

**City of Oxford Tree Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 4, 2024**

Opening

Be it known that the City of Oxford Tree Board did meet for a regular meeting on Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 11:00 A.M. in the City Hall Courtroom with phone/video conference available. The following were present:

Tree Board:

Cowan Hunter, Co-Chairman

Hume Bryant, Co-Chairman

Mary Hartwell Howorth

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

*ex-officio, non-voting

Other:

Mark Levy, Director of Special Projects, City of Oxford, MS

Call to Order

Commissioner Cowan Hunter called the meeting to order at 11:06 AM.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Hunter motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Hume Bryant seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye; the motion passed.

Approval of the December 2023 Minutes

Allison noted a grammar change. Commissioner Hunter motioned to approve the December 2023 Minutes. Commissioner Howorth seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye; the motion passed. There was discussion regarding the Planning Commission meeting discussed at the previous meeting. Commissioner Hunter recommended the Tree Board watch the Planning Commission meeting.

Departmental Issues and Reports

1. Buildings and Grounds

Greg Pinion, Director of Building and Grounds, was not present. Commissioner Hunter noted he spoke to Greg briefly last week. Commissioner Hunter noted they would be meeting to finalize signage for the Tribute Tree Grove.

a. Public Assistance Requests or Inquiries

Due to Greg's absence, no update was provided.

b. Tree Planting or Maintenance Update

Due to Greg's absence, no update was provided.

c. Discuss Possible Volunteer Project for UM Big Event

Commissioner Hunter noted he asked Greg to think about a possible idea for a project for the UM Big Event.

2. Planning

Ben Requet, Director of Planning, was not available.

a. Update re current/pending development tree issues.

Commissioner Hunter indicated he had not heard from Ben, but indicated he planned to reach out to him. Commissioner Hunter once again referred the Tree Board to the Planning Commission or Planning Department regarding the Murfield Meadow Development.

3. Engineering/Special Projects

a. Update re Brittany Woods and time frame for FY 24 Projects

Mark Levy, Director of Special Projects, reported to the Tree Board regarding planting trees in Brittany Woods. He indicated he reached out to Alderwoman Howell – Atkinson of that District as well as the Mayor regarding moving forward with the project. There was discussion. Mark reported he was still working on re-planting the replacement trees in the Cemetery Ditch Project.

b. Discuss potential reviews for completed tree projects

Commissioner Hunter proposed to the Tree Board and Mark to consider implementing a review process for completed tree projects to evaluate the growth process. There was discussion regarding the current process as well as the proposed idea. Mark agreed projects/areas need to be assessed and noted it's a complex process. There was more discussion.

Business

1. Further discussion re setting up Tree Plotter workshop, data updates

Commissioner Hunter reported he spoke to Lesley Rakestraw, GIS Analyst, for the City of Oxford, MS. Commissioner Hunter reported Lesley indicated he could help with a workshop for Tree Plotter. Commissioner Hunter was not sure when Alex Ballard, with the MS Forestry Commission, would be available. Commissioner Hunter indicated he also spoke with Lesley regarding the Tribute Tree Grove and how he could assist with that project.

2. Update re Hill Country Roots

Commissioner Hunter reported he did not have an update regarding Hill Country Roots.

3. Update re MFC and Tree City application

Commissioner Hunter reported Alex indicated the MFC/Tree City Applications evaluation was running behind. There was discussion. Commissioner Hunter indicated he would continue to check with Alex regarding the process to ensure the submitted application is reviewed for Tree City USA.

There was brief discussion regarding the Tree Escrow Fund and the upcoming year i.e. projects, meetings, etc.

Move to Adjourn

Commissioner Hunter motioned to adjourn at 11:46 AM.