

MURRAY CITY POWER
Shade Tree & Beautification Commission
Murray City, Utah
June 5, 2023

Minutes of the Murray City Power Shade Tree & Beautification Commission meeting held on June 5th at Murray City Power located at 153 West 4800 South, Murray, Utah.

Shade Tree & Beautification Commission

Darin Bird
Jan Evans (excused)
Geneal Nelson
Judith Payne

Department Staff

Matt Erkelens, Forestry Supervisor
Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent (excused)
Barbara Ishino, MCP

Darin called the meeting to order at 8:10 am. Darin made a motion to approve the November 2022 minutes and the February 2023 minutes. Judith seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. The informal April 2023 minutes were also approved.

Arbor Day

Darin said that everything went well on Arbor Day. Judith agreed and added that the day was blustery and quite cold.

Darin felt that the Jimmy John's boxed lunches were a "home run".

Judith did ask if next year gifts could be provided to the student's who read poems. Matt told her that next year there would be extra gifts for those students.

Darin wondered if there was something a little "extra" that could be given to the Citywide Grand Prize winner. Maybe an extra item in the bag for that winner. He wondered if the certificates were signed by the mayor and was told they were.

Judith reported that Cathy Singer, from the Nature Center, told her that the Murray School District won't have school on the first Friday in May 2024 due to a Teacher Workday. This is typically the day when Murray City celebrates Arbor Day.

After some discussion as to whether to move the celebration back a week or up a week, Darin suggested that Arbor Day be celebrated on Thursday, May 2, 2024, instead. The Commission agreed to work toward that day.

Judith will let Cathy Singer, from the Nature Center know of the date.

Matt Erkelens asked if the Commission liked using pavilion #5 and Darin thought it was an easy walk to the pavilion. Matt will reach out and schedule the pavilion and amphitheater with Bruce Holyoak.

Darin asked Barbara to reach out to Jaime Barnes, Utah State Forester, 1-2 months ahead to invite her and to have her send an invite to the governor's office to see if the governor or lieutenant governor could attend the celebration. In the past Greg Bell and Spencer Cox as well as others have attended.

4th of July Parade

Darin reported that most of the Commission would be unable to attend the parade so they wouldn't be participating this year.

Grant Discussion

Darin couldn't remember when the grant was due but felt the process started in July or August and that it would be due 1-2 months later. Darin has talked with Jeran Farley about applying for a grant for a water wise park strip brochure to be given out in the power bill and when citizens apply for a utility account. Jeran liked the idea of filling out a grant application for the brochure.

Darin proposed a dual grant application. One part would be for the brochure, the other for tree planting. Currently, MCP sells trees to citizens and the Forestry Division plants the trees. (Matt reported that the trees used to be free but when trees are paid for the owners typically water and care for the trees better so trees now cost citizens \$125 each, which includes planting, staking and a watering bag.)

Matt also reported that the street trees go on sale on February 1st. Once 240 trees were sold and it took his crews 3 months to get them all planted. This really set them behind as their primary responsibility is electrical line clearance. Now the number of trees is capped at 80 and they usually sell out in 2-3 hours.

Darin is hoping that a grant could be applied for that could cover the cost of tree planting for new street trees. He would like to see someone find a tree company that could give a bid for planting the trees rather than using the MCP Forestry Division for the planting. The citizens would still need to purchase the trees, which would satisfy the grant requirement for matching funds.

There also may be some areas of the city that would benefit from street trees being planted and the grant could cover those costs. He also felt it was possible that the Committee could ask for a grant up to a certain dollar amount.

As an idea Darin felt a street could be picked that has had the trees dying or the curb and gutter replaced and then the homeowners and the Forestry Division could work together to pick trees, the homeowner would pay for the trees and a contracted tree company could plant the trees using the grant money.

Although Bradford Pear trees aren't a preferred tree, Judith has loved seeing them growing and noted what a difference trees make in neighborhoods. Seeing those tree blooming in spring and seeing the beautiful, flaming red leaves in the fall is so wonderful.

Matt gave out a very rough draft of a water wise park strip brochure to the Commission. Darin liked that it had a consistent feel with the tree planting brochure that the Committee put out a few years ago. He would like to see everyone brainstorm as to what to include in the brochure and thought it would be good to see what other cities and counties have (specifically the Central Water Conservancy District and the Weber Basin Water Conservancy District). After the brochure is completed, he would also like to see the mayor promote the brochure.

Matt would like to see the brochure emphasize trees, live plant material, and proper irrigation. He would also like to have the brochure have a reference for drought tolerant plants and demonstration gardens.

Beautification Awards

As a reminder, judging the yards will take place on Monday, June 26th at 8:00 am. Matt said that the nominations will be due on June 15th and that the Commission will have the list on June 16th so they can look at the nominations and add more if they would like. The Commission would also like the last 5 years winners added to the list for reference.

Matt reminded the Committee that there is xeriscape, traditional, multi-family, commercial and the newly added category of Water Wise Living Park Strip. Darin asked for a copy of the nomination form and Matt copied it and distributed it to the Committee.

Darin asked Barbara to reach out to Jan and give her the information about the Beautification awards and to see if she will also get nominations for District #4.

A brief discussion was had about someone who could fill District #4's opening on the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission. A name was brought up however, after the meeting it was discovered, this person did not live in District #4's boundary.

Other Business

Judith brought up a concern she has had. She feels the area off 4500 South and I15 looks really bad whereas 5400 South looks really good. She is hoping something can be done to improve that area. She asked who takes care of that and where do the funds come from?

Darin felt that UDOT and Murray City oversee that area.

Matt said that it's UDOT's property and that the Park's Department help with it.

After some discussion, it was decided to have each Commission member contact their City Council member and ask for some assistance to make that area more attractive as it is a main thoroughfare into Murray City.

Darin reported that the new City Hall's open house is scheduled for Thursday, June 29th from 4:00-7:00 pm. He said it will be interesting to see the new landscape and see where the Christmas tree will go. He anticipates that the Annual Tree Lighting will draw a large crowd this year with the new venue. He also thinks it would be important to have Doug Hill attend a meeting to discuss where things will be for the tree lighting.

With no other business to come before the Commission, Darin made a motion at 8:55 am to adjourn the meeting. Geneal seconded the motion.

Minutes recorded and transcribed by Barbara Ishino.

The next unofficial meeting will be the judging for the Jim and Jean Beautification Awards on Monday, June 26th at 8:00 am.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, August 7th at 9:30 am. (This is a change from the schedule due to a conflict with one of the members.)