

MINUTES
LAWTON ENHANCEMENT TRUST AUTHORITY
NEW CITY HALL AUDITORIUM
212 SW 9th STREET
SEPTEMBER 12, 2012

Jay Burk, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the New City Hall Auditorium. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Burk, Jay; Hankins, Mary Ann; Harbison, Jean (entered late); Safi, Anika; Smith, Marilyn; Tennis, Michael.

ABSENT: Carter, Carol; Dismuke, Bob; Godlove, Jane; Hushbeck, Tim; Smith Addie.

OTHER PRESENT: Denise Ezell, City Clerk's Office.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Burk stated I would like to welcome our newest Trustee. We are so grateful you have decided to join and help us. We appreciate you being here and committing your time to us.

1. Reports

A. Receive report from 4-D Landscaping

Burk stated Elkouri was unable to be here today.

B. Receive report from Kim Shahan, Parks and Recreation Director

Shahan stated I would like to bring your attention to a few projects. Last Friday we submitted three projects to Oklahoma Beautiful for possible awards to be received by the City of Lawton. One is for Environmental Improvement Sustainable Practices for our litter patrol program. Another for the Children's Memorial under the Compassionate Friends and Playground In Park under the Lawton Board of Realtors. These two were submitted as Beautification and Landscape projects. Those were submitted as LETA projects. In reference to the dead trees there are about 120 major trees. There are ten trees in the right-of-way area that need to be removed on the basis of a safety related issue. Here are some pictures so you can see what we are looking at. If they start to fall there is some possibility of real danger. Based on 120 trees we calculated the cost to be somewhere around \$60,000 to \$75,000.

Burk stated Dr. Bellino is with us today and we had hoped Councilman Moses would be here. After the discussion at the meeting last month LETA can't go onto private property to remove a tree. The City of Lawton can do something about those in the right-of-way and city parks. Jensen stated we can only spend our funds on right-of-ways. We feel we need to start a plan to have churches and civic groups join in to help with the elderly. Due to liability issues we are unable to help.

Shahan stated the trees in the pictures are obviously the ones we have concern for. When they start to fall there is a safety and danger issue. I agree this is something we need to look at. The ice storm cleanup was a collaboration of Public Works and Parks and Recreation. If Council directed that activity to take place then there is a possibility for those services again. Ihler stated we didn't have the personnel to do so unless it becomes a priority for the departments. Direction would have to be given.

Burk stated most of the Council feels this is a priority. It has to be done with Public Works so we can use the grapple trucks to pick up the limbs. Dr. Bellino you can weigh in on this. I think we need a program where we send out, as a City, a notice to the residents. Some of those residents will remove the trees. I'm not asking that we fine them, but just to send a notice stating the safety issues. I don't know for certain how you notify the citizens. You know the homeowners had to plant the trees because we know the City didn't.

Tenis stated it may not be the person that lives there now.

Burk stated right, but don't they take some responsibility.

Tenis stated I would.

Burk asked Dr. Bellino do you have some ideas or thoughts.

Bellino stated we have to divide the issue up between City property and private property. A lot of the places I see are smaller homes, widow ladies living on \$700 or \$800 a month or older neighborhoods. In those situations possibly a church or civic group could help. The concern there is liability. Is there a way we could do this with any group such as Ambucs. Another thing I thought about is a fund raiser or asking the tree trimmers if they could do it for half price and get a write-off. Maybe we could work with some of these companies. For those on City property I think we get with Public Works and Parks and Recreation where we have a special day and remove the dangerous ones to begin with. We need to get everyone out there and just do it.

Burk stated my biggest concern is liability. I think we have to hire someone that is licensed and has insurance.

Bellino stated sometimes church groups help with their elderly. They might be able to address the issue and not have a problem with liability. Maybe we do a letter to the churches to see if they will help the elderly members who can't afford to take the trees down.

Burk stated I don't mind drafting a letter to the churches and civic groups asking for their buy in.

Bellino stated the more buying into this the better off we are. Plus you have more ideas. I think sending the letter might be a resource. Then like this corner in the picture we take a day and just take the corner down.

Burk stated the citizens may already have plans on taking them down. We can state in the letter we have some concerns that this may become a hazard and we would like for them to contact us. It would be nice if the homeowner would help take them down. If they took them down we could haul them off. Half the cost is hauling it away and the dumping fees. The City could offer to haul and dump them if the homeowner takes them down.

Shahan stated these are some huge trees. I'm not sure our local companies have the equipment for some of them. Out of the 120 trees at least sixty are this size.

Burk stated I think your estimate is low. I had one removed from my front yard and they wanted \$3500 to remove it. That was to grind the stump as well.

Tenis stated my rule of thumb is \$1000 a tree and with 120 trees that would be \$120,000. They may not all be \$1000, but some maybe more.

Shahan stated we know of ten trees in serious locations that this group or the city needs to see what the plan will be.

Smith asked is there a grant we can apply for due to the ice storm and drought.

Burk stated when we applied for FEMA money it was just for cleanup and that was two years ago.

Tenis stated it took forever to get our money.

Bellino stated I don't believe on this group of trees the homeowners will buy in. This will have to be the city. They are on easements and the City will have to buy in.

Burk stated we can send a lettering asking them to notify us of their intent. If they state they will be removing them great. If they say they don't have the money then the City has to figure out how to do so.

Tenis stated I think it's all well to send a letter, but let's assume one person pays \$1000 to remove a tree and their neighbor can't afford to so and the city removes it for them. You are going to have some serious backlash on that.

Burk stated I hear what you are saying. There is no easy answer.

Bellino stated I believe the city is stuck with the ones on the right-of-way. I don't believe there is any way that homeowners will buy into that. Tenis is right. My feelings are it can be done in a day if we dedicate one day for City employees to do the work.

Burk stated we are going to have to figure something out. Shahan, can you set a meeting with Ihler.

Shahan stated I need to go identify the locations and take pictures so we can see what we are looking at.

Burk stated it may take more than one Saturday.

Tenis stated it will. Did you say ten really bad ones?

Shahan stated there are five on this one corner.

Burk stated we are not going to take them down. All we are going to do is clean them up. Do you think you have people that know how to remove trees.

Shahan stated we take them down all the time. We just took down the ones in Elmer Thomas Park this morning. It just takes time.

Bellino asked you took down similar size trees this morning.

Shahan stated yes.

Bellino asked how many.

Shahan stated one.

Smith asked do you stack the wood? In our neighborhood they were coming with uhauls to pick it up for firewood.

Shahan stated we haul it off. It would be totally different than what we do in the park. It is a little bit of a confidence issue on our part. We would have to be directed to come onto a property.

Burk stated we would have to block off that part of the block until we got the trees down.

Bellino asked you can take down that size tree.

Shahan stated we have.

Bellino stated as we get into the winter months we need a plan to take down one a week.

Burk stated I agree we have to start with a plan. Maybe we could ask the private firms to buy in and do a special. Maybe they could do two for the price of one. We need to start talking to them and let them start advertising.

Smith stated we hired the group that trims branches off the power lines. They came in on Saturday and was very inexpensive. We had to pay them in cash, but they were dirt cheap. We paid \$250 to \$300 per tree.

Burk stated Asplundh. I bet their bosses didn't know they were doing that.

Smith stated we asked and they told us they had it approved.

Burk stated that is a great idea.

Bellino stated that is a resource. They are here anyway so maybe they could help on the weekends.

Shahan asked do you know what size tree?

Smith stated they were pretty tall. You know where I live so it was that neighborhood.

Burk stated we definitely need a plan. We need to decide on an area we are going to look at first and make it the pilot program. Most of us on City Council definitely feel it is dangerous.

Smith stated maybe we give Asplundh a tax break for giving the citizens a break.

Burk stated since LETA is a non-profit we could write a donation letter. I think that would work. Shahan will set up the meeting with Ihler and Mitchell so we can figure out how we can work this out. Bellino, I'll keep in touch to keep you in the loop of what is going on. Maybe we need to invite some of the leadership from the churches and civic groups to our next meeting to help us plan. We need to look at the those who receive a reduced rate on their water bill to prove financial capability. I'll send a letter to the churches and civic groups asking them to attend our October meeting to give us some thoughts as to whether they can help. Shahan do you have anything else.

Shahan stated I want to inform you of this because it is definitely an enhancement to our community. It is not in the community so nobody sees it. For the last eighteen months we have been in the process of getting the residents of Fisherman Cove at Lake Ellsworth to move. Finally all of the residence have moved. We have twenty-two mobile homes that are still on site so now we have a demolition and clean-up issue and we are taking care of the issue. We are requesting any non-profit organization or entity that might want some of the resources to come get it. As soon as that is done we will put the mobile homes up for auction and then demo what is left. We will do the demolition in house so it will take a little time. At the present time we are making progress and cleaning up the area.

Burk stated it was a disaster. I hadn't been out there in several years and wow it was unbelievable. Thank you. I would like to say we appreciate what you do and for submitting the three projects to Keep Oklahoma Beautiful. Tony Griffith also submitted an application for Trash-Off and I submitted one for Public Communication for the Eye Candy Banquet. I was told that all five projects were worth projects and we should be proud. We believe we will have more than one finalist this year.

Shahan stated here are the summaries of the three projects so you can place it on your list of awards.

Burk stated this year the KOB banquet is November the 1st. It starts at 5:30 p.m. at the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Any board member that would like to attend LETA will pay for you and a guest. I believe having a great showing like we did last year is important. Lawton was presented well last year. I appreciate all that Griffith and Shahan do to help us pull it all together. I need a head count as soon as possible. Please let Ezell know if you would like to attend. Thank you Dr. Bellino for being here.

C. Treasurer Report

Burk stated there has been no income from hotel/motel for the last five months. We have to an invoice for them to reimburse us. I have spoke with finance and they are working on getting our money to us up front so we can finance our projects. There is \$30,000 plus due in hotel/motel money. We received \$60,000 or \$62,000 in hotel/motel and then our municipal fines. You see on the report the LETA balance is \$46,340.21. We have an encumbrance to the local high schools for \$1500 and \$5000 for the East Side Dog Park. LETA balance after encumbrances is \$39,840.21. Playground in the Park balance is \$16,768.74; Fire Pack balance is \$2,500.85; Friends of the Trail is \$2,289.64; LETA YA is \$100 and Fishing for Food is \$630.91. The total bank balance is \$68,630.40. Are there any questions.

Motion by Tennis, Second by Smith, to accept the treasurer's report. **Aye:** Harbison; Safi; Smith; Tennis; Burk; Hankins. **Nay:** None. **Motion Carried.**

D. Receive report on LETA YA

Burk stated they are meeting as we speak. They do have some t-shirt designs that are pretty good. They are working on getting their stuff together for the International Festival booth. They didn't have anything to bring to us today so we won't be hearing from them. I did ask that they be a part of the banquet and I hope some of them will attend the KOB banquet. They might get some fund raising ideas from other youth groups throughout the state.

E. Receive report on September 8, 2012 Retreat

Burk stated I want to say I'm so proud of all the work we accomplished in a one day retreat. We figured out more about who we are and where we are headed. It was a great day. It was great to get to know some of you even better and to enjoy your wisdom in moving in the right direction and keeping on track. I appreciate you being there. We will have another retreat on January 19th at 9:00 a.m. We will meet at Marilyn's home and thank you for being such a gracious host. We enjoyed your home, your company, and all the food. Thank you.

Smith stated Pat was fantastic. We were very lucky to get someone that good.

Burk stated she was excellent and all we paid was \$100.

Safi asked are going to do the by-laws.

Burk stated yes we are going to work on the by-laws, board evaluation, and a handbook for new member. Then we will follow up in three or four months with the rest of our short term goals. Hopefully by next July we have some plans and guidelines on exactly what we are doing. Our by-laws stated we are to have standing committees so we will be appointing members to those committees. We also talked about doing a d/b/a (doing business as) instead of calling ourselves LETA. It is easy to get LETA and LEDA confused. We all agreed on Keep Lawton Beautiful. This will be on the October agenda so we can vote on it. After speaking with our CPA and the City Attorney's Office we need to file a form with the Secretary of State and pay \$25. Nothing really changes. The Trust will stay the same. I believe this will clear up some of the confusion when it comes to our name.

Smith asked should the youth group change their name to KLB YA.

Burk stated we thought we might add Keep Lawton Beautiful underneath LETA YA. We did check with the Secretary of State and Keep Lawton Beautiful is different than Lawton Beautiful.

2. New Business

A. Residential Eye Candy Awards and take action if necessary

Burk stated we will not be nominating a resident for the award this month. Tennis is going to put the sign at the resident of last month's winner.

B. Discuss KOB Banquet and KOB Meeting in Norman, Oklahoma, and take action if necessary.

Burk stated we discussed this earlier. There is also a KOB meeting in Norman on recycling in September. I would like for some of us to attend that meeting. We need to sign up at the KOB website. We are in the process of working with some groups on recycling and trying to figure out a way to do curbside recycling. We have asked for proposals on mini-murf's and dirty murf's. Ihler went to a conference in Austin on recycling and picked up a lot of great information. I will get the date so some of us can attend.

C. Discussion from Councilpersons Bellino and Moses and take action if necessary.

Burk stated this was discussed earlier.

3. Old Business

A. Discuss Eye Candy Awards Banquet and take action if necessary.

Burk stated the banquet is set for 5:30 p.m. on December 6th here at City Hall. We have booked the Mack at Cameron for 2013.

Smith stated I believe we booked that for Friday December the 6th.

Burk stated we need to make contact with Cameron and change that to Thursday the 5th. We had 220 guests last year and there were others we had to turn away. We can accommodate 350 to 400 at the Mack. They are excited to have us. In the year 2014 we will be holding it at the new hotel/conference center which will accommodate 800. We met with the cater at Cameron, Sodexo. They can cater the event here and they do have the liquor and wine bar. We ask they increase their number of servers and at this time they have three menu choices to choose from. They want to meet with us as soon as possible to see if one of the three will work. We have expressed we want another wow moment and wanted it to be special. Dr. Ross has told them this was the event in Lawton to be at. She couldn't believe how well we had done. She told Sodexo Food and the Mack they needed to step up their game because they were not doing it right. We need to meet with them at the end of this week or the first of next week.

Smith stated the first of next week will be better for me.

Burk stated what if we try to set it for Monday.

Smith stated sure. Do we want to also talk with Silver Spoon.

Burk stated yes. We need to find out if they can accommodate us with additional servers. I think they will be able to help us. I would love to use them again. They did a great job last year with the food. We are having the save the date cards printed and they will be delivering them later this week or the first of next week. We have another banquet meeting next Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. Also ODOT will be here next Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. to talk about the ODOT grant for the overpass. ODOT says the interstate has shifted 12" and this is not good. They have some major work on the tri-level to fix it. They don't want to give LETA the ODOT grant until the bridge is fixed. They are going to put in a retaining wall to reshore the bridge. It will be like the ones in Oklahoma City where they stain the concrete and stamp a scene into the concrete. I think we will want to have a buffalo stamped into the concrete. They have ask Council to be there so we can tell them what we are looking for. If any of you can make it to the meeting that would be great. They are willing to give us the ODOT grant for landscaping the tri-level once they have finished the bridge. They do not want to maintain it so the City will have to do so. This is huge for the entrance to our City.

Smith asked is that where the Gary Gardner piece was suppose to go.

Burk stated yes. I need your nominations at the next meeting for the Eye Candy Awards. You need to bring at least three nominees per Ward. We will email all of you the previous winners. We also talked about adding a category for those who five years or more ago and are still maintaining it. Those who won the first and second year ought to be eligible for the long term award. I need each of you to get at least three auction items. We are looking for stuff that is unique. I would like for each item to have a hundred dollar minimum. Email Ezell with the locations you have made contact with so we don't duplicate our contacts. At this time we have made contact with Arvest Bank, Sams, and JP Richard. The money raised from the auction is for our youth groups at the schools.

Safi stated the KOB recycling meeting has been cancelled. They will be rescheduling it for next spring.

Burk stated okay.

Harbison asked do we have a list of nominees from last year.

Burk stated I think I have a list that I can email to everyone. I want each of you to go out and really shake the bushes this year for nominees. Like in Ward 5 you have Liberty National Bank and there are many more. We need to get off the main roads and look around. There are several in the industrial area. T & G Construction was a finalist last year and they are in that area.

Smith stated what about nominees for the Lifetime Achievement award.

Burk stated we need to start looking at those also. If you have thoughts on anyone please email those to Ezell. We may not be able to fill some of the awards. We will not be giving an award away if there is no one deserving.

Smith asked did we have an institutional award.

Safi stated yes and Fresh Paint Days, Great American Cleanup, Educational Institutions, and Community Project. Those are all awards.

4. Announcements
5. Adjournment