

Jacksonville Tree Commission
Wednesday February 16, 2022 – 9:30 AM
Approved March 23, 2022
Via Zoom Platform & In Person

**Commissioners
Present:**

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

Staff: Cindy Chism

Public: Joe Anderson, JEA
Kelly O’Leary, Liberty Landscape
Fred Pope, COJ
Todd Little, COJ
Mike Zaffaroni, Liberty Landscape
John November, Public Trust
Lisa Grubba, Greenscape
Dalton Smith, COJ
Jennifer Hinton, COJ
Dave McDaniel, COJ
John Nooney
Kathleen McGovern, COJ

Advisors:

Susan Grandin, OGC
Richard Leon, Urban Forestry

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) – Joe Regueiro
 - b) Status of Pending Tree Projects (Attachment B) – Richard Leon
 - i. Currently there are 4 Level 2 Projects in progress.
 - c) Fund Status of 630-CITY, Remove & Replace and Level 2 Programs– Richard Leon
 - i. With the City Arborist position vacant, these numbers are unavailable.
 - ii. 8113 trees have been planted since the City Arborist position was filled, almost all of them 3” B&B. In the Level 2 program, to date 2248 trees have been planted. 3729 have been planted using the 630-CITY program. Remove & Replace has replaced 877. 1259 were planted before the current programs were created.
 - iii. Mr. M. Robinson asked what the survival rate was. Mr. Leon replied Todd Little has just completed an audit of the 630-CITY program, there was a 93% survival rate.
 - iv. Mr. Hart asked what the cost per tree for each program including administration costs, everything. Mr. Flagg added this would help us determine what the percentage of return is for each program. Mr. Hart continued, originally the Level 3 Program was going to be done with volunteer labor. An

organization would make a pitch for trees in an area using volunteer labor and the City staff were going to oversee the installation. The Level 3 Program was originally supposed to be a minimal cost program. In retrospect, what is the status of the program categories to determine if we are headed in the right direction. Mr. Leon agreed to put together a spreadsheet to determine what the most cost-effective efficient method to plant trees was. Ms. Fraser requested the 'cost to plant' be broken down as far as administrative costs, warranty costs, etc., from the beginning of the Tree Commission.

5. Action Items:

- a) Approval of Minutes from December 15, 2021 meeting – Chair
 - i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. M. Robinson, none opposed.
- b) Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2022 workshop – Chair
 - i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. M. Robinson, none opposed.
- c) Approval of Minutes from the Special Meeting on March 9, 2021 - Chair
 - i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Ms. Fraser, none opposed.

6. Old Business

- a) Level 3 Program Document Revisions - Deferred until March meeting – Susan Grandin

7. New Business

- a) Outstanding Professional Award given to Dalton Smith from the State of Florida Urban Forestry Council.
- b) Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens Parking Lot Tree Planting Progress Report (Attachment C) – Richard Leon
- c) Preservation Parks (Attachment D) – Jennifer Hinton
- d) Tree Maintenance – Profession E. Gillman

8. Public Comment –

- a) CM Salem asked who would I call to determine if there were permits to completely clear this land for a Charter School being built near Jacksonville University on University Blvd? Mr. hart said the Planning Department/Development Services would know but it's permitted so they would either pay into the fund or plant a bunch of trees.
- b) Mr. John Nooney – Over Superbowl weekend, on the 3000 block of parental Home Rd., which backs up to Pottsburg Creek, it was clearcut all the way to the creek. There is a sign for rezoning, but did it go to the Waterways Commission, was there a CPAC meeting, did the District Councilmember have a meeting? It was just alarming.
- c) Mr. John November – Right now the City spends about \$500,000 on the pruning budget. To initiate a pruning cycle where trees would be pruned once every 10 years, though the industry would prefer 7-8 years to keep a canopy somewhat healthy, this would require an additional \$7-800,000 per year. To get those additional funds, one approach would be to add about \$400,000 from the general fund and then allow the Tree Fund match to increase from 25% to 40% which would get another \$350,000. That

\$750,000 would enable the City to begin a preventative maintenance program which would make a huge difference in the health of our canopy overall. Taking care of our mature trees is just as important as planting new trees. It is justifiable to increase the percentage from the Tree Fund if there is a corresponding increase in the budget. The only way that increase will happen is if the Mayor and City Council hear from many voices that this makes sense. It cannot come solely from Staff. Mr. Pappas added that from a maintenance standpoint, understanding what level of service we are looking for, quantifying what the needs are and what will be achieved is really the first step.

9. **Adjournment** – the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 9:30am and will be a Hybrid/Zoom meeting in Ed Ball Building, 10th Floor, Public Works Office, conference room 5.