

RE: Tree Ordinance

Friday, March 22, 2013 12:30 PM

Paul,

I'll try to answer your questions briefly here, and ask that you respond by e-mail or talk by phone if you need clarification.

1. What would have happened if they hadn't passed this Ordinance? Would we have lost this Grant or any future Grant?

A: Not lose this grant, but would need to provide proof of the ordinance & other program components (Annual tree maintenance plan & Management Plan or EAB Prep Plan) before another grant application could be submitted.

2. In the event of a catastrophic event the City would not be able to afford to combat this to any great effective result. Would there be any assistance of funds in a Grant or otherwise available to the City for this? From the DNR or the Mn. Dept. of Agriculture? We basically have \$0. dollars for this.

A: Currently, CF Bonding funds can be used for replanting after a disaster, but not to remove damaged trees, only infested/infected public trees as specified in the Guidelines (i.e., in this round, only EAB-infested public ash trees). We don't anticipate this changing w/ EAB popping up more & more now.

3. Could the Council modify an Ordinance just to fit their basic needs? (Ex: do not hire a Inspector, drop the enforcement concerns, etc.) They don't prefer for us to be what they called "Tree Police".

A: Sure. The DNR has no minimum requirements for local tree ordinances. However, as EAB spreads, many trees will die more quickly. A city would be wise to be proactive and remove at least public trees as they become infested. Infested ash become brittle in 1 year & large branches will fall off, creating a public safety hazard AND a nightmare for utility lines. We'd highly recommend having at least a city staff person (or resident) certified as a Tree Inspector (<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/urban/certifiedtreeprogram/index.html>), or to share one w/ nearby town(s). I'd call city hall in a couple of your neighboring towns (esp slightly larger towns) & ask to talk w/ the person responsible for trees.

Another possibility is MN 1st Detector Training, which is more focused on tree pests than the Tree Inspector training. These tend to be citizen volunteers. See details at: <http://www.myminnesotawoods.umn.edu/forest-pest-first-detector/>.

4. If a landowner suspects there is an Invasive Specie problem on their property, whom should they contact? We don't want City Hall to try to handle this for reason of not being able to answer questions.

A: This is why a Tree Inspector is such an important position. As in the previous answer, infested

trees (public or private) become a public safety nuisance. Your city will not be able to ignore this safety risk. Usually, calling a private tree service is a resident's only option if there's no Tree Inspector.

I'd strongly advise that you or the appropriate city staff person talk to a counterpart in a neighboring town that has a tree program. You need to keep trying "to convince them that they could not afford not to (act)."

Thank you for your efforts.

Ken Holman, Community Forestry Coordinator
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From: Teegarden, Jennifer (DNR)
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2013 2:09 PM
To: Paul
Cc: Holman, Ken P (DNR)
Subject: RE: Tree Ordinance

Hi Paul,

Thanks for all your hard work. I'm going to forward this email to Ken Holman and have him answer the questions since he manages this project.

I will let him know you are looking for a quick response.

Jennifer Teegarden
Forestry Outreach Specialist
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From: Paul
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2013 1:57 PM
To: Teegarden, Jennifer (DNR)
Subject: Tree Ordinance

Hi Jennifer;

We've emailed to each other before, but it's been some months ago. My name is Paul B. Wirth and I'm a member of the Rockville, Mn. Park Board. You've been talking mainly with Rena Weber our City Administrator. I've been the person in the background doing all the DNR EAB Grant background work, both planning and site work. I am no longer physically able to do the hard physical work, and have been ordered by my Doctor not to. But the City wanted me for my knowledge and experience.

I am a retired (3 1/2 yrs.) Stearns County Parks Dept. (33 1/2 yrs.) former employee. I was the Grounds and Personnel Manager and have a background in Forestry. I know the work and have performed numerous projects in Natural Resources. I'm now sharing this with my Community as a Volunteer.

Last night Rena and I were able to get the required Invasive Species Tree Ordinance passed by our city Council, barely. We are a small City (pop. 2,300) and the Council Members had several questions of concern. I had explained the best I could for the reason and concern of passage using my expertise and knowledge. Their

concerns were mainly economics. They have a strong feeling that us as a small City could not afford to enforce such an Ordinance. I was trying to convince them that they could not afford not to. If you could answer the few following questions I'm sure they would be more at ease. Thank You.

1. What would have happened if they hadn't passed this Ordinance? Would we have lost this Grant or any future Grant?
2. In the event of a catastrophic event the City would not be able to afford to combat this to any great effective result. Would there be any assistance of funds in a Grant or otherwise available to the City for this? From the DNR or the Mn. Dept. of Agriculture? We basically have \$0. dollars for this.
3. Could the Council modify an Ordinance just to fit their basic needs? (Ex: do not hire a Inspector, drop the enforcement concerns, etc.) They don't prefer for us to be what they called "Tree Police".
4. If a landowner suspects there is an Invasive Specie problem on their property, whom should they contact? We don't want City Hall to try to handle this for reason of not being able to answer questions.

We would prefer these questions being answered ASAP so we can close up the present Grant. And also the Ordinance matter. Thank You for any time that you can give us.

Respectfully yours. Paul B. Wirth, Rockville Park Board
