



**Minutes**

**Wilmington Tree Commission Special Meeting**  
 929 N Front St, room 156.7, Wilmington NC  
 9:30-11:00 a.m., January 15, 2025

**Attendance**

- Tom Boland, Chair – *in-person*
- Alana Seaman – *virtual*
- Bridget Callahan – *virtual*
- Cathey Luna – *virtual*
- Terri Parham – *in-person*
- Jeanne Fisher – *in-person*
- Matthew Moore – *virtual*
- Rhonda Waterhouse - *virtual*
- Sally Thigpen – *in-person*
- Aaron Reese – *virtual*
- Haley Hopkins, Secretary – *in-person*

**Special Meeting Items:**

1. Called to order at 9:35; note presence of quorum (8/9).
2. Review and approve minutes from October 16, 2024, and November 20, 2024 – Approved
  - *Motion by Terri Parham, Second by Bridget Callahan, no discussion, all in favor (5/9)*
3. New Business
  - 2025 Calendar – Approved
    - o *Motion by Cathey Luna, Second by Terri Parham, no discussion, all in favor (8/9)*
  - Letter of Support for WRRRI-USGS Grant for Andrea Hawkes UNCW Research Team regarding the identification and preservation of historic bald cypress trees – Approved
    - o *Motion by Cathey Luna, Second by Matthew Moore, no discussion, all in favor (8/9)*

Additional Materials

**PENDING 2025 Meeting Calendar:**

Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month at the City of Wilmington, 929 N. Front St. 1<sup>st</sup> Floor.

Month	Date	Time
January	1/15	9:30 – 11:00 AM
February	2/19	9:30 – 11:00 AM
March	3/19	9:30 – 11:00 AM
April	4/16	9:30 – 11:00 AM
May	5/21	9:30 – 11:00 AM
June	6/18	9:30 – 11:00 AM
July	No Meeting	
August	8/20	9:30 – 11:00 AM
September	9/17	9:30 – 11:00 AM
October	10/15	9:30 – 11:00 AM
November*	11/19	9:30 – 11:00 AM
December	No Meeting	

**Regular Items:**

4. Call to order; note presence of quorum.
5. New Commissioner Introductions: Rhonda Waterhouse and Jeanne Fisher
6. **Heritage Tree and Tree Awards** – Update
  - *Scheduled measurements for two outstanding applications.*
  - *Discussion regarding legal protections for Heritage Trees. Currently there are no protections. Isabelle Shepherd (ACFT) suggests legal stay of demolition modeled after an existing Historic Wilmington Foundation program in which there is a tax incentive to protect during demolition.*
  - *Discussion of plaques for Heritage Trees. The Commission remains interested.*
7. Strategic Planning committee updates.

- a) **Tree Ordinance and Enforcement**- SMART GOAL: Educate all groups on how tree ordinance works by end of fiscal year 2025.
  - *Community Meeting with the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees (ACFT), City of Wilmington, and New Hanover County on January 15<sup>th</sup> focused on ordinance education. Tree Commission to focus on native plantings and Commission programs.*
  - *OLLI Presentation with UNCW on February 27<sup>th</sup> is focused on ordinance education and goals of the Tree Commission.*
  
- b) **Resource Commitment** – SMART GOAL: Provide support to City and other organizations in the implementation of the Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) (Committee members are Tom who is committee chair, Cathey)
 

Urban Forest Master Plan – (Sally/Aaron) update on progress of action plans

  - *The stump grinding contract is almost complete.*
  - *Planting contract going to City Council as a resolution in February, this includes Market Street Replanting.*
  - *No additional implementation role for the Tree Commission suggested.*
  
- c) **Community Education** – SMART GOAL: Develop an ad hoc committee to identify 3-5 actions/activities to incorp into workplan by end of 2025 (Committee members are Kate, Alana)
  - a. Native Tree 10 Best Lists – Approved
    - *Motion by Jeanne Fisher, Second by Terri Parham, no discussion, all in favor (8/9)*
  
- 8. Isabelle Shepherd - Update on activities of the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees
  - *ACFT shifting to advocacy focus, particularly for Sledge Forest and 3990 Independence.*
  - *No plantings this month, but potential planting locations have been shared with Aaron for determination.*
  - *Working to create a hub of resources online to lead people to helpful information. Tagging trees with QR code to connect to resources.*
  - *Tree Stewards – working to mobilize and create a stronger database of stewards and volunteers*
  - *Hiring a Community Engagement Coordinator*
  
- 9. New Business
  - Community Meeting with ACFT, CoW, and NHC – January 15<sup>th</sup>, 6-7:30 PM at NHC Arboretum
  - Tree Fest – January 17-18, 11-4 at Independence Mall
  - OLLI Presentation – February 27<sup>th</sup>, 10-12 at UNCW
  - Arbor Day Planning
    - *Potential planting sites: MLK Center and Hoggard High School*
    - *Connecting with the Horticulture class at Hoggard High School, site visit to select planting location suggested*
  - Officer Elections – Chair and Vice Chair
    - *Nomination for Tom Boland as Chair. Motion by Terri Parham, Second by Jeanne Fisher, no discussion, all in favor (5/9).*
    - *Nomination for Bridget Callahan as Vice Chair. Motion by Tom Boland, Second by Cathey Luna, no discussion, all in favor (5/9).*

Next Meeting is TBD, based on approval of 2025 Meeting Calendar.

- a) Adjourn – 10:39