

MINUTES
PAYETTE COMMUNITY FORESTRY COMMISSION
April 22, 2013
3:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Gene Gray, Larry Kelley, Curt Van Patten and Dick Bronson were present.

Members Absent: Tony Mell

Staff Present: Randy Fales, Georgia Hanigan, Bert Osborn, Mary Cordova and Bobbie Black

Approve the minutes of March 25th, 2013, with correction of trees being Sequoia's and not Sycamores.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Arbor Day – April 26th: We will be stuffing bags at 10:00 am on April 25th at City Hall for the classroom at 1:15 pm set-up with Ms. Thompson class. We will be planting two trees (possibly Vanderwolf Limber Pines) at Kiwanis Park Riverside on April 26th at 1:30 pm. The Commission needs to be there by 1:15 pm. The Rebekah Lodge #22 donated \$50.00 towards Arbor Day. A Thank You note will be sent to them.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Trees in City Right of Way: Commissioner Gray addressed City Attorney Bert Osborn and stated that we have worked 14 years on the ordinance on hazard trees. We have 3 ISA certified arborists, 3 master gardeners, one retired science teacher and one retired City park employee on the Commission, all with a lot of experience and knowledge. In February 2012 we asked how to send letter to the public per code to take out hazardous trees and we followed your advice, then at the last council work session they said not to send out letters anymore. Four letters were sent out as directed and all the owners took out the hazardous trees on their own. The liability the City would suffer is great and we are just trying to keep the City out of trouble. Some trees look healthy that may not be. Since we started sending letters and now have stopped, where do we stand? Mr. Osborn stated we need to keep going, first you need to go to City Council and convince them. Ms. Cordova asked if we have staff and budget to do this. The City has not budgeted anything if the owners don't take them out and we have to hire someone to do it. Commissioner Van Patten stated the issue is if something does happen, in his opinion we need to have a policy and plan to get the worst ones first. Down the road we would spend more on a lawsuit. Ms. Cordova stated that we did have one that did cause an accident and they tried to sue the City. Our code stated the property owners are to maintain the right-of-way, not the City. We need to have funding and plan for it; if the owners don't have then we have to absorb the cost. Commissioner Bronson stated if we have an ordinance and we are not going to enforce it, then we need to change the ordinance. The Commission asked Mr. Osborn if we have the ordinance enforce and we don't enforce where we stand. He stated that it doesn't make a difference; our code stated that it is the property owner's responsibility to maintain the right-of-way. Ms. Cordova stated that it is no difference than our weed ordinance. We enforce as situations arise, it is difficult to find every property that is not in compliance. If the property owner doesn't take care of their weeds we have to hire someone and then place a lien on their property. Mr. Bronson asked if the City Forester is supposed to look the other way. We need to advocate to City Council to budget for this. Mr. Fales stated he can find time to identify hazardous trees. The Commission discussed the Forestry line item in the Parks budget and it was stated that we use some of that for Arbor Day. Mr. Gray asked the Commission what is the pleasure of this group? The City is starting their budget discussion for next year's budget now. The Commission would like to go to City

Council and ask that money is budgeted for hazardous trees. Something will be prepared for the Council and Mr. Bronson will attend on behalf of the Commission. Ms. Cordova stated that the Street and Park Departments will be asking for a bucket truck to be used by both departments and advocate for this as well.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Van Patten asked about the grass at the library. It was stated that landscaping will be completed after the amphitheater is completed. A tree has been removed on the southeast corner and it will be replaced with another tree. There will be diagonal parking constructed along 1st Avenue South as part of the project. Mr. Fales stated that there will be chain link fencing around the trees planting last year during construction. The Commission recommended putting plywood down or expanding the area three times in diameter around the trees.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

PUBLIC COMMENT - None heard.

The next meeting will be held June 3rd 2013, at 3:00 pm at Payette City Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 P.M.

Recording Secretary
Bobbie Black