

City of Pierre Arbor Board
Minutes of the July 27, 2021 meeting

Chairman Art Smith called the meeting to order at 11:58 am in the Training room of City hall. Members attending were Kulesa, Isaacson, and Dorschner. Absent were M. Smith and Hanson. Also attending was Commissioner Todd Johnson, Director Tom Farnsworth, Crew leaders Toby Stertz and Aaron Semmler from the Parks and Cemetery departments and guests were Charlene Lund and Ashley Boone.

Motion by Isaacson, second by Kulesa to approve the minutes of the May 25th meeting. Motion carried. There was not a quorum for the June meeting.

Motion by Isaacson, second by Kulesa to approve the meeting agenda as presented with moving the first two new business items to the top of the agenda to accommodate the guests. Motion carried.

New Business

Chairman Smith welcomed guests Charlene Lund and Ashley Boone. Lund called the board's attention to the handout describing a Walking Play in nature and stated they would like to ask the Arbor Board for consideration of hosting a Walking Play in 2022. Lund and Boone said they had scouted several areas in Pierre and felt the "nature" aspect of the Arboretum and adjoining Isaac Walton League facility would be ideal for what is needed. A google earth map was shown on the screen to help illustrate the area and needs.

Lund said the production would be scheduled sometime between August 15 and September 15 of 2022. There are normally four or five performances by the professional actors. Tickets are sold for the play and concessions are normally offered. The play takes approximately ninety minutes and actors and patrons walk through the woods or nature to each stage setting to enjoy the performances.

After additional questions and answers a motion was made by A. Smith, second by Isaacson to give support to this Walking Play to come to Pierre in 2022 and utilize the City Arboretum setting. Staff will work with Lund to define responsibilities of the City. Motion carried. Farnsworth stated the Arbor board will need to take the recommendation to the Mayor and Commission for use of the City Arboretum at some point. This could be done after the staff and Lund define what is needed. Smith thanked Lund and Boone for the presentation.

Chairman Smith stated he had an opportunity to tour the trees in the Cemetery with Aaron Semmler and discuss a strategic plan and approach to this urban forest. The two page letter and recommendations drafted by Smith were given to the board. Semmler stated he was very

pleased that the recommendations very much aligned with his thinking of what needs to be done. These items include tree trimming and removal of trees planted too close to each other. The overall age of the forest is homogeneous and the cemetery would benefit from a census of what types of trees exist. Semmler said the work will take a few years but the advice and support from the Arbor Board is beneficial. Isaacson commented it was great to see a futuristic plan and forward thinking. In conclusion, the entire board supports the long term plan and approach that Smith and Semmler recommended for Riverside Cemetery.

Old Business

Chairman Smith called on Stertz to give an update on tree maintenance work. Stertz said some trees were removed where the new skate park will be built, staff have been helping the utilities departments with removing trees in alleys or near electric boxes. Dog Park trees now have a drip line system delivering water and they all appear to be healthy and doing ok. Stertz stated the Bauer memorial tree had been planted and the Mayor Harding tree was replanted, it was a seedless cottonwood.

Chairman Smith stated the board would carry forward the review of the EAB preparedness and response plan adopted by the City in 2013. This will be the topic for the August 24th meeting.

In dialogue the board had a discussion on removal of ash trees from public lands, this was beneficial to staff who can do the ash tree removals a few at a time without it being a large cost to the city budget. There are approximately 154 ash trees on our public lands, this does not include the golf course but Kulesa stated there are few at that location and could be easily managed. Smith did not feel there many ash trees at the cemetery as well.

Being no further business, Chairman Smith adjourned the board meeting at 1:10pm. The next meeting of the Arbor Board will be August 24th.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Farnsworth, Director