

Tree Advisory Board Minutes

September 7, 2022

1. Call To Order & Roll Call

Members Present: David Price, Robert Connors, Mandy Cilliers

Staff Present: Jennifer Nanek – City Clerk, Michael Manning – Assistant to the City Manager, Lester Gullledge – Parks & Horticulture Manager

Guests: None.

A quorum was present.

2. Communications And Petitions

None.

3. Appointing A Chair And Vice-Chair

Mr. Price asked for an overview of the Tree Advisory Board's responsibilities prior to a motion for a Chair and Vice-Chair. Michael Manning and Lester Gullledge provided an overview of the Tree Advisory Board's responsibilities. Mr. Gullledge highlighted the City's goal of becoming a Tree City, seeking board review and advice on past and upcoming tree assessments. Ms. Nanek stated that the City Commission regularly relies on advisory board recommendations.

Mr. Connors asked if it was possible to have a representative from Development Services to speak to the Tree Ordinance. Mr. Gullledge spoke to how there are conditions to no longer require mitigation for certain types of tree removals. Mr. Connors spoke to Lake Wales Heritage's tree diversity goals.

Mr. Price asked about board meeting frequency. Mr. Manning spoke to the ordinance requiring quarterly meetings. There was consensus to meet more often if needed, especially as the board gets started. Ms. Nanek advised that the board is under sunshine law requirements.

Robert Connors made a motion to name David Price as Chair, seconded by Mandy Cilliers. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

David Price made a motion to name Robert Connors as Vice-Chair, seconded by Mandy Cilliers. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

4. Board Appointments

None. The board spoke about possible candidates who could apply.

5. Determination Of Future Meeting Dates

There was consensus to set the next meeting of the Tree Advisory Board on Wednesday, November 11, 2023 at 5:30 pm.

6. Staff Updates

Lester Gulledge spoke to the Parks Department's capacity to handle tree removals and trimmings. Mr. Gulledge highlighted various trees that are in need of potential mitigation, including many at the James P. Austin Center. Mr. Connors recommended that new, young trees are planted prior to removals for time to grow. Ms. Cilliers ask how the City and Lake Wales Heritage interface, as well as does the City need a citywide tree inventory.

Mr. Price spoke to limb failures he has seen around the city. Mr. Price and Mr. Gulledge spoke about various tree companies that may be available to do work within the City.

Mr. Gulledge spoke to recent City led plantings, including the Crystal Avenue plantings. Mr. Price asked how the Parks & Horticulture department funds tree-planting projects. Mr. Gulledge and Mr. Manning stated that there are several ways to fund these projects, including the general operating budget and the tree replacement fund. Mr. Gulledge expanded on how the tree replacement fund works.

Mr. Connors and Mr. Price spoke to past major tree sites, including the site that is now Eagle Ridge Mall.

Mr. Price recommended an "Adopt a Tree" program.

Mr. Connors asked if there is opportunity for the City to partner with community groups regarding tree replacement fund dollars, Mr. Gulledge said that partnerships may be an option.

7. Board Member Comments

Mr. Price asked about how the agenda will be set. Mr. Manning spoke to keeping the existing framework and the structure to adding items to the agenda.

Mr. Price stated he'd be willing to walk throughout the park system and talk about the various trees that present problems.

Mr. Price stated his concern regarding park users parking under trees throughout the park system. Mr. Manning stated that the City has a plan to expand its natural bollard program to help limit vehicles being in the parks. Mr. Price encouraged that the police department start issuing warnings to drivers parked throughout the park.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.