Village of Spring Lake  
Parks & Recreation Board Meeting  
Tree Board Meeting  
Monday, October 3, 2022  
Barber School  
102 W. Exchange  
Spring Lake, Michigan  

[Link to website]

### Agenda:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Roll Call</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Darcy Dye, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luke DeSmet (sworn in before roll call)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Claire Groenevelt</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kristen Horine</td>
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<td>Nancy Meyers</td>
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<td>Lee Schuitema</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Susan Petrus, Village Council Liaison (will be absent)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Elliott Stepanian, Assistant to the Village Manager</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Wally Delamater, DPW Director</td>
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<td><em>non-voting members</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>7:01 p.m.</td>
<td>Approval of Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:02 p.m.</td>
<td>Approval of Minutes of September 6, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:03 p.m.</td>
<td>Finance Reports (none included)</td>
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<td>7:04 p.m.</td>
<td>Nomination of a Vice-Chair</td>
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<td>7:06 p.m.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Parks Updates</td>
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<td>7:29 p.m.</td>
<td>Communications</td>
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<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Tree Trimming &amp; Removal Bids</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:42 p.m.</td>
<td>Public Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Board Member Comments</td>
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</table>
I am headed to Florida to make repairs to my home, so I will not be in attendance at the meeting. Elliott and Wally will be there, as will Jordan to take minutes and swear in Luke. Unfortunately, I’ve been a bit distracted and I forgot to remind Marv to generate the finance reports before he left to have surgery. There are no finance reports available and I do not expect Marv in the office on Monday. So sorry about that!
I. Call to Order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Darcy Dye (Chair), Claire Groenevelt, Kristen Horine, Nancy Meyers & Lee Schuitema

Absent: Dan O’Keefe (Vice-Chair)

Also Present: Chris Burns (Village Manager), Wally Delamater and Jordan Schwing (Deputy Clerk)

II. Approval of the Agenda: Motion by Schuitema, second from Groenevelt to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

   Yes: 5  No: 0

III. Approval of the Minutes: Motion by Groenevelt, second from Schuitema, to approve the minutes from the July 5, 2022 & August 1, 2022, regular meeting as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

   Yes: 5  No: 0

IV. Finance Reports – Burns reviewed the finance reports with the Board.

V. Tanglefoot Update (Connor Keech) – Keech was ill and unable to attend the meeting.

VI. Central Park Naming Rights – Burns addressed the Doss family’s request to rename Central Park to North Bank Park following a sizeable donation to the Central Park Capital Campaign in 2016.

   The Board discussed the name and signage changes in Central Park and the development accomplished by the Doss family’s contributions before agreeing to pass the matter of renaming the park on to Village Council.

VII. Art in the Park Update – Burns discussed the progress of the art projects being developed around the Village and the success of completed art projects. Burns reviewed the placement of the donated sculptures and the efforts of Stepanian to discover the identity of the sculptors and sculpture names for appropriate recognition.

   Delamater and Horine discussed the width and maintenance of path in Central Park in relation for the Doss sculpture.

   Burns spoke on the completion of the mural on the side of Spring Lake Wine & Spirits. Dye inquired on the status of their outside landscaping efforts in relation to Zoning compliance.

VIII. Miscellaneous Parks Updates (Wally Delamater) –

   Standing Seam Roofs - Delamater discussed the status and installation of standing seam roofs for Central Park and Whistlestop which have been further delayed by the manufacturer.
**Geese - Delamater** discussed the efforts at Mill Point Park to prevent geese from roosting, which includes a vegetation treatment and a flashing light that disorients the animals at night. The **Board** discussed the methods being utilized to address the problem and whether it would be optimal to extend these efforts to additional recreational locations.

**Park Maintenance – Delamater** reported increased strain on full-time DPW staff to accomplish all required tasks due to a lack of Manpower workers who, in previous years, were employed seasonally.

**Tanglefoot Park – Burns** noted that there was a shipment of furniture at the DPW that has yet to be assembled by GDK.

**Burns** updated the **Board** on the continued delays with the Kayak rentals at Tanglefoot Park.

**Delamater** discussed the success of reservations and **Burns** confirmed that reservations have been made extending into 2024.

**Delamater** and **Burns** discussed the installation and utilization of 7 security cameras to prevent vandalism.

**Central Park Swings - Burns** addressed **Meyers** inquiry over swing set installation and the costs associated with specialized pour-in-place surfacing required for its usage. The **Board** discussed the additional costs associated with the swing set and the possibility of reaching out to engineers for alternative, more cost-effective, ground covering options.

**Boat Launches – Burns** discussed the increased revenue generated by the enforcement tickets issued for improper boat launches.

**Central Park Skating Rink – Delamater** notified the **Board** that the skating rink had been power washed in preparation for ice skating this winter.

**Tree Board Meeting**

**IX. Fall Tree Trimming/Removal – Delamater** update the **Board** on the tree maintenance bids that had been released with the slated due date of September 21st. Once a bid is accepted by the Village Council, the expected tree maintenance is due to be completed January 31st. **Delamater** clarified that the Village has approximately 80 trees and stumps that require pruning or removal.

**Delamater** continued that of the trees currently growing in the nursery, 82 trees must be planted this Fall and the efforts made to diversify the species. He is going to approach Council regarding the acquisition of an auger to accelerate the planting process.

**X. Public Comment – N/A**

**XI. Board Member Comments – Burns** notified the **Board** that O’Keefe is resigning his seat on the board, resulting in an open position that will be posted in the future for interested parties.

**XII. Adjournment**

Motion by **Groenevelt**, second from **Schuitema** the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Yes: 5  No: 0

Darcy Dye, Chair  Jordan Schwing, Deputy Clerk
Pickleball is exploding, and it’s getting messy

With multiple pro tours and new venues everywhere, pickleball’s growth shows no signs of slowing down

By Rick Maese
September 20, 2022 at 10:55 a.m. EDT

MASON, Ohio — The public address announcer’s voice boomed as balls flew amid the chaotic symphony of plastic pops and thwacks. So many greats had played and won here at the Lindner Family Tennis Center outside of Cincinnati: McEnroe and Agassi, Djokovic and Federer, Nadal and Serena. But center court was suddenly the stage for something very different.

“We love tennis, and this is an incredible tennis facility,” the announcer bellowed, “but for today we are piiiickleball!”

All eyes were on Anna Leigh Waters, 15, and Ben Johns, 23, a mixed doubles team and perhaps the brightest stars in the rapidly expanding pickleball universe, phenoms changing the way the game is played and perceived. Competing in the Baird Wealth Management Open, one of the biggest events staged by the Professional Pickleball Association, Waters and Johns are torchbearers for a young sport with a future as promising as it is unpredictable.

Quaint and complex, the game has been likened to chess on concrete and is most commonly compared to tennis, badminton and table tennis. It also has exploded into a big business with no shortage of deep-pocketed investors and eager opportunists.

“We’re going to see way more growth in the next three years than what we’ve seen in the previous three years,” said Connor Pardoe, the founder and commissioner of the PPA. “It seems like every day there’s something new and exciting and someone else that wants to get involved. It’s really hard to even predict three years out.”

Pickleball isn’t a sport at a crossroads as much as it’s a five-lane highway with everyone trying to
merge while careening against the guardrails at top speed. There are three professional leagues battling for players, customers, sponsors and superiority. Communities are racing to build courts to satisfy an ever-growing appetite, and investors are finding new ways to monetize the sport. Meanwhile, the tennis community is trying to save its courts and safeguard its future.

There’s no blueprint for this kind of growth. Pickleball, with its quirky name and humble roots, was invented in 1965 and has long been popular in retirement communities. But it went mainstream only in the past few years. Aided by a pandemic boom, there were 4.8 million players last year, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, though many in the industry suspect the real number is much higher, based on equipment sales and online activity. There are now 10,000 facilities nationwide registered with USA Pickleball, with three new venues opening every day on average.

“A year ago, it was like the wild west,” one industry insider said. “Now it’s like World War III.”

**Old sport, new vibe**

Tyson McGuffin doesn’t *look* like a prototypical pickleball player, but maybe there’s no longer such a thing. The sport is several years removed from any stereotypes or stigmas about being strictly a 55-and-older pastime, and it’s seeing growth across virtually all demographics.

McGuffin is a tatted, mulleted, mustachioed ball of energy on the court. Then there’s J “Gizmo” Hall, who sports dreadlocks past his shoulders and competes wearing brightly colored, mismatched clothes that often feature cheeseburger patterns. And if Parris Todd looks like a fashionista on the court, it’s because she’s a fashion designer off it.

The tour features former lawyers, accountants, college professors and many, many former tennis players. Its highest ranks also include teenagers Waters, Jorja Johnson (15) and her brother JW Johnson (19). Though the sport is buoyed by millions of casual players, there are a few dozen touring pros who earn a living off prize money, endorsement deals and pickleball clinics and coaching.

Professionally and recreationally, the game is showing no signs of slowing down. Its biggest events are staged in famous tennis venues such as Lindner Family Tennis Center in Ohio, Indian Wells Tennis Garden in California and Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York.

“If you would’ve told me two years ago we would have been able to take those courts and turn them into pickleball courts, I would have thought you were crazy,” said Ken Herrmann, chief executive and founder of the Association of Pickleball Professionals.

There are high-level pickleball tournaments nearly every weekend, attracting both skilled professionals and weekend and after-work players. The event organizers aim for a festival-like atmosphere with a DJ blasting music, pros mixing with amateurs as they mill between courts, food trucks and vendor tents.

9/22/22, 7:00 AM
trucks and vendor tents. Fans chase selfies and get their paddles autographed by the top-ranked players while waiting their turn to hit the courts in amateur tournaments.

In Cincinnati, more than 850 players signed up for the four-day event, where 42 pickleball courts were spread across the tennis center — a pickle-palooza by any measure. Tennis Channel covered each day.

The buzz and energy is still new. According to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, there were 3.4 million players in 2019, a figure that shot up 39 percent post-lockdown.

“You’ve got to remember that people couldn’t do anything, but they could go out in their driveway or in their cul-de-sac or the street or the park,” said Leigh Waters, one of the nation’s top doubles players who teams with her daughter Anna Leigh. “And they could do it with their family. It didn’t matter what age they were, what athletic ability they were.”

With a smaller court and a shorter net than tennis, the game can be more intimate and doesn’t necessarily require as much mobility. The plastic ball has holes like a Wiffle ball, giving it pop off the paddle and making the speed and pace manageable. Children play alongside grandparents. Men team up with women. Among pros and amateurs alike, the doubles game is more popular and highly regarded than singles.

“It’s all about equality,” says Anne Worcester, a strategic adviser for Major League Pickleball. “All ages can play — all genders, all geographies, indoors or outdoors. It’s fun, it’s social, it’s easy to pick up regardless of athletic ability. It’s affordable and inexpensive. Pickleball meets every consumer need.”

According to SFIA’s most recent numbers, the largest age demographic is still 65-plus (849,000 players last year), though younger players aren’t far behind (787,000 ages 25 to 34; 600,000 in 18 to 24; and 610,000 in 35 to 44). Players tend to be White, college-educated and earn at least $100,000 annually.

The major hotbeds are California and Florida, but nearly the entire country has felt the demand. Private businesses have been sprouting up everywhere, such as the Pickle Shack in Columbus, Ohio, which is open to players 24 hours a day; the Missouri Pickleball Club outside of St. Louis, which features 18 indoor courts spread across 51,000 square feet; and several places like Chicken N Pickle, a chain that aims to marry casual pickleball with casual dining.

Parks and recreation departments have been similarly scrambling to accommodate pickleball’s popularity.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, nearly 80 percent of departments serving communities of at least 250,000 people have outdoor tennis courts; half now also feature pickleball courts. Change is harder on the public side, where local officials have to sort out limited resources, often re-purposing tennis courts or converting soccer fields. They also must weigh the needs of their
often re-purposing tennis courts or converting soccer fields. They also must weigh the needs of their tennis players, who don’t want to lose courts or contend with pickleball lines. (A single regulation tennis court can accommodate four pickleball courts.)

In Wichita, a pickleball pro is now on the city payroll to help oversee the sport and run clinics and tournaments, and local officials have allocated $3 million to build its “Pickleplex,” a 20-court public facility scheduled to open next year.

“I knew it was coming, but it’s hard to move fast enough,” said Troy Houtman, Wichita’s director of parks and recreation. “People are just so hungry for it.”

A tour tug-of-war

Herrmann saw the potential early. With a background in tennis as a player, coach and club operator, he launched the APP in 2019, growing it from three annual events in 2020 to 32 this year, featuring $2 million in prize money.

The PPA’s Pardoe was early in the space, too. After his family, which runs a real estate development company in Utah, began casually playing together, they dreamed up something similar to the AVP beach volleyball tour. The PPA launched in 2018 and this year is staging 20 events with $3 million in prize money.

And a hedge-fund manager named Steven Kuhn founded Major League Pickleball in 2021, introducing a rating system and offering a team format that set it apart from the two existing tours. Backed by investors including Drew Brees, James Blake and Gary Vaynerchuk, the league is hosting three events this year, featuring many of the players from the tours.

All three entities are vying to be the market leader. For now, they seem to coexist, but the PPA ruffled feathers when it signed exclusive contracts with some of the sport’s top players. The tour was purchased this year by Tom Dundon, the billionaire owner of the NHL’s Carolina Hurricanes, who quadrupled the staff and moved the operation from Salt Lake City to Dallas. It has already seen improved coverage on Tennis Channel and even a weekend slot on CBS for a recent tournament.

“The most amount of money we bring in from our different buckets, the number one would be sponsorship,” the PPA’s Pardoe said. “When I came into the sport, we did not have $1 in sponsorship money, not one sponsor behind us. When we came in, it was all family money. It’s pretty surreal.”

As a whole, the industry has graduated from mom-and-pop and pickleball-specific companies to broader corporate partners. Signage around Lindner Family Tennis Center included Hertz, DraftKings, Baird and Chase.

“I have the best job in the world, honestly, because it’s true: Everyone wants to be in pickleball,” said Josh Freedman, an agent to some of the game’s top players. “I think we’re very, very early and the
Josh Freedman, an agent to some of the game’s top players. “I think we’re very, very early and the appetite is not even close to being fulfilled yet.”

But it’s not clear whether the sport, with many more amateur players than tour followers, will support three top-level organizations. They all have different credentials: The APP is sanctioned by USA Pickleball, the national governing body; the PPA has Dundon and many of the top players locked up; and Major League Pickleball, which is aligned with APP, features a team format that aims to be more like the Davis Cup or World Team Tennis.

“Let’s learn from tennis’s successes and learn from tennis’s mistakes,” said Worcester, the MLP adviser who previously served as chief executive of the Women’s Tennis Association and spent decades in the tennis industry. “Pickleball already has too many acronyms, so I’d like to think that pickleball will get its act together and streamline.”

Worcester said that means consistent rules and a unified ranking system — and not stirring confusion for the pickleball players and viewers.

“There’s been space for everybody,” the PPA’s Pardoe said, “and I think the other organizations are doing a great job right now. I think it’s been nothing but helpful for everybody.”

‘Competition for tennis’

As most tennis aficionados would be quick to note, pickleball is not tennis. But the sports are certainly related, and their fortunes can’t be easily untangled.

On the court, the scoring is different; the athleticism, mobility and endurance are much different. Even the seriousness, intensity and collegiality can feel different.

Pickleball can feature long rallies with players gathered closer to the net, exchanging short-distance dinks — until a switch is flipped and the players launch into a rapid-fire exchange of volleys. At the highest levels, it’s a game of both finesse and power. There are few aces — only underhand serves — and shot placement is at a premium.

“In tennis, if you physically don’t meet the high-level physical standards, it’s very hard to compete,” said 32-year-old Jessie Irvine, who was a high-ranked junior tennis player and is now one of the top pickleball players in the country. “This is a more neutralizing sport, more based on skill than actual physicality the way tennis is.”

Like Irvine, many pickleballers at all levels, old and young, come from tennis backgrounds, and pickleball is increasingly co-opting tennis resources, its courts and its players.

“Pickleball, to me, is a competition for tennis,” said Ray Benton, chief executive of Junior Tennis Champions Center in College Park, Md. “What the pickleball people have done is absolutely
spectacular. They found a way to get people to have fun on a racket court. In my judgment, tennis is the better sport, and we need to do a better job of promoting it.”

JTCC is a highly regarded training ground for young players — Frances Tiafoe among them — and next month it will host a PPA event at its College Park campus for the first time.

“For people in the tennis establishment to demean pickleball is missing the point,” he said. “We have plenty of room for a vibrant tennis industry and a vibrant pickleball industry. But to pretend it isn’t competition and demean it, that’s like people who drove horse and buggies demeaning the automobile. It’s not a fad, and it’s not going away. They’re two wonderful sports, and we need to maximize both of them.”

Nearly 1 in 3 pickleball players also participated in tennis at least once in the past year, according to SFIA. Tennis also experienced a covid boom, and more than 22 million Americans played the sport last year — 4.7 times more than pickleball and up 28 percent from two years earlier, according to SFIA data.

The popular comparison offered by pickleballers is to look back at ski resorts three or so decades ago, when snowboarding first took hold and skiers had to reluctantly share the slopes.

“And, you know, maybe they didn’t like the snowboarders at first, but now here we all are,” Pardoe said. “They both coexist and they all sell a ton of equipment and both are doing great.”

Global ambitions

Irina Tereschenko, 39, is a Russian-born player who made the leap from tennis six years ago and has since traveled across Europe and Asia introducing people to pickleball. They might not have access to courts and equipment yet, but Tereschenko said they’re easily hooked.

“I think pickleball is entering its second or third stage of mass adoption,” she said, “and that’s super exciting. I think it’s going to explode globally.”

If pickleball continues to grow at its current rate, there will be more than 9 million Americans swinging a paddle in 2025. Industry insiders say the sport is continuing to get younger. It’s being taught in gym classes. There are intramural clubs in high schools and on college campuses, though it hasn’t yet caught on as a sanctioned sport.

“Getting more youth programs, getting it into schools, would be the next kind of big step,” said Irvine, the pickleball pro who also coaches high school tennis. “And then I think it has the potential to be a collegiate sport and, ultimately, it needs to be in the Olympics. That would skyrocket everything.”

But it’s still largely an American game, and it would need more international players to attract serious Olympic interest. Organizers with the 2024 Paris Games and the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics have
Olympic interest. Organizers with the 2024 Paris Games and the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics have largely settled on their sport offerings, leaving the Brisbane Games in 2032 as the next possibility.

Waters and Johns could still be in their prime by then. They’re among the youngest players on tour but also considered among the best to play the sport. Outside Cincinnati, Waters won the women’s singles title and also mixed doubles, while Johns won mixed doubles alongside Waters and men’s doubles with his brother Collin. Johns won approximately $8,500 for his efforts, while Waters pocketed $7,500. Both also earned appearance fees, which can range from $1,000 to $5,000 for the PPA’s top players.

Waters, who turned pro at 12, is no longer getting asked by friends why she gave up soccer and why she’s on the road so much. She has been featured on “SportsCenter” and has her own logo, a signature paddle and a sponsorship deal with Fila. She’s growing right along with the sport.

“I used to hear, like, ‘Ha ha, that’s just an old-person sport,’ ” she said with a laugh. “But now they see me on TV and stuff — or they see that I’m playing with celebrities that they know. And I’m like: ‘I told you. Pickleball is a legit thing.’”
WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

TO:   Parks & Recreation Board Members

FROM: Christine Burns, Village Manager

DATE: September 30, 2022

RE:   Tree Trimming & Removal Bids

**Background:** Last Spring, Wally bid out tree service. We were unpleasantly surprised to find that the tree companies were swamped with work and the pricing was extremely high. Wally solicited bids again this fall and the pricing is where we expected it to be.

Bids were due at 2:00 p.m. on September 21, 2022 with 4 companies submitting a proposal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022/2023 VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE TREE MAINTENANCE PROJECT</th>
<th>CHOP</th>
<th>Get-R-Cut</th>
<th>SUMMIT</th>
<th>TREE WORKS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PACKAGE A:</strong> Street trees to be pruned (major streets) or removed (all streets).</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$8,850</td>
<td>$14,847</td>
<td>$16,250</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PACKAGE B:</strong> Street trees to be pruned (neighborhood streets).</td>
<td>$9,120</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$6,342</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PACKAGE C:</strong> Park Trees to be Pruned.</td>
<td>$12,315</td>
<td>$3,375</td>
<td>$10,325</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
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<td><strong>PACKAGE D:</strong> Park Trees to be Removed and Stumps Ground.</td>
<td>$10,500</td>
<td>$5,950</td>
<td>$10,535</td>
<td>$9,850</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PACKAGE E:</strong> Previously removed trees requiring stump-grinding.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
<td>$3,200</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
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$31,935   $21,775   $45,249   $48,600

**Issues & Questions Specified:** Should the Village award the bid to Get-R-Cut for fall/winter trimming and removals?

**Alternatives:** Do not award to Get-R-Cut. There would have to be extenuating circumstances to justify not awarding the bid to Get-R-Cut. Forrester Lee Mueller reviewed the bids as did DPW Director Wally Delamater.

**Financial Impact:** If the work is awarded to the low bidder, $21,775.
**Recommendation:** Wally Delamater will make his recommendation at the meeting.

**Attachments:** None.