the entrance to the facility, and recipients would enter through the gate. Needed materials are cones, signage, papers for tree selection and volunteers to direct traffic. Once a route is finalized, police should be requested to direct traffic.
- b. Free Tree Friday: Discussion about tree saplings being shipped bare-root ensued, particularly concerning the practicality of people carrying trees around the event as they walked through other First Friday booths. The concern that the Tree and Landscape Manual requires that bare root trees must be planted when they are fully dormant and that this giveaway could be in contradiction to that as dormancy periods vary from species to species.

[Jessie Wagner leaves the meeting, Nathan Lembke now serving as chair]

- c. Tree Preservation Update: Details were provided by Shelli Kerr that the information about tree preservation on the city website is what has currently been adopted, and that the draft changes are in the document that has been distributed to the committee. The point is made by the committee that revisions to this document should be prioritized for accuracy rather than speed, as there is no firm deadline these revisions must be completed by. Discussion ensued that the prohibited tree list should be emphasized rather than approved trees, to provide more flexibility for people to plant a wide variety of trees. In regard to the scientific names of trees being provided, the suggestion is raised that there could be overarching 'umbrella' term that lists multiple varieties of the species.
- d. Other Business: Shelli Kerr raises the topic of Bentonville residents who want to renaturalize their lawns without being subject to code violations. This would provide protection to residents whose neighbors might complain about wildflower gardens, native or sustainable plant choices. At the next meeting, a draft code amendment will be presented.

III. Adjournment

- a. Nathan Lembke motions to adjourn, Gulizar Baggson seconds. Meeting is adjourned at 11:05.