

MINUTES

**City of Oxford
Tree Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, August 1, 2024, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
City Hall Boardroom**



In-Person Attendance

Allison Ferris; Benjamin Requet; Cowan Hunter; Greg Pinion; Hume Bryant

Remote Attendance

Ed Croom

Notice that certain aldermen or commissioners may be included in the meeting via teleconference, subject to the City of Oxford Code of Ordinances, Section 2-82.

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Hunter at 11: 07 A.M. Commissioner Hunter expressed condolences regarding the passing of former Tree Board Commissioner Bill Freeman.

2. Approval of Agenda.

Commissioner Hunter moved to approved the agenda. Commissioner Bryant seconded; all aye. The motion passed.

3. Approval of July 2024 Minutes.

Commissioner Hunter motioned to approved the July 2024 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Bryant seconded; all aye. The motion passed.

4. Departmental Issues and Reports:

a. Buildings & Grounds Department

i. Public assistance requests and inquiries

Nick Matthews, from the Building and Grounds Department, spoke on behalf of Greg Pinion, who was in attendance at the meeting, regarding three inquiries for public assistance in relation to trees. Nick noted the inquiries were not on City property. There was discussion.

ii. Update regarding approved tree removal.

Nick reported the tree on South Lamar, that had been discussed at the previous meeting, had been removed.

iii. Update regarding Tyler Avenue Specimen Tree.

Nick reported the Tyler Avenue specimen tree was doing well and the project was moving along. There was discussion.

iv. Update regarding Lamar tree assessments and maintenance.

Nick reported the Lamar tree assessments were on-going and the Building and Grounds Department should received a report soon from Matt Nielson, Green Grove Arborist. There was discussion.

b. Development Services-Planning Department

i. Update regarding current or pending development tree/mitigation issues.

Ben Requet, Director of Planning, reported regarding an area near Tractor Supply that may be impacted by development. There was discussion regarding the area not being subject to tree mitigation. Commissioner Hunter inquired regarding work on Molly Barr and an apartment complex. There was discussion regarding the developers contribution to the tree escrow account for mitigation. Ben indicated there would be additional planting. Commissioner Hunter introduced people in attendance from the "Friends of the Forest" group and inquired with Ben if he could direct them on areas of focus within the Land Development Code for the City. Ben discussed Chapter 6, Article 6 in relation to Tree Preservation as well as aspects of the site-planning process.

Commissioner Bryant and Ben discussed Commissioner Bryant's inquiry about conservation easements in relation to tree mitigation. There was discussion regarding the concerns. Commissioner Bryant asked Ben to send him a summary of his concerns.

c. General Government-Special Projects Department

i. Update regarding Harrison Parking Lot Project.

Mark Levy, Director of Special Projects, discussed the project and the current timeline. Mark indicated progress was being made, but a lot of field work was having to be done in relation to utility conflicts. Mark indicated Elliott and Britt Engineering was overseeing the project. There was further discussion.

There was discussion regarding another vacant area on the square and potential future development.

Commissioner Hunter inquired with Mark regarding the Oxford Conference Center. There was discussion regarding trees being installed by September.

ii. Update Regarding City Pool Project.

Prior to discussing the City Pool Project, Mark indicated there had been progress in relation to the Oxford Police Department project. Mark discussed a planting timeline for the area. Commissioner Hunter inquired if Mark could provide the Tree Board with planting plans prior to the September Meeting.

In relation to the City Pool Project, Mark discussed the progress on the parking lot on the North side of Washington. Mark indicated he would provide the planting plan for this project.

5. Consider new business:

a. Introduction of Tympel Harrison, MS Forestry Commission.

Commissioner Hunter introduced Tympel Harrison, the new Urban Forester, for the Mississippi Forestry Commission. Tympel discussed her new role within the Mississippi Forestry Commission for North Mississippi.

b. Report on attending "Friends of the Forest" Meeting

Commissioner Hunter recognized members of "Friends of the Forest" in attendance at this meeting and reported on the meeting he was able to attend. Commissioner Hunter expressed his appreciation for their interest in tree preservation and indicated some of the members of the group live in the City as well as in the County. Commissioner Hunter discussed his encouragement that the members research the processes for the City and County in relation to tree preservation. Commissioner Hunter discussed inviting the group to participate in Arbor Day as well as discussed further his time at the meeting.

c. Update regarding FY25 Budget Recommendations.

Commissioner Hunter reported he sent the FY 25 Budget recommendations to the City of Oxford Chief Operating Office, Bart Robinson.

d. Preliminary discussion regarding Arbor Day 2024 planning.

Commissioner Hunter introduced the discussion of planning for Arbor Day 2024. Commissioner Bryant suggested compiling a list of possible locations prior to the next meeting. There was discussion in relation to the date i.e. a Friday in October/November. Greg Pinion, Building and Grounds Superintendent, discussed coordinating the timing in relation to on-going projects previously discussed. There was further discussion regarding potential ideas and locations.

6. Move to Adjourn.

Commissioner Bryant motioned to adjourn at 11:51 A.M. Commissioner Croom seconded; all aye. The meeting was adjourned.

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