



City of Spokane Park Board Urban Forestry Tree Committee Meeting

4:15 p.m. Tuesday, December 3, 2024
Hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual meeting
Katie Kosanke - Urban Forester

Committee Members:

- X Kevin Brownlee – Chair
- X Nick Sumner
Kevin Cash (Absent – Excused)
- X Kris Neely (Left at 4:25 p.m.)
Hannah Kitz – alternate – (Absent-Excused)

Parks Staff:

Katie Kosanke
Karin Cook
Steve Nittolo

Guests:

SUMMARY

- Kris Neely gave the Citizen Advisory Report.
- Katie Kosanke presented a Tree City USA Summary.
- An annual update regarding Golf Tree Work was given by Steve Nittolo.
- Discussion took place regarding the Finch Newsletter and Workshops for 2025.
- The October financials were presented by Katie Kosanke.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 4:15 p.m. Tuesday, December 31, 2024.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m. by committee chair Kevin Brownlee.

Public Comment: None

Action Items: None

Discussion Items:

1. **Tree City USA Summary** – Katie Kosanke

Katie presented a Tree City USA Summary noting every year for our Tree City USA accreditation we must submit an application and that compiling the information for the application also documents all the work UF is accomplishing throughout the year.

- a. **Community Trees Planted** – A total of 2,795 trees were planted in 2024. Seedlings were planted, there were give aways, an Expo planting for Susie Forest was done at Finch, and quite a few bigger trees were planted as well. Trees were planted throughout the park system, as street trees, and at the golf courses and this fall 162 street trees were planted in disadvantaged neighborhoods by contractors as a part of the IRA grant.
- b. **Tree Symposium** – A Tree Symposium was held with On-Track Academy. It is a great community event, and this is their fourth year having the Tree Symposium. They also have their Tree Campus USA Accreditation. There was a tree planting demonstration, a contest for an Arbor Day T-shirt, and much more including a tree seedling give away with some of the seedlings being sponsored by Bartlett.
- c. **Arbor Day Celebration** – Annual Spring Celebration that is a Tree City USA requirement to keep our accreditation. There is music at the event and free refreshments provided by sponsors. There was a ceremonial tree planting, and the Master Composters were there and provided free compost bins.
- d. **SpoCanopy Street Tree Plantings** – In Partnership with The Lands Council with plantings done in the Spring and the Fall. In the future volunteer plantings are being scaled back and will be done on a smaller scale with most of the plantings being done by contractors.
- e. **Susie Forest** – For the 50th Anniversary of Expo there were 50 Susie Forest trees planted in the burn area at Finch. Miscellaneous trees were also donated throughout the park system coordinated by Nancy MacKerrow through the Susie Forest.
- f. **Fall Leaf Festival** – Annual Fall Festival had similar offerings as the Arbor Day Celebration. The Corbin Art Center had craft activities. They had an ornament craft using rounds from the Willow tree and went through approximately 150 rounds. This fall more educational booths participated than we have ever had in the past.
- g. **UF Crew Work** – The crew does lots of work throughout the year including pruning, removals, mulching, limited fuels reduction work, storm damage response and assist other operation crews when needed.
- h. **Field Operations – Arborist Crew** – The crew pruned over 367 trees and removed approximately 200 dead or declining trees. A lot of the trees removed were smaller trees with some bigger trees being removed. Approximately a dozen trees have been lost in both Comstock Park and Audubon Park this year. Both parks also have sustained storm damage in the past and UF is monitoring those trees.
- i. **Fuels Reduction/Forest Health** – Nick Jeffries, Wildland Resource Planner with the Fire Department works on reducing wildfire risk by reducing fuel loads. He completed nearly 482 acres of fuels reduction / forest health work in 2024. Nick utilizes a wide range of resources to stretch funding for the fuels reduction projects.

- j. **Engineering Construction Projects** – There were 44+ engineering projects in 2024. Urban Forestry consults with the engineering department on these projects and creates scopes of works for each project outlining any tree work needing done to limit impacts to trees during construction. UF also attends meetings, send notices to abutting property owners and occupants regarding occasional tree removals and much more.
- k. **Engineering Dept Collaboration** – The Engineering Department collaborates with Urban Forestry to limit impacts to trees that could be affected by a project. Urban Forestry keeps in mind possible future engineering projects that could affect a tree when planting street trees – such as future sidewalks. Urban Forestry planted a giant Sequoia tree several years ago in Audubon Park to show appreciation to the city engineers for retaining trees with their projects and their significant monetary contribution for tree work associated with their projects.
- l. **Volunteer Hours** – Volunteer hours are collected, and the information is input for the Tree City USA application. The information gives a value with a minimum requirement of \$2 per capita, and as a community we are investing approximately \$11 per capita. Committee volunteer hours average approximately 500 hours per year.

2. **Golf Tree Work – Annual Update** – Steve Nittolo

Steve provided an update on tree work being done at the golf courses. Urban Forestry is currently working with Golf to address a backlog of deferred maintenance that has accumulated over the years. UF staff assists with creating and updating tree management plans which include identifying locations for planting and trees in need of pruning or removal, as well as addressing various issues on the courses. Since January 2022 as part of the Urban Forestry and Golf Partnership, Golf has contributed funding for 20% of an Urban Forestry position.

Urban Forestry trained Golf staff to do some pruning of small diameter branches of trees on the courses and Golf also contracts out some tree work.

Tree thinning at the golf course has taken place to improve turf issues and tree health.

Downriver Golf Course - Downriver had 97 Larch trees planted this year by volunteers, golf staff and UF staff and approximately 100 more will be planted by next fall. UF is monitoring for beetles and at least 20 beetle killed or damaged trees will be removed this winter. Beetles generally target stressed trees, and many factors can contribute to increased beetle activity such as drought conditions, slight changes to irrigation, disruption due to construction, etc. Specie diversification on the course may also help minimize beetle killed or damaged trees.

Qualchan Golf Course - Qualchan had 85 pine trees planted within the course and 276 pine seedlings were planted in the WSDOT right-of-way between the highway and the golf course. Six dead/declining trees were removed this fall and fuels reduction work continues mainly in natural areas surrounding the course.

Indian Canyon Golf Course - Indian Canyon has many trees that are tightly spaced causing a lot of shade areas on the turf and work has begun on thinning trees to improve the turf issues. Fuels reduction work is being done primarily in natural areas surrounding the course and clearance pruning was performed along the ROW on West Dr to improve clearance along the road.

Esmeralda Golf Course - Esmeralda was the first of the four course to have their tree management plan approved. To improve turf and play issues canopies were raised on some trees and some trees were removed. Fuels reduction work is being done in areas surrounding the course and 175 seedlings were planted just outside the fence on the southwest corner of the course and 5 Ponderosa pine trees were planted along Freya.

3. Finch Newsletter and Workshops for 2025 – Urban Forestry would like to utilize the space at Finch more and have workshops and speakers on different topics. This fall a tree id workshop was held that was well attended. The newsletter will more than likely be done twice a year. UF is considering having a workshop series a couple times a year. Some ideas for topics for speakers or the newsletter are a featured bird of the month, a Heritage Tree of the month, information on Pine beetles, and information on the clean green program.

Standing Report Items:

1. Citizen Advisory Report – Kris Neely

Kris gave the Citizen Advisory Report noting that Kathryn Alexander, a guest at the Citizen Advisory Committee mentioned she was attending the meeting as a Community Assembly representative. Katie gave a Tree City USA Summary report, discussion took place regarding a Finch newsletter and workshop ideas for 2025 and the possibility of the Spokane Conservation District contributing material to the newsletter, and Steve presented an annual update on work being done at the golf courses.

2. Urban Forestry Monthly Update – Katie Kosanke

The monthly update was included in the Annual Tree USA Summary.

3. Urban Forestry Financial Report – Katie Kosanke

The October financial report was shared by Katie. Urban Forestry is doing well with the budget and have one project that may still be contracted for this year. Revenue is down a little. Revenue is mainly from fee in lieu fees and claims for damages to street trees hit by a car during a car accident.

Other Discussion Items: None

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 4:15 p.m. Tuesday, December 31, 2024.



Urban Forestry



2024 Annual Report / Tree City USA



December 3, 2024



Community Trees Planted

Seedlings:

1,140 by Spokane Ponderosa at Champion, Qualchan, Ezzy

800 Arbor Day at On-Track Academy

200 Shadle Plant Swap

50 Susie Forest Expo Planting

1.5-2" Trees

80 UF Crew

95 SpoCanopy

162 IRA Grant (fall only)

133 Golf Courses

50 City Projects

40 Downtown

Total Planted = 2,795



Tree Symposium

- On-Track Academy
- Tree Planting demo
- Symposium – project displays
- Arts, Craft and activity tables



Tree Seedling Giveaway at On-Track

- On-Track Academy Tree Hero Event
- 1,000 Seedlings!
- 800 at Event – distributed through the School Dist
- 200 Shadle Library Plant Exchange
- Thanks to sponsors (Bartlett!)



Arbor Day Celebration

- Spring Annual Celebration, A Tree City USA Requirement
- Lively Event with Music and free refreshments
- Ceremonial tree planting
- Spokane County Master Composters and Recyclers – compost fair



SpoCanopy Street Tree Plantings

- Partnership with The Lands Council
- Spring and Fall Plantings
- 95 trees total planted
 - Approx 80 by volunteers (spring, WA DNR Grant)
 - 15 by volunteers (fall, IRA Grant)



Susie Forest Planting

- Expo 50th Anniversary Planting
 - 50 Susie trees (seedlings) at Finch burn/restoration area
- Multiple misc trees donated by/through Susie Forest (10+)



Fall Leaf Festival

- Typical festivities
- Lively music
- Free coffee, cocoa and kettlecorn
- Various new educational booths, interactive displays, etc.



UF Crew Work

- Routine pruning
- Removals of dead trees
- Fuels reduction (limited)
- Mulching
- Storm Damage response



Field Operations – Arborist Crew

UF Crew Work Summary

Pruning: 367+ trees

- Young Tree Formative / Structural
- Clearance
- Structural / deadwood removal

Removals: Approx 200

- Increased mortality in some areas due to drought/beetle impacts



Fuels Reduction / Forest Health

Wildland Resource Planner / Fire Dept, Nick Jeffries

482 acres in 2024!

- Wyakin, 25 acres
- Esmerelda, 54 acres
- Indian Canyon, 28 acres
- Upper Palisades, 102 acres
- High Bridge Dog Park, 5 acres
- Beacon Hill, 50 acres
- Hangman Park, 85 acres
- Bluff/Qualchan, 50 acres
- Geenwood Pit, 83 acres



Engineering Construction Projects

- 44+ Projects in 2024
 - *Interdepartmental billing to Engineering Services*
 - *Overlay / Chip Seals / Full Reconstructions / Business Districts*
 - *CSO's / Trails / Projects / School Safety Route projects / Sidewalks / Utilities, etc.*

Master Task List for City Construction Projects:

1. Project Consultation with Engineering Services
2. Public Meetings/Open House
3. Field Assessment
4. Scope of Work
5. Notice to property owners and occupants
6. General Pre-Construction Meeting
7. Issue Permit
8. On-site tree protection Pre-Con meeting
9. Notice to Proceed
10. Inspection

Engineering Dept Collaboration

- \$660,292 in tree work associated with City Projects
- Often design around trees
- Limit impacts
- Takes input from UF staff, often redesigns occur
- We appreciate our “tree hugging” city engineers!



Volunteer Hours

- 2,383 hours for the year
 - Volunteer Plantings (SpoCanopy, Spokane Ponderosa, TLC, Volunteer tasks, etc)
- + UF Committee – 500 hours / year average

THANK YOU!





Questions?

Golf Course Tree Management Update

December 3, 2024



Update Overview

- ▶ Background
- ▶ Urban Forestry Partnership with Golf

- ▶ Updates
 - ▶ Tree Management Plans
 - ▶ Tree Planting Plans
 - ▶ Pruning for clearance
 - ▶ Removals and Replacements



Background

- ▶ Although the golf courses are on Parks owned land, Golf is responsible for tree maintenance on the courses.
- ▶ Urban Forestry (UF) assists periodically with pruning and removal of trees and approves work done by contractors licensed to perform work on public trees
- ▶ Golf and UF are currently working to address a backlog of deferred maintenance that has accumulated over several years.



Urban Forestry/Golf Partnership

- ▶ Until 2022, UF had invoiced Golf for work done on golf courses.
- ▶ Starting January 2022 Golf has contributed funding for 20% of an Urban Forestry position.
- ▶ UF staff helps with creating and updating tree management plans, pruning, and removals.



Urban Forestry/Golf Partnership

Plans include identifying locations for plantings, trees for removal, and trees in need of pruning.

Plans address issues with Play on the course, Safety, Turf Health, and Tree Health.





Turf issues

Tree Health



Urban Forestry/Golf Partnership

- ▶ UF assists by training Golf staff to do some pruning of trees on their courses
- ▶ Golf has also contracted some tree work to implement plans.
- ▶ So far in 2024, UF has contributed work on over 85 trees in addition to a clearance project on the ROW of West Dr at Indian Canyon where about 90 trees of various sizes were pruned or removed

Update for Courses

▶ Downriver

- ▶ Management Plan for existing trees has been approved.
- ▶ Planting Plan - 97 larch have been planted this year
- ▶ Tree Monitoring, removals of dead trees (in-house in partnership with work crews for clean up) At least 20 beetle killed or damaged will be removed this winter





Update for Courses

▶ Qualchan

- ▶ Tree Planting Plan - 85 pine trees of 5-6', 6-7', and 7'8' sizes planted within the course.
- ▶ Permit for planting in WSDOT right-of-way was obtained and 276 pine seedlings were planted in ROW.
- ▶ Six dead and declining pine trees were removed this fall
- ▶ Fuels reduction work coordinated by Wildland Resource Planner- work mostly in natural areas surrounding course continues





Update for Courses

▶ Indian Canyon

- ▶ Tree management plan for existing trees
 - ▶ Turf and play issues
 - ▶ Plan approved last fall; work has begun
 - ▶ More planned for this winter
- ▶ Fuels reduction work mostly in natural areas surrounding course
- ▶ Road clearance work performed along West Dr.

Tree Removals Indian Canyon





Update for Courses

▶ Esmeralda

- ▶ Tree management plan and tree planting plan
 - ▶ Plan approved last year; first of the 4 plans approved
 - ▶ Turf and play issues- canopy raising, tree removals
 - ▶ 175 tree seedlings and 5 trees planted
- ▶ Fuels Reduction work on surrounding areas

Plantings Esmeralda



five 6' ponderosa pine planted between 2 fairway and Freya. 40 Rocky Mountain juniper, 75 lodgepole pine and 60 ponderosa pine seedlings planted at SW corner outside fence



Golf Course Tree Management Update

- ▶ Any questions?



Natural Resources - October 2024



	Adopted Budget 2024	2024 Remaining Budget Balance	2023 October Actual	2024 October Actual	2023-2024 Monthly Difference	2023 YTD Actual	2024 YTD Actual	2023-2024 YTD Difference	2023 YTD % Of Budget	2024 YTD % Of Budget	YOY % Change
Revenue											
Program Revenue	\$ 91,000	\$ 31,002	\$ 4,671	\$ 3,489	\$ (1,182)	\$ 96,000	\$ 59,998	\$ (36,002)	105.49%	65.93%	-39.56%
Operating Transfers	\$ 66,000	\$ -			\$ -	\$ 66,000	\$ 66,000	\$ -	100.00%	100.00%	
Total Revenue	\$ 157,000	\$ 31,002	\$ 4,671	\$ 3,489	\$ (1,182)	\$ 162,000	\$ 125,998	\$ (36,002)	103.18%	80.25%	-22.93%
Expenditures											
Salaries and Wages	\$ 647,136	\$ 179,641	\$ 44,616	\$ 46,503	\$ (1,887)	\$ 444,399	\$ 467,495	\$ (23,096)	79.47%	72.24%	-7.23%
Temp/Seasonal	\$ 85,839	\$ 32,660	\$ 15,380	\$ 7,838	\$ 7,542	\$ 85,934	\$ 53,179	\$ 32,755	95.48%	61.95%	-33.53%
Personnel Benefits	\$ 246,719	\$ 69,289	\$ 18,649	\$ 18,960	\$ (311)	\$ 178,835	\$ 177,430	\$ 1,405	87.77%	71.92%	-15.85%
Supplies	\$ 35,600	\$ 4,318	\$ 3,980	\$ 145	\$ 3,835	\$ 24,621	\$ 31,282	\$ (6,661)	69.16%	87.87%	18.71%
Services and Charges	\$ 222,200	\$ 72,673	\$ 40,626	\$ 18,358	\$ 22,268	\$ 208,583	\$ 149,527	\$ 59,056	95.95%	67.29%	-28.66%
Interfund Payments	\$ 23,000	\$ (10,108)	\$ 1,249	\$ 7,129	\$ (5,880)	\$ 21,821	\$ 33,108	\$ (11,287)	94.87%	143.95%	49.08%
Subtotal Op. Expense	\$ 1,260,494	\$ 348,472	\$ 124,500	\$ 98,933	\$ 25,567	\$ 964,193	\$ 912,022	\$ 52,171	85.41%	72.35%	-13.05%
Transfers Out	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -			
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,260,494	\$ 348,472	\$ 124,500	\$ 98,933	\$ 25,567	\$ 964,193	\$ 912,022	\$ 52,171	85.41%	72.35%	-13.05%
Net Gain/(Loss)	\$ (1,103,494)		\$ (119,829)	\$ (95,444)	\$ 24,385	\$ (802,193)	\$ (786,024)	\$ 16,169			

