

**City of Oxford Tree Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 7th, 2023**

Opening

Be it known that the City of Oxford Tree Board did meet in special session on Thursday, September 7th, 2023 at 11:00 A.M. in the City Hall Courtroom. The following were present:

Tree Board:

Cowan Hunter, Co-Chairman

Ed Croom

Mary Hartwell Howorth

*Allison Ferris, Development Services - Engineering Department, City of Oxford, MS

*ex-officio, non-voting

Other:

Nick Matthews, Building and Grounds Department, City of Oxford, MS

Call to Order

Commissioner Cowan Hunter called the meeting to order at 11:07 AM.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Ed Croom motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Mary Hartwell Howorth seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye; the motion passed.

Approval of the August 2023 Minutes

Commissioner Hunter motioned to approved the August 2023 Minutes. Commissioner Croom seconded. All commissioners voted aye; the motion passed.

Departmental Issues and Reports

1. Buildings and Grounds

Nick Matthews, Maintenance Supervisor for the Building and Grounds Department, attended in Greg Pinion's place.

- a. Loss of city trees in recent storm, damage to property, etc.*

Commissioner Hunter inquired with Nick regarding the large tree lost on North Lamar. Nick discussed the plan for replacing the tree in this area. There was discussion about the plan as well as other ideas for assessing specific trees in Oxford i.e., the idea of hiring a service to come in and assess trees on North Lamar.

Nick reported their department had not received reports of tree damage with the recent storm on September 6th, 2023. There was discussion regarding the storm in the area.

- b. Update on FY 24 budget priorities, Fall planting plans, etc.*

There was no update regarding the Building and Grounds FY24 budget.

2. Planning

- a. Current or upcoming development project tree issues*

Ben Requet, Director of Planning, was not able to attend the meeting.

3. Engineering / Special Projects

Mark Levy, Director of Special Projects, was not able to attend this meeting.

a. Tree planting plan and update re Brittany Woods connector

Commissioner Hunter reported he talked to Mark regarding the Brittany Woods Connector Road Project. There was discussion regarding the plans for trees in this area. Commissioner Hunter reported Mark should be providing the Tree Board with a plan for this area.

b. Assistance with design of signage for Tribute Trees project sites

Commissioner Hunter reported he believed the budget requests were moving forward regarding the Tribute Trees as well as other projects.

Business

1. Respond to resignation of Bill Freeman and discuss replacement process

Commissioner Hunter discussed his report to the Board of Alderman on September 5th, 2023 regarding Commissioner Bill Freeman's resignation from the Tree Board and expressed appreciation for his service, work, and commitment. Commissioner Hunter indicated he encouraged the Board of Alderman to think about who may be willing to serve on the Tree Board in Commissioner Freeman's place.

2. Report on 9/5/2023 appearance by Hunter and Ballard (Mississippi Forestry Commission) before BOA

Commissioner Hunter reported to the Tree Board about his overall report to the Board of Alderman at the September 5th meeting. Commissioner Hunter and Alex Ballard, with the MS Forestry Commission, attended the meeting. Commissioner Hunter reported he discussed Commissioner Bill Freeman's resignation, Matt Nielson's role as Green Grove Arborist and the incorporation of some of his recommendations, and the Tribute Tree Program plans/implementation. Commissioner Hunter indicated he introduced Alex and allowed him to speak to the Board of Alderman. Commissioner Hunter noted Alex spoke about the canopy study. There was discussion. Commissioner Hunter reported the tree canopy study should be completed within the next several weeks. There was further discussion.

3. Updates and further discussion of Arbor Day 2023 plans

Commissioner Hunter reported part of the Arbor Day 2023 plans would be planting replacement trees in the City Hall Pocket Park. Commissioner Hunter expressed his desire for Mark Levy and

Greg Pinion to discuss the plans for planting at Arbor Day. Commissioner Hunter indicated he spoke with the Mayor's Office prior to this meeting regarding Arbor Day and coordinating plans. There was discussion about plans for Arbor Day i.e. developing the program, incorporating the dedication of the City Hall Pocket Park, and regarding a potential Arbor Day theme. Commissioner Hunter reported he still needed to speak with Commissioner Bryant as well as the head of the Oxford Garden Club regarding the plans for the program. There was more discussion regarding potential poster contest theme, "Trees are Terrific!". Commissioner Howorth reported on her meeting with the principal of Central Elementary School. Per Commissioner Howorth, the principal, Ms. Logan, expressed excitement regarding the poster contest. There was further discussion regarding planning, logistics, and the poster contest for Arbor Day 2023.

Move to Adjourn

Commissioner Hunter motioned to adjourn at 11:59 AM. Commissioner Howorth seconded; all members voted aye.