



Minutes
Wilmington Tree Commission Regular Meeting

9:30 – 11:00 pm, January 17, 2024

2024 Chair, Tom Boland presiding.

Commissioners Present In-Person:

Catherine Cardamone
Andrew Blank

Commissioners Present Virtually:

JoAnn Daley
Alana Seaman
Peter (Jud) Watkins
Rainey Wallace

Absent with notice:

Jim Gregory, Ph.D.

Absent without notice:

Cathey Luna

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Haley Hopkins
Sally Pridgen
Aaron Reese (Virtual)

Other Present:

Dan Camacho (ACFT)

Non-Commissioners Present:

Councilwoman Salette Andrews
Jeff Mason
Richard Bunting

1. Call to order 9:40 AM; Quorum Present.
2. Review and approve minutes from November 15, 2023, meeting (VOTE) – Motion Andrew Blank, Second Cate Cardamone. All in favor, 6/9.
Approve minutes from November 22, 2023, meeting (VOTE) – Motion Andrew Blank, Second Cate Cardamone. All in favor, 6/9.
3. Introduction: Salette Andrews
4. **Heritage Tree and Tree Awards** – (Cathey) update on tree award.
 - a. Discuss presentation plan, certificates, and missing data. – *Have 13 applicants to recognize from 2020 to 2023; Shared certificate draft via email and asking for feedback.*
5. Strategic Planning committee updates.
 - a) **Tree Ordinance and Enforcement**- SMART GOAL: Educate all groups on how tree ordinance works by end of fiscal year 2023 (Committee members Jim and Jud). Jim reviewing Tree Permitting education piece to recommend for use in Zoning Dept.-Jim Update. – *Jim not present.*
 - 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) – *Tom requesting update from Aaron Reese and Sally Thigpen.*
Urban Forest Master Plan – (Sally/Aaron) update on progress of action plans – *Aaron shared they are still in the budget request stage of implementation, Sally shares one of the major goals of the budget request is for a complete street tree inventory for the City.*

- c) **Community Education**-SMART GOAL: Develop an ad hoc committee to identify 3-5 actions/activities to incorporate into workplan by end of 2022 (Committee members are Lloyd Singleton who is committee chair, Kate, and Alana). - Native Tree list-(Kate) update. Kate has completed four lists that have been edited and combined into one document and sent to WTC members. Jim and Kate revising. Next steps and final goal of document. – *Kate suggests the creation of a subcommittee for Native Tree resources, Andrew Blank, JoAnn Daley, Dan Camacho and Haley Hopkins join subcommittee.*
- 6. Dan Camacho - Update on activities of the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees – *Upcoming events:*
 - a. *Jan. 27 – Tree Distribution at Robert Strange Pool to target Southside neighborhood*
 - b. *Feb. 10 – Tree Planting in Southside neighborhood*
 - c. *Mar. 9 – Tree Distribution at Legion Stadium*
- 7. New Business
 - a) FY2024-2025 Budget Request – see attached **(VOTE)** – *Motion Kate Cardamone, Second Andrew Blank. All in favor, 6/9.*
 - b) Urban Heat Island Mapping Grant from NOAA – Letter of Support **(VOTE)** – *Motion Andrew Blank, Second Kate Cardamone. All in favor, 6/9.*
 - City applying for Urban Heat Island Study Grant through NOAA which would help facilitate the City collecting temperature data in areas throughout the City to understand where we are the hottest and how it relates to other social and environmental factors.
 - Likely would need support through volunteers to help collect temperature data if grant is received.
 - c) Review/Develop Calendar of Events for 2024 – *Goal to create a yearly calendar of events in order to be more constantly involved in community/with other organizations. Will be working on a calendar for this year to be the base for future year calendars to understand general time frame of events.*
- 8. Jennifer Blomberg – Tree Concerns
 - a. *Jeff Mason and Richard Bunting present to speak on behalf of Jennifer Blomberg. Mason and Bunting shared frustration and concern with neighboring property, 411 S 2nd St, due to approval from Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to add pool and cabana to backyard. From arborist reports, the construction of the pool and cabana has potential to cause the decline of Pecan trees in Mason backyard. Mason and Bunting attempted to appeal the HPC decision to allow the removal of trees and construction of the pool/cabana via the Board of Adjustment but were not successful. They then tried to appeal with the Superior Court, which was denied and the ruling from HPC on the project's appropriateness stands. The ask of Mason and Bunting was for the Tree Commission to attempt to advise the HPC on this decision, City Attorney Whitely Stavish shares that this would be inappropriate and as the wife of Mason, Jennifer Blomberg, has threatened the City with litigation Commissioners are not able to comment on this issue.*

Next Meeting is at 9:30 am, Wednesday, February 21, 2024. The meeting will be hybrid, (via zoom or in person at City of Wilmington 5th Floor Human Resource Conference room at United Bank building located at 115 N 3rd Street).

- d) Adjourn – 10:40 AM



ACCEPTED

Budget Request

Wilmington Tree Commission

January 17, 2024

Tree Awards (Heritage Tree Program and Tree Award Program)	\$300.00	
Azalea Festival Home and Tree Tours (Educational signs)	\$300.00	
Travel, lodging, attendance fee for annual Great NC Tree Conference	\$600.00	
Printing of community education pamphlet, brochure, flyers	\$300.00	
Total		\$1500.00