

MURRAY CITY POWER
Shade Tree & Beautification Commission
Murray City, Utah
July 2, 2024

Minutes of the Murray City Power Shade Tree & Beautification Commission meeting held on July 2nd at Murray City Power located at 153 West 4800 South, Murray, Utah.

Shade Tree & Beautification Commission

Marshall Smith, District #4

Jann Cox, District #2

Alex Motro, District #5

Department Staff

Matt Erkelens, Forestry Supervisor

Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent (excused)

Barbara Ishino, MCP Staff

Matt called the meeting to order at 9:02 am. Matt asked for a volunteer to be the Chair of the Commission. (The chairperson will keep the meeting on task.) Marshall volunteered. Jann seconded it. Marshall will be the new chairperson of the commission.

Matt explained that Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent, usually attends the meetings. Matt gave out a packet with the meeting schedule and beautification award nominees.

Events that the commission participate in:

- Arbor Day
- 4th of July parade
- Jim and Jean Hendrickson Beautification Awards
- Tree Lighting
- Possible grant opportunities

4th of July Parade

Alex will be participating. Marshall will likely participate and will let Matt know for sure. The Commission members will ride in a Murray City Power vehicle with a banner on it. Candy will be provided.

Meet at the Fashion Place mall parking lot between 7:00 am and 7:30 am. Matt will send a copy of the map and directions. As he won't be at the parade, he will provide the Commission with a number for forestry personnel in case they have questions that day.

Arbor Day Poster Contest and Ceremony

Matt reported that the state used to hold an annual Arbor Day poster contest until a few years ago. When they quit, Murray decided to continue. Last year's theme was, Trees are Terrific in Murray and Beyond. Currently, all Murray City schools, and one Granite School District school (Woodstock) participate.

Marshall wondered about opening the contest up to charter/private schools within Murray city. He specifically mentioned Wonderbloom, an outdoor education preschool with about 60 students. If ok, he could approach them.

Matt thought the Commission could consider it and possibly vote on it. Marshall said that if it was a complication and didn't work that it was ok.

Marshall asked if the Commission went to the schools to judge the posters. Matt told the Commission that the posters are picked up from the schools and brought to Murray City Power where they are judged by the Commission and other forestry personnel. The date of judging will be on the 2025 meeting schedule to be voted on by the Commission in October.

Winners and parents are then notified and invited to the Arbor Day Celebration typically held in May. (Matt informed them that the state celebrates Arbor Day on the last Friday in April. Murray typically celebrates a week later. This allows the State Forester, Jamie Barnes to attend.)

Marshall asked if a date had been chosen and Matt told him that he is shooting for the first or second week of May.

Last year Murray had to hold Arbor Day on Thursday because schools were out on Friday. Also, last year busing became an issue. Due to bus driver shortages and the time of the event, students who were bused had to leave shortly after the program and missed out on the educational sessions. It is possible that next year the educational sessions will need to be held before the ceremony to make it easier on the school's transportation department. This also allows the program to continue being held at noon at the Murray City Amphitheater. The buses could then take the students back to school around 1:00 pm.

The tentative schedule may be:

Students come at 9:30 am. Educational sessions from 9:30-11:00 am, lunches from 11:00-11:30 am, program noon to 12:45 pm, students leave at 1:00 pm.

The educational sessions are held at Murray City Park, Pavilion #5. Matt referred the Commission to the 2024 Arbor Day program.

The Commission responsibilities that day are:

- emcee

- announce winners

- introduce the Honorary Tree Recipient*

*In 2024, Murray City Park was honored as part of the 100-year anniversary of the park. Each year a tree is planted in Murray City Park's Arboretum in honor of the Honorary Tree Recipient.

Jann has noticed a neighbor who voluntarily cleans and weeds throughout Murray city. He may be someone to consider for 2025. Marshall agreed that her neighbor would be a good nomination. Matt knows the gentleman and agrees it would be good to consider him.

Jann attended Arbor Day last May and thought it was a fun program. She also noted that the amphitheater was full.

Tree City USA

Matt told the Commission that Murray City has the longest recognition in the state for Tree City USA. This is the 47th year and the city has been recognized since 1977. Only a dozen other cities in the nation have been recognized for that long.

Marshall asked if an application is sent in each year. Matt said that he fills out the application online each year. Matt also mentioned he sent Commission members a copy of the standards for Tree City USA recognition:

Standard 1: Form a Tree Board or Department

Standard 2: Establish a Tree Care Ordinance

Standard 3: Maintain a Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at Least \$2 Per Capita.

Standard 4: Proclaim and Observe Arbor Day

Murray City Power sells trees annually (this year the trees sold for \$125). Matt reported that in the past the city used to give trees for free but that they noticed the trees weren't well cared for. Now that there is a fee for the trees, people tend to take better care of the trees.

Marshall asked who plants the trees and Matt told him that the Forestry Division does the planting on the park strips. If there aren't park strips they can plant in the right of way. The trees that go on sale annually are only for residential, businesses and HOAS don't qualify.

Alex asked if there were still places within the city that need trees. Matt reported that there are 2 places...Julep Drive off of 4500 South and one other area. He also said that the State Forester sends out a list of where they think trees are needed within the city. Marshall expressed surprise that the State Forester sent out recommendations. Matt said that there are grant opportunities through the state and that is why they send out recommendations.

Shade Tree and Beautification Commission

Matt gave out the ordinance regarding the Commission.

A. To study the problems and determine the needs of the city in connection with its tree planting and maintenance, and city beautification programs.

B. To assist the City Forester in the organization, coordination, and management of tree planting programs.

C. To promote the dissemination of news and information regarding the selection, planting and maintenance of trees and other landscaping in the city, whether the same be on private or city property.

D. To promote public support of and visitation to the Joan M. Hardle Memorial Arboretum and city parks.

E. To identify and mark historic or notable trees within the city and provide recommendations to the mayor for the preservation and maintenance of these trees.

F. To hold publicized meetings at which trees, landscaping, and other pertinent subjects insofar as they relate to the city may be discussed by the members of the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission, officers and personnel of the city and its several divisions, and all others interested in the city's tree programs.

G. To have the authority to Accept gifts or bequests from any person or from any source, on behalf of the city and with the consent of the mayor, for building improvements or maintenance of a civic arboretum, or for other programs sponsored by the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission. Monetary gifts or bequests shall be received by the Director of Finance and Administration and shall be earmarked for the purposes donated, within the parameters set out above.

H. To assist the city forester in his various duties, as outlined in section 2.30.060 of this title; and

I. to review and make recommendations to the City Forester regarding specifications developed by the City Forester for the regulation of matters pertaining to shade trees. (Ord. 19-05. Ord. 16-17)

Matt noted that the Joan M. Hardle Arboretum at Murray City Park is unique. There used to be plaques by all the trees. However, due to vandalism, maintenance, and wear and tear, the plaques have been removed.

Jann asked what was in the arboretum. Matt said that there is a rose garden, trees, and other gardens. He felt that it may be a good idea to update the map and advertise the arboretum.

Marshall suggested the Commission reach out to master gardeners. They could use the arboretum as a place to learn. This relationship would benefit both the gardeners and the arboretum.

Murray City Tree Lighting Ceremony

Matt gave an overview of the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony.

- First Saturday of December (this year December 7th) at 6:00 pm.
- Held at City Hall.
- Santa visits and brings a helper.
- Flyers sent to all Murray City schools.
- Hillcrest Jr. High choir performs.
- Miss Murray and Little Miss Murray attend.
- Santa gives a gift (usually a large candy bar and candy canes).
- The commission can meet to put those candy bars together.
- The Power Department puts up a 70' tree, 4 smaller trees, and an archway.
- Chairs can be set up near the council chambers for the Commission.

Jann mentioned the line for Santa from last year. Both Matt and Barbara acknowledged there will need to be some changes from last year to make the traffic flow better and to have citizens have a better experience.

Marshall suggested possibly contacting the Murray Symphony that may like to perform outside for the Tree Lighting (depending on the weather). There is a possibility of a marching band performing outside this year.

Alex asked if the commission did anything at Halloween. Matt said that the Parks Department does the Haunted Woods.

Jim and Jean Hendrickson Beautification Awards

Matt gave out lists of the nominations to each member of the Commission. Alex asked what the judging criterion was, and Matt told him that he would send that out to them in an email. Matt asked who would be willing to take District #1 (Jann volunteered) and asked who would take District #3 (Alex volunteered).

To make things easier, Matt will send out a map of the council district voting areas. He explained that last year a new category of Water Wise Living Park Strip was added. The Commission should be looking for plants and trees in this new category. Using straight a rock bed in the park strip wouldn't qualify. It is difficult to get rocks and trees to grow near the rocks, mulch is a much better option for around plants, and it is better for reducing urban heat island effect.

Matt asked them each to choose 1-2 yards in the district and then the Commission will get together to judge them. Once the winners are chosen the Commission members will be responsible to notify the winners. Matt will take pictures, have plaques made and then the winners will be honored at a Murray City Council Meeting (he is hoping for September 10th).

It was decided that the Commission members look over the nominations and narrow it down to 1 or 2 and then send that list to the Power Department by July 10th. The final judging will be done on **Tuesday, July 16th at 8:00 am**. Meet at the Power Department.

The awards are:

- Xeriscape
- Living Water Wise Park Strip
- Commercial
- Multi-Family
- Citywide Winner
- One winner from each voting district. (It can be traditional OR a xeriscape.)

Alex asked about the possibility of having more pollinator friendly plants. Marshall concurred and would like to see the idea promoted. Marshall knows someone who could share a PowerPoint presentation to educate the public about pollinator friendly plants.

Grants

Matt explained that the Commission could apply for grants, work on city ordinances, and other little projects.

Alex asked if there were any grants to look at. Matt said that the State Forestry has grants and that he would share them with the Commission when he hears about them. The Commission did apply for a grant a few years ago and produced a tree brochure.

Marshall looks forward to looking into the grants.

Alex would love to see the elimination of Bradford Pears. Matt felt that educating the public about these trees would be good.

Miscellaneous

The Commission asked that they get contact information for each other. That information was shared and will be sent to each member.

Tuesday, August 6th will be the next meeting. The following will be discussed:

- date and theme for Arbor Day 2025
- beautification awards
- approve minutes for March and April

With no more business to come before the Commission, Matt made a motion to adjourn. Alex seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:11 am.

The next scheduled **meeting** will be on Tuesday, August 6th at 9:00 am at Murray City Power.