

Tree and Landscape 2024 October Meeting Minutes

Reagan Roth	1	Ralph Weber	1
Gulizar Baggson	1	Jeannie McIntire	1
Ashley Harris	1	Mark Lankford	1
Nathan Lembke	1	Holly Hook	1
Tyler Cheek	1	Emily Kroll	1
Taylor Allen	1	Shelli Kerr	

1. Open Meeting – Ralph Weber brings meeting to order at 10:02
 - a. Approval of September Minutes – Motion to accept, made by Reagan Roth, Mark Lankford seconds, all in favor.
2. New Business
 - a. Tree Canopy Assessment – Tyler Overstreet. presents to the committee on the canopy assessment. A grant was received (\$90,000 from Walton Family Foundation) for the assessment and action plan, which will develop and prioritize planting budgets. Ralph Weber asks if there will be comparison numbers in the assessment, the answer is yes – it will be done via aerial imaging against the 2021 data and images. There will be parts of the assessment that will guide ordinances for preservation and species selection, as well as maintenance.

Total cost of the Tree Canopy Assessment project is \$110,000. To account for the needed \$20,000 to supplement the grant from the WFF money was moved from promotional activities budget, which includes Tree and Landscape, spending its budgetary reserve. As of 2025, the T&L budget will be back to the normal amount. Gulizar Baggson asks where the assessment will be done, Tyler Overstreet replies that it's city-wide and done by aerial imaging.

In the past, the only work done has been the assessment itself – this time there will be other steps to allow the city to support tree objectives and set goals for Bentonville's canopy. Gulizar Baggson asks if there's any similar cities or benchmarks, or recommendations from Arbor Day. Tyler Overstreet answers that yes, this firm has done work on these projects in the past. Ralph Weber asks if a tree inventory is done, Tyler Cheek answers that an inventory is done by Parks for the trees within city parks. The inventory includes size, health, species,

A member of the committee will be invited to the kickoff event for the Tree Canopy Assessment.
 - b. Fall Tree Giveaway – The committee discusses the final stages of planning for the giveaway event on October 26th. Requests are made for traffic cones, gate entry codes, zip ties, tree tags and tree shields.

High-Vis vests will be made available for the volunteers, along with radios.

Committee members volunteer to arrive at the Compost Facility on Friday before the

giveaway so that trees can be tagged and there is no delay in starting the event. On the morning of the 26th, volunteers should arrive between 6:30 and 7.

- c. Upcoming projects – The committee discusses potential projects and goals for 2025.

Overarching goals include:

- Increased community engagement
- Partnership with other city organizations
- Advertisement and promotion of T&L projects

Project ideas include:

- Presence at First Fridays and the Farmer's Market with a T&L booth distributing educational materials, marketing materials, and interactive goods or keepsakes for the public. Some sort of activity at the booth should be done to encourage participation and engagement. City staff will reserve time with FF and DBI for the spring and summer.

Ideas for booths:

- Information on trees from different areas around the world.
 - Seed packets (flowers, vegetables and trees).
 - Wooden keepsakes such as bookmarks, tree cookies, or small carvings.
 - Tree-themed food such as nuts, maple syrup candy, pecan brittle and apples.
 - Activities such as 'measure yourself in tree years' with trunk sections.
 - Tree species identification guides.
 - Memorial items for the storm.
- Community events, such as wood painting for children at the library, educational outreach through the Great Neighborhoods program, potential tree planting activities once the Canopy Assessment has been completed, and individual neighborhood outreach to encourage planting trees (including to rental houses and apartment complexes, which have less incentives to add trees to their landscaping).
 - New garden and forest spaces planted. These ideas include edible gardens and foraging sites, mini-forest locations around the city, native plant reserved planting spaces, community garden spaces, selected edible tree sites within existing parks, tree adoptions such as at Orchard Park. (Members will reach out to contacts who are familiar with the history of the tree donation program).
- d. Other Business – Ralph Weber mentions that the seed packets at the library were not able to be put up before closing, that they may go up after reopening. As the packets were too short to appear over the display, Ralph Weber asks if the display can be modified. Mark Lankford will make lengths of wood to go into the bottom of each bucket to raise the packets up.
3. Adjournment – Gulizar Baggson motions to adjourn, Mark Lankford seconds. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 11:09. November 21st is next meeting.