

Jacksonville Tree Commission
Wednesday May 18, 2022 – 9:30 AM
Approved June 13, 2022
Via Zoom Platform & In Person

**Commissioners
Present:**

Chris Flagg, Chair
Mike Robinson, Vice Chair
Curtis Hart
CM Ron Salem
John Pappas
Susan Fraser
Rhodes Robinson

Staff: Cindy Chism

Public: Paul Davis, COJ
Kathleen McGovern, COJ
John November, Public Trust
Tracey Arpen, Scenic Jax
Kelly O’Leary, Liberty Landscape
Mike Zaffaroni, Liberty Landscape
Dave McDaniel, COJ
Anna Walling, Kimley-Horn
Kaitlin Heckman, Kimley-Horn
Susan Cavan, Scenic Jax

Advisors:

Susan Grandin, OGC
Dalton Smith, Urban Forestry
Jose Regueiro, Finance
Justin Gearhart, City Arborist

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) – Jose Regueiro
 - i. Mr. Regueiro asked the Commissioners to evaluate the new format for financial reports. Ms. Grandin asked about the names of the funds, 15304 Charter and 15305 Mitigation. The draft is mislabeled, the Charter is 15305 and Mitigation/Ordinance is 15304.
 - ii. Mr. Regueiro told the Commission he was working to close out some of the projects which need to be closed out with the remainder put back into the respective funds.
 - iii. Mr. Hart would like to meet with Ms. Grandin and Mr. Regueiro to discuss the financial reports.
 - b) Status of Pending Tree Projects (Attachment B) – Justin Gearhart
 - i. Ms. Fraser asked if the year the project was done could be added to the table. Mr. Gearhart agreed to do so.
 - c) Fund Status of 630-CITY, Remove & Replace and Level 2 Programs– Dalton Smith
 - i. The remaining funds for Level 2 are \$2,217,700, 630-CITY funds are \$1,058,065 and Remove & Replace funds are \$806,655. There are a lot of Level 2s being planned.

5. Action Items:

- a)** Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2022 workshop – Chair
 - i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Pappas, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson. None opposed.
- b)** Approval of Minutes from April 20, 2022 meeting – Chair
 - i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Pappas, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson. None opposed.
- c)** Approval of Minutes from April 28, 2022 workshop – Chair
 - i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Pappas, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson. None opposed.
- d)** Proposed Level 2 Project(s)
 - i. Deerwood Park Blvd. Tree Planting Project (Attachment C)– Justin Gearhart
 - 1. Presentation – Ms. Fraser asked if in the future a key could be included. Mr. Gearhart agreed and said the red dots are Live Oak, the light blue are Walters Viburnum, the green are Long Leaf Pine and the dark blue are Yaupon Holly.
 - 2. Mr. M. Robinson asked what the warranty period was going to be. Mr. Gearhart replied 2 year warranty.
 - 3. Mr. Flagg asked about sight lines clearance for safety at the intersection. Mr. Gearhart said to ensure there was adequate space for sight lines there are 40 feet between the intersections and the first tree being planted and kept the plant list to plants which were not low growing near the intersections as well.
 - 4. Ms. Fraser asked why Long Leaf Pine was selected. Mr. Gearhart said it is more tolerable to the median conditions there. It is very drought and disease tolerant as well. Sometimes in the medians, especially when clumped together, Slash Pines and Loblolly can pick up diseases. In addition, there are already Long Leaf Pines and Live Oaks on the other side of the road to continue the aesthetic.
 - 5. Public Comment
 - 6. Vote - Motion to approve made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson. None opposed

6. Old Business

- a)** Level 3 Program Document Revisions – Ms. Grandin
 - i. The changes will be discussed at the next meeting. This process isn't typically necessary for a consultant who knows how to do all these things but for the non-profits which don't work in this area all the time, that is why the instructions are so important. So everyone's expectations are managed.
- b)** Update on Proactive/Preventative Tree Maintenance Program – Mr. Smith
 - i. The Specs have been written and given to Mr. Pope for review and then revisions. It should go to Procurement next week for their review. There are some areas already under considerations. The intent is to take pictures of the locations and make a presentation to illustrate what the cost was, what we got for it and before and after. The comparison will be on cost comparing what kind of work they've done and determining what we can get for the price.

- ii. Mr. Pappas added long-term, looking at those corridors over time to see the result from these early efforts. It should be telling.
- c) Urban Forestry Funding – does the legislation say “Agency?” – Ms. Grandin
 - i. Ms. Grandin pointed out that legislation means for the Level 2 Program. CM Salem has agreed to do the legislation for what is needed now, it’s approximately 8 million dollars. The legislation is prepared, and it will be filed this afternoon. The question of the fund is important because referenced in the legislation is 15304. That fund, the Charter Fund is much more restricted than the Ordinance Fund. So directly after the Tree Commission concludes this needs to be resolved.
 - ii. In the title and the appropriation, City Departments was added. Just to make it clear that City Departments can use the Level 2 Program. It may have been assumed before, which makes sense, but now it says: “Level 2 Tree Planting Program provides individual citizens, organizations, City Departments, or Council members with the opportunity to suggest location for tree planting projects on public property.”
 - iii. However, Tree Funds cannot be used to mitigate for trees removed, this is only for extra trees.
- d) Results of Meeting with Council Member regarding Palm Trees – Ms. Grandin
 - i. Though CM Salem wanted this legislation submitted today as well, this turned out to be a heavier lift than the Level 2 Project.
 - ii. Members of the Tree Commission, Planning, and Mowing & Landscape Divisions have been working on revising the Landscape Code to fix, Shade Trees and other things. It’s a huge project. If one thing is changed it dominoes to other things.
 - iii. In the definition’s portions of the Landscape Code, which is part of the Zoning Code, part 12, little letters were inserted in front of the word defined. This got changed to putting the terms in alphabetical order.
 - iv. CM Salem asked if there was anyone else this document should be shared with. Ms. Grandin suggested sharing it with Mr. Pittman, whose letter prompted this change, and Planning and Development. Mr. Flagg suggested getting more done before asking for too many additional opinions.
 - v. Mr. M. Robinson asked on a palm trees, the clear trunk can be manipulated, the boots can be skinned off but a young palm, some can be 12-15 tall and retain all the boots all the way up and so have no clear trunk. How is that measured? Ms. Grandin answered, the boots should be kept on to protect the trees. Perhaps the word “live” should be added before “fronds” in the definition of clear trunk. What Mr. Pittman pointed out is if the palm is not 8 ft of clear trunk, then it doesn’t require mitigation. However, you can move it somewhere else. When measuring for mitigation, e.g., if 21” Maple is cut down then 7” of another type of hardwood must be planted or you pay into the fund. What Mr. Pittman suggested that for the clear trunk height, each foot is equivalent to an inch, e.g., if the trunk is 9 ft clear trunk palm, you must pay for 9 inches or 3 inches. It could be inch per foot or a third.
 - vi. Once place in the code says only palms can be used to replace palms, another place 2 palms can be used for every tree or 4 palms for every shade tree. There are policy questions and items to discuss. Mr. Hart suggested a subcommittee meeting to continue this discussion. Ms. Grandin will schedule it. Ms. Fraser also volunteered.
 - vii. Tracey Arpen pointed out it will be difficult to write a one size fits all definition of clear trunk for palms. A cabbage palm compared to pindot palm, which is difficult to determine how big the trunk is, with the inch for each foot, a palm may be 15 years old but only 12 feet tall.

- viii. Mr. Zaffaroni suggested using the Florida Grades & Standards for the measurement of those trees. Clear trunk is applicable for Date Palms but not commonly used for Washitonian as it's a more difficult measurement. What has happened is Municipal Codes will use one type of measurement, DBH for example, but in the trade, what's used is overall height. Translating those measurements become difficult. There are only 15-18 types of palms which live in this area, it shouldn't be to difficult to generate a list determining which are measured using with which technique.
- e) Proposed Plan to Implement Objective 1 (Attachment G) – Ms. Fraser
- i. The goal for the Commission is to have policy level classifications of projects we can then invite other people to help us facilitate. The decision was made to have a facilitated exercise which helps the Commission decide what those bigger pictures are and determines how best to implement them. The goal for this discussion today is to look at the proposed plan to implement. A resume for a facilitator is being passed out (Attachment H) if there are no objections then should a facilitator be retained.
 - ii. Perhaps at the next meeting, insight from the facilitator maybe, it will take this long to collect the data to support the discussion we want to have, so a workshop date will be set for August or September. This is Step 1, what do we want to accomplish, what insight can we get and what support do we need to decide we can have a productive meeting(s), recommendation for 1 meeting, 2 shorter meetings, those types of things we need to discuss today, and then the next meeting, report on the facilitator's insight and then set a meeting date.
 - iii. Mr. Flagg said it sounds like a strategic planning session. Ms. Fraser agreed. Mr. Flagg continued, it's an excellent idea to have an annual cadence of that. Perhaps every year we have this level of meeting to outline objects, goals, results of the past year, what the issues are. How do we pay for a facilitator, is there funding in place to do that? Mr. Pappas wondered if Tree Funds could be used for this. Ms. Grandin replied not sure, is it part of the design, trying to plant trees in a more efficient effective manner. Mr. Flagg pointed out that is somewhat of a stretch as that is Commission focused, activity driven, result driven and objective driven by this board.
 - iv. Ms. Fraser said the ballpark figure received from the facilitator is \$3000-4000. Mr. Hart suggested finding an outside contributor if it's allowed. Ms. Grandin will determine if it is permitted for an outside sponsor to pay for a facilitator.
 - v. Mr. Flagg added it must be determined what the Commission wants to get out of the meeting. What the objectives of the meeting are, the tasks outside of the meeting, to outline that and then manage them as the year progresses. Ms. Fraser suggested a subcommittee meeting to determine those items. Who would like to be involved in determining all these factors?
 - vi. CM Salem said the Council has a strategic plan by ordinance, passed by Aaron Bowman when he was Chairman. I led it this year as Chairman of the Finance Committee. The plan was given to the administration hopefully to include in the budget process of here are the Council's objectives. Most like the Council would respond favorably for the Tree Commission to have a strategic plan. A \$3000 or \$4000 investment which Mr. Hart could raise for the Commission is a great idea.
 - vii. Ms. Fraser reached out to the Community Foundation, and they responded with a resume for a facilitator (Attachment H). If any of the Commissioners know of any other facilitators, please feel free to give me their information. The Commission needs to decide on a facilitator and ensure the funding can be secured then schedule a meeting with the selected facilitator and any Commissioner's who want to be involved, to determine what is required to hold the Facilitated Session. Depending on that information is when the actual session will be scheduled.

- viii. Mr. Flagg asked how we ensure we can secure the funding. Mr. Pappas suggested asking more than 1 facilitator. Ms. Grandin will investigate if the Tree Fund may be used for this. Mr. Hart will investigate if he can secure funding. Mr. Flagg asked if funding cannot be secured what is Plan B. Mr. Hart replied, assume the funds can be secured. Ms. Fraser suggested prior to the next meeting, if the Commissioner's could send names of Facilitators to add to the list to Ms. Chism.
- ix. Mr. Arpen suggested asking if the Jesse Ball duPont Fund may be willing fund this project. Ms. Grandin pointed out that to vet any facilitator, the City uses a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to make the choice, not cost. If the funds are not City funds, there is no reason to follow this requirement. Mr. Hart suggested following it anyway just to make sure everything is above board. Mr. Flagg asked if the candidates would be expected to come before the Commission and give a 10 min presentation, at some point. Mr. Pappas suggested asking Procurement what format they think would be appropriate.
- x. A meeting will be scheduled with Ms. Fraser, Mr. R. Robinson, and Mr. M. Robinson. Mr. Flagg said 1) make sure the funding can be secured, 2) a list of facilitators, and 3) then list the objectives and work towards those. Ms. Fraser asked if this session for this year Mr. Flagg was referring to all the objectives or just objective 1. Mr. Flagg replied he would like to see an overview for the year. It's been discussed in the past to develop planting objectives for each district, strategies, internal staff objectives, insight as to where the priorities should be. Perhaps that is too much but if we could have project priorities at least but are there other issues to touch upon if we have a facilitator in place and our board together, that's a powerful bank of knowledge to contribute to next year's objectives. Ms. Fraser suggested that be the first goal once we engage a facilitator, this is a bigger bite than can be done in one session. Maybe that's the first thing brought back to the Commission.

7. New Business - None

8. Public Comment –

a)

- 9. Adjournment** – the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 22, 2022 at 9:30am and will be a Hybrid/Zoom meeting in Ed Ball Building, 10th Floor, Public Works Office, conference room 5.