

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

March 21, 2012

8:35–10:00 am

140 West Pine Street

Members Present, Marilyn Marler, Adam Hertz, Bob Jaffe, Caitlin Copple (Chair), Dick Haines, and Ed Childers

Members Absent: Dave Strohmaier, Cynthia Wolken, Adam Hertz – came in @9:40

Others Present: Donna Gaukler, Alan White, Greg Howe, Karen Sippy, Ken Wall

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Approve minutes.

Minutes of March 14, 2012 were approved as submitted.

II. FINAL CONSIDERATION AGENDA ITEMS

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A. Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign contract PR12-03MC Meter Conversions. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Alan White) (Referred to committee: 03/19/12)(**REMOVE FROM AGENDA**)

MOTION: The committee recommends Council approve and authorize the Mayor to sign contract with Rainmakers in the amount of \$103,525 for contract PR12-03MC Meter Conversions.

This project is a result of the 2010 order by the Public Service Commission to the City and Mountain Water to convert all flat rate City parkland irrigation to metered services over a phased three year period. A utility cost reduction survey by JCI two years ago indicated the many of the parks should actually be converted over to wells. Twenty seven park sites remain at this time to be converted from flat rate to metered. Additionally sixteen of the park sites will include a reduction in the meter size to further save on irrigation costs.

There were seven contractors who responded to the public process but only one chose to submit a competitive sealed proposal for the project. This response was from Rainmaker and is within the project budget. Alan indicated that since most of the work was not installation but related to the service end which is the changeover of meters and plumbing and may account for the lack of bids.

Bob – I would like to see the financial implications of the project as it relates to the possible savings.

It was moved to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Contract with Rainmakers in an amount not to exceed \$103,525. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

IV. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Update on Missoula's Urban Forestry Program. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Greg Howe) (Referred to committee: 03/19/12) (**INFORMATIONAL ONLY REMOVE FROM AGENDA**) [Urban Forestry Power Point](#)

Greg Howe was introduced to the committee as the new urban forester who was hired in September 2011. Greg along with Ken Wall and Karen Sippy provided the committee with an update on the state of the urban forest as well as the newly created Trees for Missoula advocacy group.

The Urban Forestry department is broken into two areas, Community Forestry and Greenways. Urban Forestry is the art, science and technology of sustained planning and managing trees, green spaces and forest resources in and around urban community ecosystems for the physiological, sociological economic and aesthetic benefits proved to society.

A main objective of an urban forestry program is to plan and manage the tree resources to create a healthy and sustainable forest to enhance the benefits to the safety of citizens. There are many benefits of the urban forest including habitat and food for wildlife, reducing energy demand by 20-50%, a buffer for noise pollution. Studies on the effects of landscaping on humans, showed that a green area outside will help with concentration and has a positive psychology effect.

The urban forestry staff is responsible for

- Developing a strategic plan to manage public trees

- Maintenance and removals of trees located on city property and ROW
- Education of citizens and enforcement of the City ordinance section 12.32 and 12.48
- Review sub development plans
- Issue permits for arboriculture and landscape work performed in the ROW
- Supervise and inspect contracted services
- Assess trees for hazards

The City has over 25,000 trees along approximately 600 miles of streets and there are over 5000 trees in approximately 60 parks.

In 2003 a partial tree inventory included over 11,000 trees, and 13,455 planting areas. The majority of the trees were Norway maples (60%) and ideally no one species is over 10%, which shows Missoula urban forestry is a mono culture. The inventory indicated that 96% of the trees were in poor condition, which means the trees were found to be in decline, decay and damaged or structurally unsound. The value of the trees in 2003 inventory was calculated to be over \$20 million in replacement value, or a mean appraised value of \$2,196.

In 2011 the Urban Forestry planted 185 trees, pruned 505 trees and removed 123 trees. The priorities for 2012 include developing a new street tree planting list, review ordinances related to trees for future updates, review tree technical manuals for updates, plant approximately 180 trees and monitor a contract to remove 55 tree stumps. A CIP for a stump grinder was requested this year so resources could be used for tree pruning and removals.

Trees for Missoula – Karen Sippy

The nonprofit friends group recently changed the name from Friends of the Urban Forest to Trees for Missoula to include a broader area than just the urban forest. The advocacy group is dedicated to public awareness, finding alternative funding sources and education. One of the projects is to help with a canopy count which indicates the health of the urban forest and includes private as well as public trees. The TFM has divided into two subcommittees one to focus on hardware/software and tools and the other education and marketing. The group will be helping the Department with the 20th annual Run for the Trees on April 14, 2012.

Bob – I would like to suggest integrating students into help with the GIS project, also the possibility of having a neighborhood put in for a block pruning project to help share the costs and benefits.

Marilyn – I would suggest working with Mayor's office on a PSA to raise public awareness as to the level of crisis in the urban forest.

Dick – it would also be valuable to make sure new sub developments require tree plantings.

Ken Wall, GeoData – ([Wall Presentation](#)) provided some information gathered from the 2003 inventory using geographic mapping. Trees are important from an economic as well as energy savings standpoint. Ken encouraged funding for the urban forestry program to include an active pruning and planting program. Budget decision made now affect the next 40 years in the urban forest. He uses Community Vis a software program which can show scenario planning and can provide the cost benefit analysis for the future. Different factors can be adapted and adjusted to show "what if" scenarios related to planting, pruning, etc to show the best use of resources. In order to look at the whole forest it will take a collaborative public mapping project which uses parents and kids to do mapping.

The committee agreed a community mapping project would be a great tool at a low cost and a great value.

HELD ITEMS

1. Discuss the city's strategy to complete a boundary survey of Greenough Park. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Strohmaier) (Referred to committee: 04/04/2011)
2. Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign an amendment to the agreement with Territorial Landworks, Inc. (TLI) in an amount not to exceed \$136,702.37 for professional services, including engineering, surveying, and construction management for Project #PR 08-02 GCT, Grant Creek Trail, CTEP #STPE 8199(105). ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Shaw) (Referred to committee: 10/24/11)

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 am.