

## MINUTES

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



### **In Attendance**

Allison Ferris; Cowan Hunter; Ed Croom; Greg Pinion; Hume Bryant; Mary Hartwell Howorth

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 AM.

2. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Hunter moved to approve the agenda. Commissioners Howorth and Bryant seconded; all aye. The motion passed.

3. Approval of June 2024 Minutes

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

4. Departmental Issues and Reports:

a. Buildings & Grounds Department

i. Public assistance requests or inquiries

Greg Pinion, Superintendent of the Building and Grounds Department, noted most assessments of reported tree issues were on private property. He discussed an issue with a tree within City Right-of-Way on South Lamar. Greg indicated his department had been assessing the tree for a period of time and he believed it's time to remove it. There was discussion. Commissioner Hunter indicated if Greg believed it's a hazard, he moves to remove it. Commissioner Howorth seconded; all aye. The motion passed.

Greg indicated he and Matt Nielson, Green Grove Arborist, will continue to move forward with their evaluation of trees within the City. Greg discussed different areas of focus. There was further discussion.

ii. Update on Tyler Ave specimen tree and construction

Greg discussed the specimen tree within City Right-of-Way at the above location and indicated his department was continuing to observe the tree and noted the tree containment protection was working well in relation the on-going project in the area. There was discussion.

iii. Comments regarding summer weather issues and city trees

Commissioner Hunter inquired regarding water maintenance in relation to City trees. There was discussion regarding the Building and Grounds water maintenance plans. Greg indicated due to the heat of the summer his department was not currently planting and discussed his plan for planting in the Fall.

iv. Proposed FY 25 budget for Building and Grounds trees and tree maintenance

Greg discussed his departmental budget planning for the upcoming fiscal year. Commissioner Hunter inquired with Greg regarding the approximate budget for tree work. Greg seemed to indicate an estimate between \$25,000.00 - \$30,000.00. There was further discussion.

b. Development Services-Planning Department

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

- i. Update regarding current/pending development projects.
- ii. Comments regarding FY 25 funding for projects from mitigation account

c. Special Projects, Engineering

- i. Status of projects currently underway requiring mitigation funding

Commissioner Hunter summarized past budget recommendations requiring tree mitigation for Fiscal Year 2024. Commissioner Hunter inquired with Mark Levy, Director of Special Projects, regarding past projects that were complete i.e. City Hall Pocket Park, Cemetery Ditch Project. There was discussion. Commissioner Hunter inquired with Mark regarding the Brittany Woods Project. Mark indicated this project was complete. There was discussion. Commissioner Hunter inquired with Mark regarding current projects that are on-going i.e. Oxford Police Department, City Pool, Harrison Parking Lot, and the Conference Center. Mark discussed different timelines and how each of these projects should be completed within the upcoming fiscal year. There was further discussion regarding the trees in relation to the City Pool Project.

- ii. Recommended funding from mitigation account for FY 25 projects

Mark discussed the recommended funding for the FY 25 projects. He indicated the Conference Center mitigation should be an estimate of between \$2,500.00 - \$5,000.00. Mark discussed the Harrison Parking Lot mitigation should be an estimate of \$10,000.00 or less. Mark indicated the City Pool Project estimate should be between \$10,000.00 - \$15,000.00. There was discussion regarding the Oxford Police Department Project and trees in relation to the area. There was discussion regarding a variance in relation to the project to help visibility for public safety. Mark indicated he would recommend allocating an estimate between \$20,000.00 - \$25,000.00 for tree mitigation. There was further discussion regarding the budget. Commissioner Hunter summarized the recommendations and further discussed how timelines could vary.

5. Business

- a. Consider FY 25 funding recommendation for projects from tree mitigation escrow account

Commissioner Hunter suggested the Tree Board move forward with making recommendations for the upcoming FY 25. There was discussion regarding budget recommendations and the approval process. Commissioner Hunter discussed recommending up to \$2,500.00 for the Conference Center Project. Commissioner Hunter discussed recommending up to \$4,000.00 for the Harrison Parking Lot. Commissioner Hunter discussed recommending up to \$20,000.00 for the Oxford Police Department. Commissioner Hunter discussed recommending up to \$10,000.00 for the City Pool Project. In relation to Old Taylor Road, Commissioner Hunter recommended up to \$20,000.00. Greg discussed the budget planning process. Commissioner Hunter inquired if there was a motion. Commissioner Howorth motioned to recommend a total of up to \$57,000.00 be used from the Tree Escrow Fund for these projects. Commissioner Bryant seconded ; all aye. The motion passed.

- b. Mississippi Forestry Commission updates regarding regional urban forester position and webinar

Commissioner Hunter indicated he had not heard back from Alex Ballard, with the Mississippi Forestry Commission, therefore, there was no update.

c. Update regarding "Friends of the Forest" group

Commissioner Hunter indicated he may be attending a future meeting for this group at the home of Susan Marchant later in July.

6. Move to Adjourn

Commissioner Hunter motioned to adjourn at 12:00 PM. Commissioner Howorth seconded; all aye. The meeting was adjourned.

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