

MURRAY CITY POWER
Shade Tree & Beautification Commission
Murray City, Utah
February 11, 2025

Minutes of the Murray City Power Shade Tree & Beautification Commission meeting held on February 11, 2025, at Murray City Power located at 153 West 4800 South, Murray, Utah.

Shade Tree & Beautification Commission

Jann Cox, District #2

Marshall Smith, District #4

Alex Motro, District #5

Department Staff

Matt Erkelens, Forestry Supervisor

Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent

Marshall called the meeting to order at 9:15 am. He asked if there were any changes or corrections to the November minutes. There were none. Jann made a motion to approve the minutes and Alex seconded it. The minutes were approved.

Tree Lighting Review

Marshall asked what worked well at the Tree Lighting event.

There was some discussion about how to keep the hot chocolate out of the building. The Commission felt that there could be more garbage cans outside, maybe someone outside reminding people not to bring it in, and for garbage cans to be inside.

Although there were signs on the doors, the Commission felt they were ineffective. Marshall thought that signs could be made with cut out letters and a light behind it. The signs could be placed outside entrances.

Marshall also thought a string of light along the path might be a good idea.

Matt thanked the Commission for doing such a good job keeping the Santa line moving and for rerouting the line and stanchions when needed. The goal was to get the line of children to be inside as much as possible.

The Commission liked that Miss Murray was in the middle of the line visiting with the children and taking pictures with them. They floated the idea that another person or character could also attend in another spot as well. Matt said that if more people are needed to move the line along Forestry Division personnel could assist.

Matt mentioned that there were some communication issues to be addressed for next year. They will try using radios instead of cell phones to ensure the lights all go on at the same time.

Jann talked about the Santa that visited city hall that same month. It was suggested that maybe the Commission use him next year. (Lori from the Park's Department arranged for that Santa.) Matt told the Commission that the Santa hired is a Murray resident and has been the Santa at the event for years.

All in all, the Commission felt the Tree Lighting was successful. Jann said that it was great and beautiful. Marshall felt it went well and Alex said that he had comments about how pleased the public was about the event.

Arbor Day Poster Contest

Marshall asked Matt to explain to the Commission what happens.

Matt reported the following:

- The school principals and secretaries have all been notified.
- A letter to the teachers, along with the poster paper was delivered to each school.
- Students k-6 will participate.
- Nine schools participate (eight from Murray School District, one from Granite.)
- Completed posters will be picked up on March 4th.
- The Forestry Division will organize them by schools and grades.
- The Commission will meet on March 11th at 5:00 pm to judge the posters. (Matt will order in pizza because it will likely take 2-3 hours.)
- One winner in each grade from each of the 9 schools will be chosen.
- There will be a Citywide winner chosen for each grade.
- There will be one Citywide Grand Prize winner chosen.
- Winning posters will be mounted on poster board and given to the students prior to the Arbor Day Celebration.
- All other posters remain at the Power Department until the event is over. Then the Forestry Division will take them back to the schools where they will be returned to the students.

Alex asked if there was a rubric for the judging like Matt had when the Commission judged the Beautification Awards. Matt will put one together.

The Commission discussed the following possible criterion:

- Use of theme
- Uniqueness
- Artistic ability
- Content
- Subjectivity (personal preference)
- Use of color

Matt explained that the Commission would find the top 3 or 5 in each grade and keep narrowing it down until a winner is chosen. Alex will bring his laptop and use excel to track the entries/winners.

Marshall did ask if the posters were reproduced in any way or if they were distributed to other departments or media. He wondered if they were posted at City Hall or anywhere else.

Matt said that the Citywide winners were posted on Facebook. The school and student names are not posted.

Marshall would like to see the posters (or the likeness) put on display at City Hall for the public to view. Alex suggested that the images be put on the TV inside City Hall. No names would be included. This could happen in April or May.

Alex wondered if the Arbor Day Poster Contest was advertised. He was told that all of the posters are done in school so there wasn't a need for advertising.

Jann brought up the idea to have the winning posters published in the new Murray Magazine.

Barbara reported that the event was advertised in the Murray Journal.

Arbor Day Celebration on Thursday, May 1st

Nationwide Arbor Day is celebrated the last Friday in April. Murray City has opted to have their celebration a week later so that the State Forester can come. This year the celebration will be on a Thursday because one of the schools doesn't have school on Friday of that week.

Bruce reported that he has the amphitheater and pavilion #5 scheduled.

A lunch from Jimmy John's will be provided for the winners and their families prior to the celebration.

Fourth grade students from 3 elementary schools will be attending both the celebration and educational sessions.

Around 9-10 educational sessions will be held. City Departments, as well as other entities, will be teaching those sessions. Those sessions will be held near pavilion #5 and will last about 10-15 minutes. Students will rotate between the educational sessions.

In the past the educational sessions were held AFTER the celebration (which is at noon). However, due to bus driver shortages in the afternoon, the educational sessions will be held PRIOR to the celebration beginning at 9:15 am. Students will stay for the celebration and then the busses will take them back.

Alex asked who attended the Arbor Day Celebration and was told that 4th grade students, teachers, city personnel, poster contest winners, their families, the honoree, their families, and the public attend.

The Commission asked Barbara to contact Cathy Singer from the Nature Center to get a student count. She was also asked to invite the State Forester and ask her to say a few words. They also asked her to send last year's program to the Commission for their review.

At the ceremony, winners will be announced (Jann and Marshall will assist with that). There is typically a flag ceremony by a scouting group, the mayor speaks, and the honorary tree person is presented. The emcee for 2025 will be Alex.

Arbor Day Honorary Tree Recipient

Matt explained that each year an Honorary Tree Recipient is chosen and honored during the Arbor Day Celebration. The recipient is someone who has contributed to the city by serving and/or beautifying it. A tree is then planted in their honor at the arboretum in Murray City Park.

There was a question about how the trees were marked. Matt and Bruce explained that each tree used to be marked with a plastic plaque on a metal post, but they were damaged by weather, tree roots, and vandalism. Vandalism is typically greater at the park because it is open all the time as opposed to Red Butte Gardens where they charge admission and is closed to the public after hours.

There have been some trees marked with plastic signs in concrete placed flush to the ground but even that hasn't been successful. Marshall felt engraving bricks might be a good idea for the signs. One day Matt would like to see QR codes used.

Barbara asked if there is anyone that knows which trees were planted and in honor of which person. Bruce replied that the winners definitely know which tree is "theirs". However, he didn't know if anyone has tracked that.

Last year Murray City Park celebrated its 100-year anniversary. The Commission at that time chose the park to be the recipient.

A few of the past winners were Karen Crook, Becky Hansen, and Mayor Blair Camp.

Jann asked if the nominee had to only do things outside to improve the city of Murray and Bruce told her that it was community service of any kind.

The Commission talked over several names and decided to choose a recipient at the April meeting.

Alex asked if the Commission should go to the public and ask them for nominations. Matt replied that so far, they have been able to find someone to honor without doing that but would consider it in the future if needed.

Matt would like to have a decision by the April Shade Tree & Beautification Commission meeting.

Advertising

The Commission would really like to see the Arbor Day Celebration, Poster Contest, Jim and Jean Hendrickson Beautification Awards, and the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony advertised on the TV in Murray City Hall corresponding to those dates.

It would be good if all those things could be on the TV during the Tree Lighting Ceremony as that is where the largest audience is. Matt noted that the TV is often covered during the Tree Lighting Ceremony. They wondered if it would be ok for the poster contest and beautification winners to be on the TV in the Council Chambers instead.

The Commission had questions about the Murray Journal. Bruce explained that the city pays for the space and that the Departments can use the space. (It was found out after the meeting that there ISN'T an assigned month for Departments to contribute. The city tries to accommodate publishing whenever is most timely and needed to include. The flyers in the utility bill have a schedule. The Power Department has March, June, August, and November.)

It was suggested that Barbara ask the Murray Journal if they would like to cover the Arbor Day Poster Contest and Celebration.

New Business

This year the mayor would like to have a City Vehicle Light Parade in conjunction with the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. It is in the preliminary stages. They aren't sure what time the event will start. However, it would be before the tree lighting and a route has been decided. In 2002 the city did a light parade in the park to celebrate their centennial. This parade would be like that.

Jann was curious if citizens could participate or if it would only be city vehicles. Bruce said that those decisions haven't yet been decided. As of now the Power Department, Park's Department, Public Works Department, the Police Department, and the Fire Department have been asked to participate. Santa would be in the parade and then he would arrive at city hall to help light the trees on the plaza. The Commission asked how far people would need to walk to get from the parade route to city hall. Bruce didn't think it would be a very big route.

Bruce talked about the 2002 Olympics when the torch came through the city and how the whole city hall area was packed with people to watch. In that instance, and maybe in this instance, there may be people who can see it and maybe some who can't. The city may have to adapt for future years because right now it's hard to know how many people will be there.

Also, the city is looking at the budget to see how that will impact the parade. Bruce will find out and report back.

Alex said that Wheeler Farm has some trains that are pulled by a tractor and would be fun. Maybe they would loan them to us and characters could be put in them.

With the addition of the Light Parade under the Park Department's direction, Barbara wanted to be sure the advertising was coordinated with both the Power and Park Departments.

As an aside, Marshall suggested putting red, white, and blue lights on the power trucks for the 4th of July parade. Because the city will have the inverters and most of the lights, Matt thought that could be done.

Because Marshall attended the 4th of July parade as an official shade tree member, Matt asked him what he thought about it. Marshall reported that he was more impressed than he thought he

would be. Both Matt and Jann feel the parade is one of the best in the state. Marshall said that people were constantly cheering Murray City and Murray City Power. He could tell how much the citizens appreciate them.

Matt reminded the Commission that they were more than welcome to join the parade in 2025.

Marshall asked if there was any other business to come before the Commission. There was none. Jann made a motion to adjourn. Alex seconded it.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:11 am. Minutes recorded and transcribed by Barbara Ishino.