

**SUMMARY OF ACTION  
MUNICIPAL TREE BOARD  
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT, SILAR ROAD  
CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2018, 11:30 AM**

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**MUNICIPAL TREE BOARD  
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT, SILAR ROAD  
CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2018, 11:30 AM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Municipal Tree Board was called to order by Chair, Katherine O'Brien at 11:30 am, on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at the Parks and Recreation Department on Silar Road, Conference Room, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**2. ROLL CALL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Katherine O'Brien, Chair  
Pam Wolfe  
Tracy Neal  
Becky Touchett

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Tom Dominguez

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Richard Thompson  
Michael Smith, Friends of the Santa Fe River  
Keely Jackson Kennemore, Santa Fe Watershed Association  
Mary Schruben  
Elizabeth Martin, Stenographer

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** A motion was made by Ms. Touchett, seconded by Ms. Wolfe, to approve the agenda as presented.

**VOTE** The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES  
JUNE 27, 2018**

**MOTION** A motion was made by Ms. Wolfe, seconded by Mr. Touchett, to approve the minutes as presented.

**VOTE** The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

### A. TREE INVENTORY PROJECT

Ms. Touchett reported on the Tree Inventory Project.

Chair O'Brien asked how does the public access the sign up to volunteer to do tree inventories.

Ms. Wolfe asked have they been signing up and if not how can we do it.

Chair O'Brien said we want the public to sign up.

Mr. Thompson said we can blast out emails or publish a public service announcement or put it on the Parks website.

Ms. Wolfe said last year she went to one with only 3 of us. One session has only 2 people. Of course the opposite would also be a problem if we had too many sign up.

Ms. Touchett said last year we had too many sessions. We decided to consolidate and do only 20. We have some with 8 to 10 people and some with 4.

Chair O'Brien said the idea was to divide into teams.

Ms. Touchett said it is important to coordinate between the 3 different groups. We need to also do that with the public. Also we need to show who the tree identifier is on the website.

Ms. Wolfe asked if you look and there is no leadership why sign up.

Ms. Touchett said we are always going to be there.

Ms. Wolfe said you can't tell that from the website.

Mr. Neal said the other thing is Sarah wrote an article for the *New Mexican* about Aspens and could write a notice about inviting the public in the newsletter or the *New Mexican*.

Ms. Touchett said we did add 2 classes for tree identifiers before the tree inventories started.

Ms. Schruben said a member of the public came to a class and then came to an

inventory.

Mr. Thompson asked do any of you offer a professional tree inventory or appraisal of plants and trees.

No one responded.

Mr. Neal said he and Katherine have gone informally to look at a tree someone says is sick.

Mr. Thompson said a Board of Realtors member adopted a park and got a grant from the US Board of Realtors to do some things. It is the Luis Montoya Park

Mr. Thompson said he got a call from the *Journal North* asking about the development at Peralta and the Old Taos Highway. He told him he was unaware. They asked about the old Sequoia tree there.

## **B. TREE PEST REPORT**

Mr. Thompson reported that Victor Lucero resigned effective July 13<sup>th</sup> and is gone.

Ms. Wolfe said last fall she, Victor and Tom placed Japanese Beetles traps and found nothing. We placed them again this year. Through County Extension we are monitoring those weekly. No Japanese Beetles yet.

## **C. SANTA FE RIVER VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

Chair O'Brien said Mr. Smith is here because she had encountered him a couple of times this last month. He wondered what the City and the Tree Board's view was on Siberian Elm management. She told them that Richard said if everyone took the responsibility of pulling out 2 to 3 inch elms they would not be a problem. Is there any discussion on invasive species and vegetation management that we want to have.

Mr. Neal said there was an article in newspaper that said most of the 150 Cottonwoods got washed down the river. They thought some of the willows would make it.

Mr. Thompson said that channel falls under Public Works and the Watershed Association. Melessia McDonald is the administrator of that program. There is an action within Public Works and some private citizens, especially Michael Smith, to reduce the amount of Siberian Elms and replace them with native species.

#### **D. TREE BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Chair O'Brien said we are operating with a Board of 5 with one who needs to submit his resignation.

Mr. Thompson said he will check on that. He will move forward with that.

Chair O'Brien said we are looking for a 5<sup>th</sup> member.

Ms. Schruben said she sent the recommendation by email to the Chair from the Water Conservation group.

Chair O'Brien said she did not get it.

Ms. Schruben will resend the email.

Ms. Wolfe asked is there a process for recruitment and Richard said we should look for another arborist. Tracy and Katherine are arborists. Do we need to go to revising and updating the mission statement and consider what kind of skills and talents we need to round out the mission of the Board.

Mr. Thompson said in a committee make up you usually vary the backgrounds. You can mandate them in the Charter. They are not mandated in the Tree Board Charter. Recruitment is word of mouth. We have an opportunity, and did look into, if we should include a tree care professional for variety in the makeup. We sent out a notice to tree care professionals and they all declined.

Ms. Wolfe said maybe a retired member.

Chair O'Brien said there are not that many tree care professionals period. We know personally a few that are retired. We could talk with them and invite them to a meeting to see if they are interested. Maybe we need a grant writer depending on our mission.

Ms. Wolfe said if we go back to the mission statement and revise it to what our needs really are and think about what we need that would get it started.

Chair O'Brien said she would like people to think about who they would like to see on the Tree Board at this time. Someone who has the time and interest to be at the meetings.

Mr. Thompson said this core group is making the meetings regularly more than they were at the beginning.

## **E. LAND USE TREE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Chair O'Brien said at the last meeting a subcommittee was formed to begin the process of looking at the Land Use Code and recommendations. Did you meet.

Mr. Neal said no. Mary did some research. We have not met yet.

Mr. Wolfe said she had an email exchange in January with Richard and he said he had an outline for a set of ordinances.

Mr. Thompson said he looked at his old computers and found it. It was just a California Tree Protection Ordinance. Not so much Land Use. Right now we do have a minimum number of trees in the development code.

Ms. Wolfe said the Park that was in the news recently, is it based on some code.

Mr. Thompson said that development was in the County before annexation. It is now in the City. When it came to us it was not in code. They told us to move forward with the development of that park. The City Engineer said the accessibility did not meet City standards. When we got to the meter being restored there was a very big outstanding water bill. The developer is bankrupt..

Ms. Wolfe asked are there more parks than we need or can maintain.

Ms. Schruben said Los Solaris designated 2 parks in their development plan. One was a corridor between Monte Del Sol School and Beckner Road that has a steep grade and was going to be graded to have retention ponds, but now they are constructing 6 foot walls behind all those houses. There is no access to that open space. She spoke up at planning meeting about access and about crossing Beckner. It was not agreed to by the developer. The size of the area has been reduced from 90 feet wide to 40 feet. The ponds are supposed to be stormwater run off ponds, but they will not be maintained. They said the Parks Department will be maintaining it.

Mr. Thompson said this is a 28 year project. There were lengthy meetings about promises made and the promises made in the Master Plan. We rejected maintaining it due to all the maintenance challenges after the changes. Then we chopped it up in 3 phases. The Planning Commission said there would be 2 soccer fields built in the Master Plan. There were questions about building soccer fields in an arroyo. Now there is a greater than 15 grade on those fields. Then Land Use took over on the acceptance of the initial phase 1.

Ms. Schruben said regarding her research she started the project on chapter 14 at the end of the section with the definitions. She has gotten to 14.6. She is going through each of the sections looking for places that mention trees or any kind of vegetation, drainage, water use, lot size, limbs over other peoples walls, invasive

species and anything german to this kind of thing. She is copying those sections into a document so we can see the totality of the project. The process is taking a while. She has found some interesting things. There are big conflicts on things so there are plenty of things to work on. It will not be a quick project. She also told Greg Smith about this. We need to get the list of trees for planting to them.

Mr. Thompson said Land Use has brought 2 revisions to the Governing Body and are bringing another one tonight. We noted it in the CIP that Parks would invite Land Use to revisit the landscape portion of the code for revision and to strengthen the tree preservation and protection portion.

Ms. Schruben said she is working on it.

Ms. Schruben said the Sustainability Plan does not detail the code as one of the strategy projects.

Mr. Neal asked Richard are you sending a list of recommended trees to someone.

Mr. Thompson said he suggests you use the State Forestry recommended list. It was in the remediation plan that we revisited with the landscape requirement specifically medians.

Mr. Neal asked is there something in the Land Use Code with recommended trees.

Ms. Schruben said yes, trees and shrubs.

Mr. Neal said the list on the Park website is what he put together in 2001. He has revised that several times. Can you get the revised list on there.

Mr. Thompson said we can send it to the Director and ask him to revise it. There is a reference to medians in the plan and that they should be maintained by Parks.

Ms. Wolfe said she thinks she heard we have more parks than we can maintain.

Mr. Thompson said not every park needs to have a playground et all. The cost of maintaining a playground is high. We have 72 playgrounds in the City at this time and more to come. The parks are designated as neighborhood parks. The importance of parks is not necessarily in recreation, but in relief and green space.

## **F. PARK IRRIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Chair O'Brien said Richard and Becky were going to work on this.



Ms. Touchett said she met with Patricio at Water Conservation because when she went to get the water usage by park the Eye On Water system needs an account number to access it. Patricio was going to set up account numbers for several parks which he did and gave to her. She tried to use them to get the information and ran into error messages. She sent him back the numbers and asked for corrections. He did that and even with those she got the same error message. She sent him pictures of the screens.

Mr. Thompson said the system crashed and has not been working for a bit. They are working on it. It is part of a greater objective of his boss Christine. She wants to collaborate with Parks on conservation success through collaborative action. The idea is we get together and come up with a better plan. Right now conservation is imposed on all of us. We hit the industrial user rate which is expensive. It is \$2 million out of our \$7 million budget. Today the business part of ITT is meeting and we have tendered our upgrade of our irrigation system from analog to digital. We did slip in a couple of things we want to see in the re-contracting with our vendors. More users and managers can view that and citizens who volunteer on programs. We would probably handle this administratively.

Ms. Schruben said as to water usage, for example a person now who has a lot with a grandfathered well on it who wants to build another house on their lot cannot extend lines to the well. They have a choice of hooking up to the City meter for that extra house, but they don't have a mandate to put a meter on the grandfathered well.

Ms. Touchett said she needs the acreage for all the City parks by park.

Mr. Thompson said some of the parks are irrigated and some are not.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT**

Chair O'Brien asked Richard to give an update.

Mr. Thompson said we have a new manager as of last Monday. John Munoz. He is a native of Las Cruces. He graduated from Texas State at San Marcos. He has a degree in business and has worked in several large organizations. He works on streamlining processes and moving forward. He is well versed in labor management and organizational theory. We are looking forward to great things under his guidance.

Mr. Thompson said we will advertise for Victor's position. There is an effort to consolidate similar processes such as procurement. Right now we have distributed decision making. Our new Director's intention is to consolidate all that and have similar products at every facility. He has asked staff to propose what positions we would like to

see on the roster for the near term, median and long range. We would like to see an arborist, water manger/turf manager or both. We feel we could reduce the water budget by as much as 50% if we had a manger. His consolidation of services would free up salaries in the divisions so we could possibly have some vacant positions and savings and create some degreed positions.

Chair O'Brien said we want to revisit the discussion from the June meeting under Parks and Recreation Structure and Budget. It says you, Richard, would like the Tree Board and PARC to get involved during the midyear review of the budget. His invitation to the Board also included the \$10,000 in the fund and the question of is 5 members of the Board enough. That is what we want to discuss.

Chair O'Brien said she would like to hold off on the vision statement and mission statement to next meeting Pam. She would like to discuss what Richard brought up at the last meeting and focus on that now. She sees our role as supporting the Parks department.

Mr. Thompson said the vision and mission can be an action item for next meeting.

Chair O'Brien said with what Richard brought up last month, how do we want to have advocacy in the community.

Mr. Thompson said he is talking about the mid year review. The Mayor is looking for restructuring. We are gearing up for that. The part the Tree Board would play in that is in developing a concise and clear unified message to the Governing Body regarding the things we love and the things we could improve on. The Mayor is looking for citizens to support what the City does and what they want to do.

Ms. Wolfe asked we could invest \$10,000 to be more vocal and effective and make the message more concrete.

Mr. Thompson said you could have a Community Day outreach where there is an opportunity to study sessions to strategize the idea of change to specific departments and take that to the Governing Body. It could be outreach we could present at Community Day and Arbor Day and could have the Tree Board and staff at a table at that. You could invest in branding the Tree Board subject to approval by his Director and PARC. You can bring him ideas of how to spend the money. Your wishes or agreed upon plan could be to make the MTB more visible in the community or you could spend it on stratigizing how to increase his budget.

Ms. Wolfe asked wouldn't it be more efficient if you told us what those budget constraints are and we could make suggestions such as to spend more on mulch.

Mr. Thompson said it is a conceptional problem for the Parks Department to use

chemicals in the parks. Highlighting our best manage practices and codifying it would serve a good public practice.

Mr. Thompson said we could have an 8 hour meeting and feed everyone. We could do business cards for the MTB. It could be used as another opportunity to reinforce to the City the needs in parks.

Ms. Wolfe said are you talking about the things we have talked about over the year that are not in the budget. We could budget for things not here.

Mr. Thompson said within the tree fund there is a line to pay the contractor to remove trees. We could use that line to plant trees professionally. There is a conversation about street trees downtown. There are things we can work on and use the \$10,000 to plan or spread the word. We have trees in the nursery right now. This is the first great opportunity for this. You can spend that money any way you want. We want this on the agenda every month for ideas. Greater awareness of our threatened urban forest could be a consideration.

Ms. Wolfe said she does not know enough about how things work or what is in place to make a recommendation of any sort. How do we educate the Board.

Chair O'Brien said what she gets from this is the Parks Department wants us to envision what is lacking.

Ms. Wolfe asked how do we know what is lacking. You mentioned a contractor who is coming to take out the dead trees. Maybe there is not enough money to do that.

Ms. Touchett said it sounds like Pam would like to see goals for things we could do. She suggests we look at our goals and pick one or two to focus on.

Mr. Neal said it would help him when he thinks about approaching the Mayor or Council is if he had a clear picture of what the budget is now and what it goes to.

Mr. Thompson said our budget is not specific as to expense. It says operating budget. We have not established our ability to institute new approaches to park management. We need to work on establishing our credibility. It is important for the Governing Body to understand the threats to the urban forest. Victor did a great job in promoting that. We actually had questions from Councilors about tree health on the Plaza. We did make changes on the Plaza with a mandate from Councilors.

Ms. Schruben said we need to have a budget discussion.

Mr. Neal asked Richard if he could give the Board a detailed budget.

Mr. Thompson said the City is doing a massive transition in the reporting

systems. It is an enterprise wide approach in determining where money is being used and for what. We will be clearer in accounting for monies.

Chair O'Brien said we need a motion to request what we need.

**MOTION** A motion was made by Ms. Wolfe, seconded by Mr. Neal, to request that at the next meeting Mr. Thompson provide a baseline budget for Parks with expenditures to date.

Mr. Thompson said rather than expenditures to date he will provide the previous year expenditures. That will give you a full year to look at.

Both Ms. Wolfe and Mr. Neal agreed to the amendment.

**AMENDED MOTION** A motion was made by Ms. Wolfe, seconded by Mr. Neal, to request that Mr. Thompson provide at the next meeting the baseline budget for 18/19 and the expenditures for 17/18.

**VOTE** The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

#### **B. SEPTEMBER MEETING**

Chair O'Brien said she is going to be out of the country for a month.

It was decided to move the meeting date so that Chair O'Brien would be present.

**MOTION** A motion was made by Ms. Touchett, seconded by Ms. Wolfe, to move the MTB meeting to September 12<sup>th</sup>.

**VOTE** The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

#### **7. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

None.

#### **8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Smith said there are 25 Sequoia trees in Santa Fe and 1 Redwood.

Mr. Neal said he would love to have the list of where those trees are.

Mr. Smith said he will send it to him.

Mr. Thompson said there is going to be a Field Day at Alcalde on August 10th.

Ms. Wolfe asked that he put the Tree Board on the mailing list for things like that and include Mary.

Ms. Schruben thanked Richard for his help to get some of her neighbors inspired to help her clear out the garden at Rancho Siringo Park. She also thanked Terrance Foreback for giving her a sharps box for all the needles. We have made major progress.

**9. NEXT MEETING  
AUGUST 22, 2018**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Board the meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.

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Katherine O'Brien, Chair



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Elizabeth Martin, Stenographer