

Jacksonville Tree Commission
Monday June 13, 2022 – 1:30 PM
Approved July 20, 2022
Via Zoom Platform & In Person

**Commissioners
Present:**

Mike Robinson, Vice Chair
Rhodes Robinson
Curtis Hart
CM Ron Salem
Susan Fraser

Staff: Cindy Chism

Public: Jameka Smith, COJ
Kathleen McGovern, COJ
John November, Public Trust
Tracey Arpen, Scenic Jax
Joe Anderson, JEA
Mike Zaffaroni, Liberty Landscape
Dave McDaniel, COJ
Brian Burkett, COJ

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. There are 2 formats, which would the Commission like to use, the new format which is pages 6 & 7. Mr. Hart asked if the date was indicative of when the report was prepared. Mr. Regueiro said this report is run off-cycle.
 - ii. Ms. Chism said she inadvertently left 1 page out. Also, the titles are mixed up, the page labeled Charter should be Ordinance. Mr. Regueiro said he would correct this.
 - iii. Ms. Fraser asked about making sure the Budget Balance of Appropriated Expenditures page is kept with the report and use the simpler overall report. Mr. Hart asked what the significance of the date (6/9/2022) on the top of the page. Mr. Regueiro said it was the date the numbers were pulled. Mr. M. Robinson asked for the reports to be run on the first of the month like most financial reports are done.
 - iv. Mr. Regueiro said the financial report will consist of a screen shot of the webpage as of the first, the Combined, Charter, Ordinance, and the Budget Balance of Appropriated Expenditures pages.
 - b) Status of Pending Level 2 Tree Projects (Attachment B) – Justin Gearhart

- i. Per the Commission's request last month, the year of the project has been added to the report. It has also been updated with the actual status; grey means the project is completed and the warranty has finished, green means trees have been planted and are still under warranty. White means the project has not progressed to the planting phase.
 - ii. Mr. Arpen asked if there was enough similarity of sites to determine if there is any difference in survivability between the 3 months vs. 1 year warranty vs. 2 year warranty. Mr. Smith said it is very site dependent. A 3 month warranty is appropriate when someone is watering the tree, such as a homeowner other places a longer period of time is really necessary. It would be much worse to use a 3 month warranty and then the tree dies at 6 months or a year than to use a 2 year warranty knowing that after 2 years that tree is established. Mr. Arpen asked if selecting which warranty period was cost or site driven. Mr. Smith replied, site driven.
 - iii. Mr. Zaffaroni said Liberty Landscape first started planting 2 year warranted trees in the fall of 2019. Depending on the amount of time it took the project to get completed, we are just now seeing the expiration of the beginnings of those projects now. Trees have been replaced through the course of that time. So far there have not been any trees which have died after the 2 year warranty period was up. Planting was heavy in 2020 so through the course of this year we should have more data available on this issue.
- c) Fund Status of 630-CITY, Remove & Replace and Level 2 Programs— Dalton Smith**
- i. Level 2 Planting Program funds available \$2,217,700.17, 630-CITY has \$1,058,065.44 and Remove & Replace has \$806,655.80. There are projects currently in process of getting purchase orders issued. Remove & Replace and 630-CITY funds will be depleted by the next Tree Commission meeting.

5. Action Items:

- a) Approval of Minutes from May 18, 2022 meeting – Vice Chair**
 - i. Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson, none opposed.
- b) Approval of Minutes from May 23, 2022 Palm Tree Subcommittee – Vice Chair**
 - i. Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson, none opposed.
- c) Approval of Minutes from June 1, 2022 Facilitator Subcommittee meeting – Vice Chair**
 - i. Motion to approve the minutes made by Ms. Fraser, seconded by Mr. R. Robinson, none opposed.
- d) Proposed Level 2 Project(s)**
 - i. Hanna Park Tree Planting Project (Attachment C)— Kathleen McGovern
 - 1. Presentation – This project was proposed by Brian Burkett, City Parks Dept. There are 5 separate locations throughout the park. This began with the Events Pavilion which is currently under construction.
 - 2. Public Comment – Mr. Arpen suggested a statement in the file from a certified Arborist which confirms the trees being removed are dead, dying, or diseased, so mitigation is not being done. Mr. Anderson suggested this was a good opportunity for some recognition for the Commission with a sign. Mr. Zaffaroni said there were signs done which were generic and still had 2 of the 4 made in his shop, available.

3. Vote – Motion made to approve the project by Mr. R. Robinson, seconded by Ms. Fraser, none opposed.

6. Old Business

a) Level 3 Program Document Revisions – Susan Grandin

- i. The last meeting was April 28th and stopped on page 10 of the Instructions. There are 4 pages left. Ms. Grandin has the changes which need to be done. Ms. Chism will send a doodle poll for the for June 28th to determine the time. Invitees are Susan Grandin, John November, Justin Gearhart, Mike Robinson, Jameka Smith.

b) Palm Tree Subcommittee – Susan Grandin

- i. A doodle poll will be sent out to Mr. Hart, Susan Grandin, Buck Pittman, Tracey Arpen for the second week in July.

c) Facilitator Subcommittee – Susan Fraser

- i. A lot of time was spent talking about being able to retain a Facilitator. Ms. Grandin followed up after the meeting with the information that a Facilitator could be retained under an MOU. The goal now is to schedule the next meeting to select a Facilitator to assist with the format, understand the scale of what we need for the MOU. If anyone has any suggestions other than the 1 already shared with the Commission, please ask them to join us at the meeting on the 30th.
- ii. Mr. November reminded the Commission not to forget to invite the non-profits to the meeting. Ms. Fraser agreed our current stakeholders should be invited to meet the Facilitator and perhaps participate in what the scope should look like.
- iii. Mr. McDaniel pointed out it may not be appropriate for the non-profits which are participating in the program donating to the Facilitator.
- iv. Mr. November suggested the Community Foundation may be better neutral body for the contribution. Sierra Club may also be willing to contribute and will not participate in any of the programs.
- v. Ms. Fraser asked if there was a perception that someone may lean on the Commission to make decisions based on who pays for the Facilitator. Ms. Grandin will find out if that is a possibility and if a non-profit that wants to utilize the Planting programs would be allowed to contribute to the Facilitator.

7. New Business

a) Plan-it Geo – Dalton Smith

- i. This is a good tool for the Tree Commission to use to determine what to plant for. There is the ability to look at layers, such as low tree canopy, demographic, heat island, etc. Unfortunately, the information is 4 years old. There is a way to project based on the percentage of tree canopy desired for geographic area, the system will detail how many trees will need to be planted to meet that canopy goal.
- ii. Ms. Fraser clarified, if 50% tree coverage by subarea, Plan-it GEO would highlight the areas deficient and how many trees required to reach that goal. Mr. Hart asked if the number of years were entered? So, if X number of trees were planted, in 15 years the canopy will be X. Mr. November agreed, yes, Plan-it GEO will do that. But if the increase is 2 or even 3%, because

Jacksonville is so large, Plan-it GEO will say 10,000 trees are required to make percentage changes. Mr. Hart asked, can we project by site, not city-wide. Mr. November said the smallest geographic region Plan-it GEO will do is by census block.

- iii. Ms. Fraser pointed out that while Plan-it GEO keeps an inventory of trees which are planted but every time a site is developed, there is no removal from the inventory. So a lot of the trees from the inventory 4 years ago don't exist anymore. Every time Developers ask for a permit, it contains a site with a legal description with trees removed, the data exists is there a way to get it on Plan-it GEO?
- iv. Mr. Smith added, the study GIC did, if another grant could be obtained to do it again, say in 3 more years, which would make it 5 since the last study, all that data would be updated. Ms. Fraser pointed out looking at the Tree Commission revenue, a lot of trees are being removed very quickly so a delay in knowing that will give a false picture. Is it a data entry exercise, with the building permit information?
- v. Mr. Hart added, developers are prohibited from planting trees in the sequence they were removed. Trees must be planted 10 ft apart which leaves no opportunity to grow the new canopy to match the one removed. It's less expensive to plant trees on the site but it is prohibited, so mitigation gets paid.
- vi. Ms. Fraser suggested adding a layer to Plan-it GEO called Development sites. This was an undeveloped site and now it's been developed, therefore the tree canopy in the area has taken a hit.
- vii. Mr. M. Robinson asked Mr. McDaniel if he was aware how much the inventory done by Plan-it GEO 4 years ago cost and how it was paid for? The Tree Commission objectives require the Commission to conduct and maintain an inventory. Could Tree Fund monies be used for that? McDaniel replied it was somewhere in the range of \$100,000. There was money in the Mowing & Landscape Division's Professional Services budget. Tree Fund monies were not allowed to be used. It may be possible to purchase an add-on to Plan-it GEO, perhaps some type of geospatial layer. Surely those types of upgrades are available but there is the money issue again. Using the data from Planning & Development is a great idea but someone must enter the information.
- viii. Ms. Fraser pointed out that every permit has a parcel number and how many trees were mitigated. Mr. Hart said the developers give Planning & Development all the information already. It's just a matter of determining how to get it and in what format.
- ix. Mr. Smith said Plan-it GEO has a lot of tools which the City doesn't pay for. Currently it's basically only being used for inventory. Ms. Fraser said the public sees the removals and they would rather see the funds paid into the fund go to those spaces than other places. Mr. Smith said the Resiliency Chief does receive data with the number of trees removed. It's just a matter of determining the platform. Mr. Smith will contact Plan-it GEO to see if there is a way to mesh the information.
- x. Mr. Smith said there is the GIC survey which used some of the Plan-it GEO data plus additional data. It has a tool which can tell you if you lose X amount of canopy, what the stormwater effects would be, the number of pollutants, flooding, etc.

- xi. Mr. Hart said it seems a big opportunity is being missed to put good trees in these neighborhoods. Currently, the trees being removed and itemized to the Planning Department, these are trees which grew well in the area but there is no requirement to put back in the same type of trees which were removed. Instead, what happens is the developer puts in the least expensive tree possible. If there was just another step the City could take, suggest certain trees be planted in this area because of X, Y or Z or because this is what came out. Mr. R. Robinsons suggested matching what is being removed with what's being planted.
- xii. Ms. Grandin said the Commission will restart the meetings to revise the Landscape Code. This kind of change could be discussed at that time.

8. Public Comment

- a) Mr. November told the Commission that several of the Live Oaks just planted at Jarboe Park are already dead.

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.