

Jacksonville Tree Commission
Wednesday April 21, 2021 – 9:30 AM
Approved May 19, 2021
Via Zoom Platform & In Person

Commissioners Present:

Chris Flagg, Chair
Curtis Hart, Vice Chair
Mike Robinson
Rhodes Robinson
Susan Fraser

Staff: Cindy Chism

Public: Dalton Smith, COJ
Joe Anderson, JEA
Fred Pope, COJ
Todd Little, COJ
Mike Zaffroni, Liberty Landscape
John November, Public Trust
Nichole Evans, COJ
Nancy Powell, Scenic Jax
Jeff Lucovsky, COJ
Dave McDaniel, COJ

Advisors:

Susan Grandin, OGC
Richard Leon, Urban Forester Manager
Kathleen McGovern, City Arborist
Joel Provenza, Finance

1. **Call to Order** - Chair
2. **Roll Call and Verification of Quorum** – Cindy Chism
3. **Submittal of Speaker’s Cards** – Chair
 - a) A raised hand icon as well as waving at the screen will be acknowledged by Chair or Ms. Chism.
 - b) For those attending in person, paper speakers cards are available.
4. **Reports:**
 - a) Fund balance and encumbrance report for 15(F) (Ordinance Tree Fund), 15(N) (Charter Tree Fund) and BJP (Attachment A) – Joel Provenza
 - b) Status of Pending Tree Projects (Attachment B) – Kathleen McGovern
 - c) Fund Status of 630-CITY, Remove & Replace and Level 2 Programs– Richard Leon
 - i. 630-City has a remaining balance of \$666,570 with 3414 trees planted to date; with an average of 15 requests per week. We anticipate this number doubling as we move into spring and summer. It takes approximately 2.5 months from request to tree in the ground. There is \$1,081,000 in the Level 2 program after the 3 projects presented today. Remove & Replace has \$167,215 in Replacement and \$20,804 in Removal. Mr. Hart commented that 2.5 months from request to tree in the ground is an outstanding timeframe.

Action Items:

- d) Approval of Minutes from April 21st, 2021 meeting – Chair
 - i. Motion made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson, none opposed.
- e) Proposed Level 2 Project(s)
 - i. Kernan Blvd. Tree Planting Project (Attachment C)– Dalton Smith

1. Presentation – The project was requested by Councilman Bowman. There are a lot of issues with heat and wind on this road. The project we developed has 119 trees to be planted on the stretch of Kernan between Atlantic and Beach Blvds. The main focus was to replace the Lacebark Elms which had been removed from the medians, fill in the gaps as well as add trees to the right-of-ways on the each side. Locates were requested for every proposed location.
 - a. Ms. Fraser asked why the Little Gem Magnolia tree was chosen. They require a lot of water initially and do not provide much shade. Mr. Smith replied this project has a 2 year warranty so the contractor will be keeping a close eye on them. Due to space constraints a large tree was not appropriate because of the slope of the right-of-way in several locations. There are several Little Gem Magnolias already planted so the new planting will “match.” Ms. Fraser added because the tree only reaches approximately 8-10 ft. canopy, some of the spacing is inconsistent, from a design aspect are you trying to fill in a pattern that’s there or is it supposed to be a kind of windscreen? Mr. Smith responded yes, some pattern using the Hollies already planted and some windscreen
 - b. Ms. Fraser pointed out Little Gem Magnolias will not provide any shade and because they are so far apart they will look like green fence pickets to a driver. Mr. Smith said they would fill a visual gap. Mr. Flagg replied there are physical gaps and visual gaps and the plan is really only filling a visual gap. For the money, fulfilling a physical gap would be preferred. Ms. Fraser added the Little Gem Magnolia is the most expensive tree on the invoice at \$2500 each. Isn’t there a species which is less expensive and would give more shade? There could then be more of them.
 - c. Mr. Flagg asked if an Overcup Oak would work instead. Mr. Smith answered that the concern was to prevent encroachment into the roadway. There are already a lot of oaks which require trimming; there have been complaints about the trees overgrowing the sidewalk because it is used so much. Mr. Leon added there are Little Gem Magnolias already thriving out there. From a maintenance standpoint, trimming trees on Kernan is a major undertaking.
 - d. Mr. Flagg pointed out that the Commission relies on the recommendations of the on-site visits from Mr. Leon’s team. However, if there is an opportunity to cluster more of a shade tree and enhance the canopy on a grander scale that will find favor as well. Mr. Hart said if we are going to plant slash pines, why are we planting 3 gallon size at \$1400+ each? They grow all over Florida with no special treatment, why aren’t we planting 1 gallon trees. We could plant 5 times as many. Mr. Smith responded that with the wind effect from the traffic, smaller trees will not establish well. Ms. McGovern added that the cost of the tree covers more than just the price of the tree. Mr. Hart added that do we need those services for slash pine? Ms. Fraser pointed out that the cost of the services, the pre-prep, delivery, daily checks, is not dependent upon the size of the tree being planted. However, perhaps for some of the trees “which grow like weeds” we could use a smaller tree and twice as many.
 - e. Mr. Flagg agreed with the points and suggested staff should evaluate. Ms. Fraser suggested setting a design standard for slash pines to be 1” vs. 3” and plant 3 times as many and group them. Then staff will know that using slash pines in a project, 1” trees will be used and they

will be clustered. Mr. Flagg suggested the project be deferred so staff could make adjustments on the tree species being planted.

- f. Mr. Leon said there are reasons for the size of the tree we have chosen. There are times when we plant smaller or larger trees. The smaller trees are more susceptible to vandalism, whether deliberate or accidental. 3" trees have more of a visual impact and seem to be neither too big nor too small. Ms. McGovern suggested replacing a lot of the Little Gem Magnolias with Southern Magnolias, switching many of the slash pines to long-leaf pines and increasing the canopy where possible.

2. Public Comment – None.

3. Vote – The Commission suggested changes be made as a result of this discussion and the project resubmitted next month.

ii. Twin Lakes Academy Elementary Tree Planting Project (Attachment D)– Todd Little

1. Presentation – The school requested trees be planted to increase the shade where the children play. Councilmember Becton requested adding more trees to increase the sound buffer making the total trees being planted to 66.

2. Public Comment – None.

3. Vote – Motion to approve made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson, none opposed.

iii. Atlantic Beach Tree Planting Project (Attachment E)– Todd Little

1. Presentation – The City of Atlantic Beach requested several street tree plantings throughout residential areas, totaling 133 trees. Where there was room larger trees were used such as oaks where there wasn't, Little Gem Magnolias were used.

2. Public Comment – None.

3. Vote – Motion to approve made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. M. Robinson, none opposed.

5. Old Business

a) Level 3 Document Revision (Attachment F) – Susan Grandin & Fred Pope

- i. The impetus to change the Level 3 documents was the organizations that are applying for Level 3 projects don't have the funds to pay their contractor(s) before the City pays them. So instead of a reimbursement type of contract, the agreement will work as a draw request either monthly or however we set it up to be, i.e., the Applicant will turn in their invoices when they turn in a draw request. It will work like this: the plant material will be ordered, then installed and then the invoice submitted, the City will pay them and they will pay their contractor. The next time they submit invoices for payment, they must show proof they paid their contractor previously. Many contracts at Public Works are managed in this manner. The reimbursement plan is usually used for grants and this is not a grant, which is another change. This is a design build contract.
- ii. The idea is to simplify everything. The definitions will be incorporated into the contract itself or the Application which will become an exhibit to the contract.
- iii. In the Attachment, 3.a.there are several questions in the Application which may be unnecessary.

- iv. Number 7. is a policy question, who is eligible to be an Applicant? Is it still limited to non-profits, 501(3)(c) non-profits and community organizations or open to anyone.
- v. Number 8. is a list of definitions which will be added and include required criteria for personnel. The inspections are also new; interim inspection is at the end of construction; the Final Inspection generates a punch list once the punch list items are completed another inspection is held. If that inspection is passed, initial acceptance has been done, then maintenance starts, once maintenance is completed there is another inspection, corrections completed and then final acceptance. There is an inspection for each draw request as well.
- vi. All statutory and ordinance code requirements will also be added.
- vii. Motion to approve the changes suggested, leaving the program limited to non-profits, 501(3)(c) non-profits and community organizations by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson, none opposed.

6. New Business

- a) Presentation on Previous Planting Projects (Attachment G) – Todd Little

7. Public Comment –

- a) Mr. Hart requested an Agenda item for next meeting to discuss an alternative to total asphalt in parking lots.

- 8. Adjournment** – the next meeting is Wednesday May 19th and will be a Hybrid Zoom meeting in Ed Ball Building, 10th floor, Public Works Office, conference room 5,