**The Town of Leesburg**

**Leesburg Tree Commission**

**MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT**

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:00PM**

**Town Hall, Lower-Level Conference Room II**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Earl Hower (24), Chair

John Groothuis (26), Vice Chair

Frank Schneider (26), Member

Joe Garnreiter (24), Member

Phil Marshall (24), Member

Elizabeth Welch (24), Member

**ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION:**

**ABSENT:**

Roberta Griffith (26), Member

**COUNCIL PRESENT:**

N/A

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Noble Atkins, Urban Forester, Commission Liaison

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

N/A

**1) CALL TO ORDER/ROLLCALL**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hower at 7:09 pm.

**2) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Hower motioned to approve the December 12, 2023 agenda**.**

Motion to approve: Groothuis

Second: Marshall

Carried: 6-0-1

**3) APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 17, 2022 MINUTES**

Mr. Hower motioned to approve the October 17, 2022 minutes.

Motion to approve: Welch

Second: Garnreiter

Carried: 5-0-2

**4) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

N/A

**5) COUNCIL COMMENTS**

N/A

**9) STAFF COMMENTS**

Mr. Atkins reported that the Town will receive word back from the Federal Tree Planting 50K matching grant by the end of year. The Battlefield Bridge landscaping is underway. The Town median landscaping contract is out for bid. The Town is exploring a trail grant.

**5) SUBCOMMITTEES**

**Adopt A Spot**

It was discussed that the nandinas are non-native and should be removed from the Adopt-a-spot.

**6) OLD BUSINESS**

**a) Town Reforestation Public/Street Tree Locations – Commissioner’s Sites**

It was agreed that Lacebark elm trees were approved by the Tree Commission to plant townwide. 54 potential medians have been identified to plant with new trees. The list is being vetted.

**b) 2024 Arbor Day Townwide Tree Planting Project – Plan Development**

The 2024 Arbor Day festivities were discussed including unveiling the tree planting GIS website, an extended weekend of planting and tree preservation, Live in Leesburg coverage, “Plant a Tree for Leesburg” and other teamwork inspired ideas.

**c) Urban Forestry Grant Proposals and Submissions – Status**

Still awaiting response from VA Dept of Forestry

**d) Tree Tour App – Design Progress Update**

A discussion ensued about using better photos, physical signs, and tree metrics in the app.

**7) NEW BUSINESS**

**a) 2024 Flower & Garden Festival – Give-Away Tree Seedling and PSA Subject Selection**

Redbuds, Dogwoods, Crepe Myrtles, Pines, River Birch, Am. Hollys, Red Maples were considered for giveaway trees. An 80/20 split of small and large trees was considered. Utilizing mulch, mycorrhizae and water for 2 years were potential items for a public service announcement. Any leftover trees could be planted in Town medians.

**b) 2024 Leesburg Arbor Day Tree – Tree and School Site Selection**

North Star School at Fox Ridge was discussed again as the Arbor Day school site.

**10) COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Mr. Garnreiter volunteered to create a decision tree for the group. Mr. Hower announced he would talk with Loudoun County about the former Westlake golf course. He mentioned 2 ash trees at State College and Tuscarora High School planting 5000 trees.

**11) ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Hower made a motion to adjourn.

Motion to approve: Marshall

Second: Groothuis

Carried: 6-0-1

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM