

Trees, Parks, Recreation Board – City of Oxford, GA
Minutes of Meeting
6:00 P.M., December 13, 2011
Upstairs Conference Room, Oxford City Hall

Attendance: Cheryl Ready (Chair.), LaTrelle Oliver (Sec.), Simon Perryman, Hulon Clemons, Anderson Wright, Connie Head (City Arborist), Hoyt Oliver (City Council liaison)

Minutes of October 11, 2011, unanimous approval

Old Business

- A. Tree City application almost complete for mailing –
- B. Progress on water and pavement projects – see Connie’s report in minutes of August 9, 2011.
- C. Rosenwald School Recognition report – Anderson Wright and Hoyt Oliver reported on the meaningful ceremony for unveiling the historical marker at the site on Mitchell Street, at 2:30, Sunday afternoon, November 27, 2011, that was attended by former students, Newton County and City of Oxford administrators and interested citizens. Many months ago, Councilman Frank Davis, Mr. Wright, and others initiated and developed the dream of recognizing the school by documenting its site and revealing its remaining foundation. Conversations with the land’s owner, Donald Ballard (Oxford resident, former Georgia State Senator, former Oxford Mayor), led to an agreement that allows the City’s 2012 budget to begin leasing the area from Mr. Ballard. Intense labor resulted in clearing invasive vegetation from the existing foundation and surrounding area; a temporary fence defines and secures the property until further safety improvements can occur. Chairs for audience and speakers were arranged in the street and sidewalk, and a podium with microphone was used. The respectful gathering and the bright autumn day paid homage to this important piece of hidden history.
- D. Neighborhood “pocket” park at #84 Oxford Way report – At a public hearing held by Oxford City Council in November, area citizens spoke in opposition to the City’s purchasing this lot, as had been proposed by its owner and encouraged by others who understand the importance of having easily accessible public green spaces; however, as thoughtful neighbors considered the implications of this particular lot’s use as a public park, issues of potential safety and noise arose. The Council accepted their position and withdrew the proposal.
- E. Regarding Councilman Davis’s earlier request for the blessing of this Board in clearing an area of pine trees surrounding the Lions Club Boy Scout hut, there is no word on their final decision to pursue removal of trees from this private property over which we have no jurisdiction.

New Business

- A. Motion regarding procedure for withdrawing from this Board before a member’s term expires – remove last sentence from the proposal as presented at our meeting on October 11, 2011, so that motion reads as follows: ***Effective December 31, 2011, any member of the City of Oxford Trees, Parks, and Recreation Board who wishes to withdraw as a member should write a letter stating that desire, sign and date it.***
Motion to accept made by LaTrelle Oliver with second by Hulon Clemons. All approved.
Motion carried.

- B. Proposals for increasing membership. Cheryl urged everyone to discuss membership with any interested citizens. Members need to be presented to City Council for approval in 2012.
- C. Tree City designation – Connie to confirm with Beryl and check our signage to assure that the correct number of years is displayed.
- D. Arbor Day discussion and decisions:
 - Meet here in committee at 6:00 p. m. on Tuesday, January 10, 2012.
 - Anyone on this Board who wishes to plan should come and be part of this committee.
 - City’s celebration will be held Saturday morning, February 18, 2012, 10:00-Noon.
 - Site will be here at City Hall and adjacent park, as follow-up to last year.
 - Due to timing, possible Valentine theme: “loving trees”
 - Possible information to deliver: 10 most important things for tree care

Other Concerns

- A. Anderson requested that he and Connie arrange to meet again for pruning at Oxford Historical Cemetery. Earlier work together was pleasantly productive there.
- B. Connie reports she has been checking and finds that pruning of trees near utility lines throughout the City has been well done.
- C. Connie distributed city maps and asked that we identify and mark places for new trees on streets that are 60’ and wider only.

Plans for next meeting

- A. All agreed on our usual second Tuesday of the month, even though it is Valentine’s Day.
- B. So be it! Tuesday, February 14, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

LaTrelle Oliver, Secretary