



MINUTES

The City of Beaufort
PARK & TREE ADVISORY COMMISSION
Thursday, October 26th, 2023 at 3:00pm
City Hall Executive Conference Room 2
1911 Boundary St, Beaufort, SC

- I. The Meeting was called to order at 3p.m. by PTAC Chair Barbara Farris, in attendance was PTAC members Victoria Bergesen, Tamala Conner, Parks Supervisor Adam Wellins, and City Manager Scott Marshall
- II. Minutes from the September 28th, 2023 meeting was revised and approved.
- III. Adam Wellins gave updates on listed items from the September meeting, the first being Bartlett Tree Service, which he was made aware that there was a mix-up within the company, and didn't assign an arborist to that quote to perform work on the little gems on Palmetto St. Barbara Farris asked if the city had anything in mind for replacement purposes, and Adam Wellins stated he liked the Allee Elm trees that were planted along Prince St due to their ability to thrive in smaller islands or areas. Adam Wellins then gave updates on the vegetation blind for the Spanish Moss Trail, he stated that he spoke with his director Nathan Farrow about piping in the ditch line, and he was told that he will get with Norris Bloodsaw who is the Stormwater Supervisor to get it put on the schedule in the coming weeks.
- IV. Barbara opened discussions about Arbor Day, Adam Wellins stated that if anyone was interested in having a celebration that they usually need to get in contact with his department before November ends but that the city still tries to find ways to assist with other celebrations via allocating city staff to assist on site. Tamala Conner asked if Adam had any places in mind, and he thought that the Spanish Moss Trail or Pigeon Point

could be good locations for some new trees. He stated that Southside is a park he would like to do an arbor day celebration in but will have to wait until the conclusion of the parks upgrades before they decide to do anything inside the park. Victoria Bergesen brought up that the city should come up with a system where they can send out information to the garden clubs and other outside organizations who are interested in planning an arbor day, a first come, first serve situation, the information should include a list of locations the city is willing to allow them to plant in to help expedite the process.

- V. Barabra moved the meeting forward with discussions on Tree City USA application process. Adam Wellins stated that he understands the responsibility is listed under PTAC to submit the application Paperwork for Tree City USA but acknowledges that it still needs Public Works to provide the information of its yearly tree work and spending. Adam walked the committee through the process with a copy of last year's application to give the committee a better understanding of what goes into it. Adam also stated that he has spoken with his director and would like to invite the committee to the Public Works' Complex to go through the paperwork for this year's application and submit it together with the committee in attendance.
- VI. Adam Wellins asked the committee about moving the November and December meetings to accommodate for the holidays, Tamala Conner made a motion to move the meetings to November 16th, 2023, and December 1st, 2023, the committee approved the changes.
- VII. Victoria Bergesen brought up during new business that the committee for some time has been trying to get information from the city about funds that were supposed to be used for PTAC to utilize for projects and plantings. Adam told the committee that the line item is in a fund that is outside of the Public Works' department, and they would need Finance and Planning departments assistance with giving the committee the information they need. Victoria also mentioned that they are still waiting for contact information of who citizens can reach out to when trees are being clear cut, or a homeowner has questions about trees on their private property and has been waiting for this information since June or July. The City Manager, Scott Marshall let the committee know that the Director of Planning was Curt Freeze if they needed to get in contact with him. Victoria shared with the group that Clemson extension had not had a local extension agent since January 1st of 2023, in September, Glenn Payne had taken over but was still in training and would be ready full time by mid- November, she stated the importance of the extension agency and how resourceful they are to the community. The City Manger used the rest of the new business to introduce himself to the committee and answer questions that they may have had, Victoria brought up that the committee really needs information and a guideline for funds gathered from clear cutting and how they can be used for projects such as Spanish Moss Trail Vegetation blind, ect, because the penalties are too low for companies to clear cut and they are

making more profit from selling the lumber, and citizens want to know how that money is being spent. The City manager respectfully let the committee know that it was out of their purview to determine what is done with money from penalties due to clear cutting. He recommended that the committee revise and update the urban forestry management plan, that can help the city move forward with better fines and rules to enforce. Barabra Farrior asked isn't the funding from clear cutting where the committee would use to pay for future projects, the City Manager said it is the groups responsibility to come up with a plan and to work with the committee's liaison to help find funding, if funding can't be found then it will need to be budgeted for in the following fiscal year. Barabra asked what happens to the money from clear cutting if they committee doesn't utilize it? Does it go back into general funds? The City Manager said that he would get with the city's finance director to see if there are funds set aside just for clear cutting. The City Manager told the group that he believes they have a tremendous opportunity in front of them to put the work in and really make changes that will help the city move forward into the future, Adam Wellins agreed that he believes this committee has shown the most potential to make the biggest impact.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned.