Minutes of the Tree Advisory Board, Connell, Washington
Thursday, February 9, 2017

Members present: Ken Sellereite, Linda Bailie, Becky Daggett
Absent: Kim Phanthavong
City Officials: Mayor Bruce Blackwell, Maria Pena

Meeting began at 3:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved with a motion and second.

Ken reported that he attended the June 1st seminar in Richland, "Quality Trees, Quality Cities" by the Washington DNR. He said it was informative and that he was invited to come to the meetings of the Mid-Columbia Tree Council. He said he would make an effort to attend one of their meetings.

It was noted that the tree, a Japanese Snowbell, that was transplanted to Striker Park last Arbor Day is flourishing in its new location. There is also a Japanese Snowbell in front of the Ed Poe Agency that is also doing well.

The original plum trees and silver maples that were planted on Columbia Avenue will need to be replaced as time and resources permit. Neither variety has turned out to be the best for our situation.

There was lengthy discussion on the tree varieties that were recommended by the Garden Gate Nursery on Sagemoore Road. The types that were recommended for Columbia Avenue are: Snowcone Japanese Snowbell, Canada Red Chokeberry, Golden Desert Ash, Rocky Mountain Glow Maple, Thundercloud Plum, Spring Snow Crabapple, and Frontier Elm. The pros and cons of the varieties were analyzed. The following seemed like the best ones: Japanese Snowbell, Golden Desert Ash, and possibly the Rocky Mountain Glow Maple and Thundercloud Plum. The Frontier Elm is questionable. The Spring Snow Crabapple was nixed due to lack of resistance to Scab.

The question was brought up about the size of the square openings in the sidewalks. Are they large enough? This led to questions about what to put on the ground around the young trees. The heavy metal grates are not the best solution because they capture too much heat. Other suggestions were: bricks, cement blocks, and a special type of asphalt designed to go under trees that allows for drainage and breathability. These are areas that need to be investigated and decided in the coming months as new trees are placed.

After the discussion about tree varieties, it was decided that we need to have a site map of Columbia Avenue that includes the location of all the trees and the square "holes" designated for trees. Mayor Blackwell said he could get that map for us for the next meeting. He also stated that he would survey business owners to give them a choice between tree(s) or planter box(es) in front of their doors. We will use this information at the next meeting to plan specifically for tree placements and planter boxes.

Another matter of discussion was the use of the 4X4 square "holes" that could not be used for trees. It was decided that the squares would be best used by having cement aggregate planter boxes placed there

that would incorporate bench seating. Only hardy native, drought resistant flowers and grasses should be planted in the planter so there is minimal upkeep. The city would be responsible for these planters. Mayor Blackwell and Ken are going to investigate this option further.

The use of the wine barrels that have been placed on Columbia Avenue by the Downtown Development Association was discussed. The original idea was to have the individual businesses to plant and maintain the barrels in front of their businesses but many barrels have been neglected. Volunteers have worked to maintain part of the barrels. It was suggested that perhaps all the barrels could be moved to a location where they can be creatively arranged for a nice display that would be more easily maintained.

It was decided to celebrate Arbor Day on Saturday, April 29th. Ken is going to contact the Fire Chief to discuss the possibility of planting a tree in front of the Fire Station.

Ken informed the board that Garth Davis, arborist, will be coming in June to take inventory of all city trees. The inventory will include information on the type, condition, size, etc. of each tree. He will provide helpful suggestions.

We are in need of another tree board member. We are to think of community members that would work well in this capacity and come up with some nominations for the next meeting.

The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, February 28, 3 p.m. at City Hall.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:05.