

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MONDAY, MAY 17, 2021

A Committee of the Whole meeting was held on Monday, May 17, 2021 virtually via Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Scott Bahr, Council Vice President
Jim Jolly
Brandon McCullough
Laura M. Toy
Cathy K. White

Committee Members Absent: Kathleen McIntyre, Council President
Rob Gjonaj Donovic

City Officials and Others Present: Susan Nash, City Clerk
Lynda Scheel, City Treasurer
Paul Bernier, City Attorney
Dave Varga, Director of Administrative Services
LaShawn Thomas, Director of Government Affairs
Don Rohraff, Director of Public Works
Doug Moore, Assistant of Public Works
Todd Zilincik, City Engineer
Dave Lear, Assistant City Engineer
Arica Flores, Forestry Foreman

Additional Attendees: List of attendees via Zoom is attached

The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

1. CR 145-21 Subject matter of tree removal and replacement during road and sewer repair.
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A discussion was led by Council Vice President Scott Bahr regarding the assessment of trees to be removed. He began by acknowledging the recurring nature of this concern and his support for taking the opportunity to learn more about it in a public forum. He then summarized the situation, including the steps that got us to this point, before asking administration officials to confirm or correct his assessment and add any additional pertinent details.

Doug Moore, Assistant Director of Public Works, summarized the rationale for marking certain trees for removal in the case of a road reconstruction. He noted that, per the typical process, the original estimate included 40 trees as a worst-case scenario, but that city officials subsequently reviewed that list and narrowed it to 24 trees marked for removal on Blue Skies Street. 35 large trees will be preserved. The primary concern is that the extensive disruption of the root system will make the trees unstable and unhealthy to the point of being a potential liability for the city.

Todd Zilincik, City Engineer, provided a few additional details about the contract process and the city's approach.

Councilmembers asked numerous questions to further understand the situation:

- Cathy White asked about alternatives to road reconstruction. City officials explained how any alternatives would simply be kicking the can down the road and would not look good in the meantime.
- Laura Toy asked if a public hearing was held for this project (no, it is not required) and suggested that maybe we could find better ways to communicate the intent of the project before the contract is approved.
- Jim Jolly asked Law if there is anything legally that Council can do at this point now that the contract has been approved and work has begun. City Attorney Paul Bernier said that Council is not able to change the course at this point.
- Brandon McCullough proposed a resolution to create an ordinance regarding Urban Forestry to include landmark trees, removal and replacement policy, tree credits and citizen petition process

All citizens who wished to speak were then given an opportunity to express their concerns and have their questions answered.

The meeting closed with Vice President Bahr reiterating his understanding of the resident concerns and noting that nobody takes delight in the removal of these trees. The hope is that our better understanding of which trees can survive in the right-of-way will prevent us from dealing with this same situation in future decades.

The Committee recommends:

A consideration of an ordinance regarding Urban Forestry to include landmark trees, removal and replacement policy, tree credits and citizen petition process.

Note: This item will remain in committee.

This item is to be placed on the **Regular Meeting Agenda of June 14, 2021**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott Bahr", is written over a horizontal line.

Scott Bahr, City Council Vice President

cc: City Clerk, City Attorney

Zoom Attendees

Morgan Detweiler

David Leins

Patricia Madden

Brian Meagher

Chris

WDIV Receive

Urszula

James Crowley

Tom Simons

Rob Kennedy

Tina Crowley

Mary Edwards

Tall Paul

Mike

JL

Marybeth Dillon-Butler

WDIV News

Nola Street

tcarew

Tom Shipley

Pd

Ross Wilberding

Theresa Votruba Harrier

Joe's Blackbook

Susan Cooper

Kaitlin Shelby

Rachel D.

Liam Neary

Greg Crouch

Ellen

Heather Behm

Bob Hauser

Scott Lockwood

John

Lori Shuk

Bill

Theresa McEwen

Z Zuko

Carrie Budzinski

Pauline Crowley

Judi Orlowski

Carol

Brent Sabo

Julie Seiter