



**City of Springfield Urban Forestry Commission
Minutes**

4:00 p.m. July 14, 2021 via Zoom

The meeting was called to Order at 4 p.m.

In attendance were:

Susan Allen
Randy Belville
Rianne Hawkins
Ernestine Lawrence
Amy McEuen
Erskine Route
Jan Von Qualen
Jeff Reim

There was a fond farewell and words of appreciation to Rianne Hawkins for her 2 years of service on the UFC. Rianne was thanked for her service as the Secretary and her knowledge of administrative and political matters. She was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation, signed by Mayor Langfelder, stating: "Thank you for serving on our Commission. Your time and dedication have helped further our efforts to preserve and enhance our greenspaces and landscape throughout the City of Springfield."

Dr. McEuen introduced our guest speaker, Dr. Lucia Vazquez. Dr. Vazquez has a Ph.D from Cornell University and is a full professor and the Associate Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation at the University of Illinois, Springfield. Prior to this appointment, she served as the Associate Dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences at UIS. Dr. Vazquez is a botanist by training and her research focus is on oaks. She gave a brief overview of her work with oaks

Certain grammatical changes were made, and a discussion of the Report on the Arbor week was added to the previously circulated minutes from the May 12, 2021 meeting. With those changes Amy McEuen made a motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Erskine Route. The motion carried unanimously.

Ernestine Lawrence reported that John Stremsterfer was on vacation and unable to attend the July meeting, but that he would be invited to join us in September to discuss ways in which the UFC could participate with Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have a map or diagram of the various Community Foundation programs.

Jeff Reim reported that Zach Wirz from the Morton Arboretum had contacted Jeff and offered to help with ordinance and provide templates. Jeff said the June Report was prepared by Susan Allen and had been submitted. The next Quarterly Report will be due in September. He said the tree inventory will begin in September or October. Jeff said the matching funds can include expenses for tree planting and ash tree removal, the City will keep track of those expenditures. Jeff said that Zach Wirz emphasized that

the tree ordinance is the most important requirement and that failure to have the ordinance approved by July 1, 2022, would hold-up reimbursement for the survey.

Randy Belville reported that he has planted 36 trees along the Stanford Avenue and that all are alive. He replaced 6 dead trees, but most survived and have taken hold nicely.

Jeff reported that Pat Buckley of the Dept. of Public Works will begin to remove the tree grates the week of July 26.

There was discussion of the list of species for a sapling give-away next spring. Amy noted the preference for small and flowering trees, so several of them should be included. Jeff said there will be no problem securing funding to purchase the trees. He said the Mayor was very pleased with the popularity of the program this spring. The list will be finalized at the September meeting and given to Forrest Keeling in October.

Ruth Oliver participated as a special guest. Ruth is a Master Gardner and tree enthusiast. She received training from the U of I Extension Master Gardening program and completed a tree inventory in Cantrall. Ruth said that 110 people live in Cantrall and she counted 126 trees. Ruth also said that Leland Grove is applying for a grant of money and tools from Trees Forever to complete a tree inventory.

There was a discussion of the minimum 4 ½ foot requirement for parkway widths as this raised concern, at the last meeting, that at most only a small tree and maybe not that could be grown in the parkway. The Springfield Arboricultural Manual indicates that small trees of up to 30 feet have a 4 ½ foot requirement. Jeff explained that the Springfield/Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission set the 4 ½ foot requirement. He indicated that any effort to change it would have to go through that Commission. It meets the first or second Thursday of each month.

A discussion of the size of parkways followed. Amy asked what the size of the parkways had been historically. No one could answer, but Erskine made a quick measurement of his. He is on the corner of 12th and Monroe. The parkway on Monroe 12 feet wide and 12th Street is 9 feet wide. There was concern that the parkways be required to be large enough to support healthy mature trees.

Any action toward making that change would have to be vetted by Nate Bottom and the Mayor. It was noted that the small parkway allows the builders to sell larger lots. There are larger parkways in subdivisions with large lots. For example, Panther Creek North Reserve has 1 acre lots and 9 ½ feet wide parkways.

It was noted that Jeff completed the revised Arboricultural Specification Manual last fall, with the thought that it would be updated annually. Commissioners were asked to think about what if any changes they would suggest.

Under Old Business, Jan requested that notices of the UFC meetings be posted in the City Announcements email that is widely circulated every Friday. UFC meetings are a City event, and the UFC is working to encourage citizen involvement.

New Business, Jan asked for a volunteer for the Secretary position held by Rianne. There was some discussion about whether the City Staff could take the minutes.

There were no public comments.

Upcoming events were Jeff and Jan's engagement to speak to the Sertoma Club on August 9 at noon at the MCL cafeteria. Susan Allen invited all to attend. The next UFC meeting is scheduled for September 8 at 4 p.m.

Erskine made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Ernestine. The motion passed unanimously.