

Jacksonville Tree Commission
Meeting Minutes June 28, 2018
Approved July 12, 2018

Commissioners Present: John Crescimbeni, Chair
Curtis Hart, Vice Chair
Chris Flagg
Aaron Glick
John Pappas
Rhodes Robinson

Staff: Cindy Chism

Public: Tracey Arpen, Greenscape
John November, Public Trust
Anna Dooley, Greenscape
Teresa Eichner, COJ Budget
Courtney Hilson, Greenscape

Advisors: Sondra Fetner, OGC
Richard Leon, Urban Forest Manager
Kathleen McGovern, City Arborist
Joel Provenza, Accounting

A. Meeting was called to Order by Chair at 12:02 PM.

1. All present introduced themselves.
2. Submittal of Speaker's Cards.
3. Motion made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Flagg, to approve minutes from the meeting of June 14, 2018. None opposed.
4. Fund balance and encumbrance report for 15(F) and 15(N) (Attachment A)
 - a. Better Jacksonville Plan funds – Mr. Pappas asked if these funds were going to be listed on the Tree Mitigation webpage. Ms. Eichner reported she is still trying to determine if 10-set plans had been reviewed to know where the funds came from so we know which sub-fund, charter, or ordinance to deposit them into. However, if any of these funds are spent, they are still subject to ordinance code.
5. Status of Pending Tree Projects (Attachment B) – changes are in green.

B. New Business

1. Tree Planting Suggestion Form Revisions (Tier I Application) – CM Crescimbeni, Sondra Fetner
 - a. Work on this continues.
2. Continuation of Not-For-Profit Application Process (Attachment C) – Sondra Fetner
 - a. Project Evaluation (Attachment D) – This is the form the Tree Commission will use to evaluate the applications and projects. Once this aspect is completed, the application, instructions and forms can be updated and a vote can be taken on the whole process. The factors listed on the evaluation are in matrix format so each Commissioner can

enter his grade. Sections 1 and 2 are true/false, and sections 3 and 4 are ranked 0 through 5 with 5 indicating strongly agree.

- b. Mr. Robinson asked about 1.c.; if unacceptable trees are proposed, the applicant would then get a 0. Ms. Fetner agreed. The list of acceptable trees is a policy decision for the Tree Commission to make sure applicants are only using specific trees. Mr. Leon recommended using a list of preferable trees and trees that are not allowed. CM Crescimbeni asked if the application has 80% acceptable trees and 20% unacceptable, would the applicant get any points? Mr. Robinson stated that if the application has unacceptable trees, the application should be denied. Mr. Leon responded that the application would be submitted to he and Ms. McGovern first and they could work with the applicant to select acceptable trees. Ms. Fetner suggested there be a list of preferable trees and a list of unacceptable trees. If the application contained unacceptable or prohibited trees, it would not be approved by Mr. Leon or Ms. McGovern. Mr. Hart stated he didn't believe unacceptable trees should be on the application. CM Crescimbeni said there needs to be a master list of acceptable trees; possibly ranked from premium to less than desirable. **Mr. Leon was tasked with expanding the current Approved Tree list (Attachment E) to include which are non-shade trees, which are Florida Friendly, which are allowed in parks and which are only for City right-of-way plantings, irrigation requirements, and site development.** Ms. Fetner asked if it was the Tree Commission's desire to remove 1.c and make it a prerequisite for application, like a minimum requirement.
- c. Mr. November asked how the applicants would know if a tree is Florida Friendly. Ms. Fetner said it would be notated on the acceptable tree list Mr. Leon is generating. Mr. Leon said "Florida Fancy" or "Florida #1" standards refer to structure, while "Florida Friendly" is categorized by climate. Ms. Fetner said a link to the website (which lists Florida Friendly trees) is on the application. CM Crescimbeni asked how the applicant would indicate they would plant "Florida #1" or "Florida Fancy". Mr. Robinson stated this is a requirement for the application, which would be picked up in the initial review. Mr. Robinson and Mr. Flagg added that normally there is a tree schedule with all the specifications on each tree which would be included in the application. CM Crescimbeni suggested including that specific information on the application.
- d. Mr. Leon reminded the Tree Commissioners that the Tier II Application is for groups that have experience in completing this type of work. Mr. Robinson asked if there was a place on the application for the applicant to explain their proposed use of the tree funds with specificity. Mr. Pappas said a schedule of values should be developed in which the applicant would fill in the type of tree with the category boxes next to it.
- e. Ms. Fetner said the application will be either a packet or a booklet, but these evaluation factors will be available to the applicant and it will be in their best interest to create their application in response to these factors. The intent was for the tree planting plan to be completed by using the jaxdigstrees tool, which can specify the grade of tree. Mr. Pappas' recommendation was standardizing some type of basic application and checking boxes for the grade of trees to expedite the application process. **CM**

Crescimbeni will schedule a workshop to generate a tree list and a standardized application. Mr. Arpen asked about the current tree list which is titled Approved Trees for City Right-Of-Way Landscaping. Is there an expanded list for parks and areas not Rights of Way? Mr. Leon suggested there be an expanded list for parks as well.

- f. Ms. Fetner brought to the Tree Commission's attention 2.c. Irrigation costs; how strong should the points for irrigation be; if it's not needed or is insufficient, a decision was never reached. CM Crescimbeni said since there is a one- or two-year warranty that should include irrigation. Ms. Fetner suggested re-wording this factor to specify that irrigation requirements do not exceed two years, which was the intent at the time of writing.
- g. Ms. Dooley asked if site preparation was included in the overall expense and if there will be some type of spending cap. Site preparation may include old tree stumps which need to be removed, soil remediation, and removal of lime rock. Mr. Arpen asked what the ratio is of the site preparation to what you are going to plant. Mr. Hart asked if the Tree Commission should pay for site preparation. CM Crescimbeni asked if the ordinance code and the charter amendment addressed spending funds on site preparation. Ms. Fetner agreed that it is addressed as long as it is directly related to the planting of the trees. Susan Grandin has approved that work to be paid for from the Tree Fund because it is directly related to planting trees. CM Crescimbeni pointed out that the Tree Commission needs to be careful so they do not end up doing re-development work using tree mitigation funds. Perhaps site preparation costs should be restricted to some percentage of the total cost of the project. Mr. Flagg pointed out that site preparation will affect the health of the tree.
- h. CM Crescimbeni asked how much concrete could be removed. Ms. Fetner responded that the issue has never really come up. CM Crescimbeni then asked what are Ms. Grandin's comments related to irrigation. Ms. Fetner replied that Ms. Grandin said "for purposes of determining what amount of funds could be utilized for the site preparation, design fees, incidental landscaping, and maintenance activities, such as irrigation, adding nutrients, pruning, and pest control, a proportional calculation should be made. For example: If the trees are planted as part of a street median tree planting and landscaping project that includes 10 shade trees spaced 30 feet apart with under-planting of shrubs or groundcover, the entire landscape design, site preparation, cost of materials and installation could be appropriate for consideration as a proportion of the tree planting. However, if the trees are just part of a larger landscape project such as within a park or school site, the mature drip line of the trees could be utilized for determining what percentage of the area is designed." Ms. Fetner continued, if the project is an overall tree planting project, those types of costs can be included, but if it is a portion of a larger landscape project, then it is the mature drip line which determines what percentage of the area should have the Tree Fund dollars. This is really going to be a case-by-case basis but after a few evaluations are completed the Tree Commission will have a better sense and may then make a rule.

- i. Mr. Pappas suggested a cost-benefit analysis should be a part of the evaluation. If the project will require \$50,000 to plant 5 trees compared to \$50,000 on another project which will plant 50 trees, that needs to be considered. Mr. Flagg agreed it should be a case-by-case basis. Ms. Fetner added that it would make sense to the site preparation cost ratio along with irrigation, and types of trees being planted. Mr. Robinson asked how site preparation is currently handled with the Countywide Tree Planting contract. Mr. Leon said there are many various line items for site preparation in the contract. However, there are no line items for concrete removal. CM Crescimbeni added that the only way to address this is to select a percentage of the total cost. Ms. Fetner pointed out that sometimes the site preparation costs far exceed the costs of the actual tree; the percentage is a moving target depending on the trees you plant. Mr. Glick recommended the Tree Commission cap the percentage at 35% - 50% of the total project; anymore indicates redevelopment.
 - j. Mr. Arpen referred to Judge Watson's comments regarding appropriate use of tree fund money; "payment into the fund is used solely for planting trees which are mitigation for trees which have been removed." Spending the funds on things which cannot be considered tree mitigation (like removing concrete or asphalt) is not mitigation and clearer guidelines should be written.
 - k. CM Crescimbeni added that perhaps the ordinance code needs to be made more specific. Mr. Pappas agreed, the whole purpose is to plant trees. CM Crescimbeni suggested restricting the site preparation to any hard surface removal that will only be paid for up to the future drip line of the mature tree
 - l. CM Crescimbeni said in the current Countywide Planting Contract there are no line items for removal of impervious surfaces. Perhaps we should continue that way and not fund any projects which require the removal of impervious surfaces or at least not fund that portion of the project. Mr. Leon agreed. Mr. Flagg pointed out the City has a tree ordinance which has been extended to 5 x 10 square foot hardscape removal. CM Crescimbeni suggested the Tree Commission use the City standards as the cap for size of hardscape removal. **Ms. Fetner will draft a factor for site preparation.**
 - m. Mr. Arpen questioned 4.b. "distinct and unique." Perhaps just providing a benefit to the neighborhood, not necessarily distinct and unique, which was suggested by Mr. November. **Ms. Fetner will change the factor to read "a unique benefit...."**
 - n. Ms. Fetner said as the evaluation stands, the values of each section are as listed: total points for Design - 45 points, Cost – 25 points, Maintenance and Review - 20 points, and Public Benefit - 25 points. **Ms. Fetner will finalize the Evaluation and it will be ready for review at the next meeting.**
3. North Main Street project – Aaron Glick
 - a. Mr. Joe Anderson, JEA, met with the Springfield Merchants Association and demonstrated acceptable methods to prune trees.
 4. PUD Meetings – CM Crescimbeni, Sondra Fetner

- a. Nothing new to report.

C. Public Comment

- Mr. John November, Public Trust. 1) It is important to decide how this application is going to be published either through the City's ITD or Plan-It Geo. There needs to be discussion, perhaps a subcommittee. 2) There are no funds for the Urban Forestry Division for small scale tree planting or removing dead trees throughout the City. Perhaps the allocation of some mitigation funds could be discussed.
- Mr. Hart asked about tree stump removal. Mr. Leon said they grind the stumps. There would have to be soil replaced to be able to plant right away. Most stumps are removed using in-house crews. One crew can remove two to three stumps per day. CM Crescimbeni asked about a permit for tree removal at Lonnie Miller Park. Mr. Leon answered that Lewis Tree; the City contractor removed those trees for the Parks Department under Mowing and Landscape's contract. Ms. Fetner added Lonnie Miller is an ash remediation site controlled by the EPA. The EPA preempts the City and any other department from requiring a permit. Outside of the ash remediation boundary, there will be tree mitigation, but within that boundary of the main portion of Lonnie Miller Park, there are no permits and no mitigation. All trees which would otherwise meet the definition of a protected tree could be removed because they are on top of an ash incinerator site which the City is required to clean up. CM Crescimbeni was told the trees were being removed to make an amphitheater. Mr. Pappas added that the trees which are being removed for the amphitheater will be mitigated as the amphitheater is not on the ash area, they should have had a permit. **Mr. Pappas will find out what happened and provide a summary.** Ms. Fetner said this is a specific situation at Lonnie Miller Park. There was a tree survey completed for outside where the amphitheater is but a permit is still not required because the whole site is considered part of the EPA site. The ash remediation is being done and tree mitigation will be done in some parts as well. **Ms. Fetner will send CM Crescimbeni an email detailing this project.**
- Mr. Tracey Arpen, Greenscape – Wax Myrtles should not be on the list of acceptable trees. Their life expectancy is short and they blow over easily. The landscape ordinance lists them as a nuisance or invasive species not because they are but because they didn't want them planted. Also, Oleanders shouldn't be listed because they are a shrub, not a tree. There are two tree planting processes now but there should still be a third; a volunteer driven, with smaller trees and not necessarily a guarantee for two years or have irrigation.

D. Action Items

Mr. Leon was tasked with expanding the current Approved Tree list (Attachment E) to include which are non-shade trees, which are Florida Friendly, which are allowed in parks and which are only for City right-of-way plantings, irrigation requirements, and site development.

CM Crescimbeni will schedule a workshop to generate a tree list and a standardized Application

Ms. Fetner will draft a factor for site preparation in the Project Evaluation, Section 2. Cost Review. Ms. Fetner will change factor 4.b to “a unique benefit....”

Ms. Fetner will finalize the Project Evaluation and it will be ready for review at the next meeting

Mr. Pappas will provide a summary regarding the tree removal at Lonnie Miller. Ms. Fetner will send CM Crescimbeni an email detailing ash mitigation and tree mitigation at Lonnie Miller.

E. Meeting adjourned at 1:35.