

**Trees, Parks, Recreation Board (TPR) – City of Oxford, GA**

Minutes of Meeting **February 13, 2018**

Community Room, Oxford City Hall

**At 5:00 p.m.** Chairman Ready called the meeting to order.

**Attendance**

Present – Members Cheryl Ready, LaTrelle Oliver, Laura McCanless, Anderson Wright;  
newly appointed members Teresa Welch and Mike Besaw  
City Manager Matt Pepper  
City Superintendent Jody Reid  
City Arborist Beryl Budd, GUFCA  
Oxford College Senior Manager of Operations Kendra Mayfield  
Emory University Landscape Director James Johnson

Absent – Member Sallie Robinson,  
GUFCA Community Forester Seth Hawkins

**Agenda for meeting:**

Motion to approve by Laura McCanless; second by Mike Besaw. Unanimous approval.

**Minutes of meeting December 12, 2017:**

Motion to approve by Anderson Wright; second by Laura McCanless. Unanimous approval.

**Reports and updates:**

A. Maintenance concerns

1. Mitchell Street Park (Rosenwald School Memorial) - Beryl Budd will provide the requested bare-root dogwoods.
2. George Street Park kiosk repair - John McElroy has begun the carpentry repair; Cheryl Ready will apply stain when weather improves.
3. This year's Arbor Day tree, a Japanese maple, will be installed in City Hall park. It replaces the arboretum tree planted several years ago in memory of former mayor Jack Atkinson. Beryl suggested we hire Miles Cope to engrave sizable markers for all memorial trees.
4. Asbury Street Park ad hoc committee report - Cheryl: No movement.
5. George Street trail extension - Project is complete. A formal ribbon cutting was recently held involving officials from the city, college, and Newton County Chamber of Commerce.

B. Yarbrough Oak planting possibilities - Arborist Budd delivered copies of the bid from Native Tree, LLC, Alpharetta, GA. Copy attached to minutes. Actual move postponed until next planting season (though the two trees offered will continue growing!) when the welcome center project is better defined.

C. Pocket Park at Longstreet Circle - Board members who visited the site agree on these points: rather than developing a park with built features, *the best use is a well-maintained, natural, open vista*. Consideration was given to safety issues due to heavily traveled streets on two sides and sloping topography. Recommendations: remove or do structural pruning of existing few trees bordering Longstreet Circle, fill any holes left from former tree stumps, clear brush from bottom of slope to reveal small creek if western property line permits, refresh turf, and maintain regular mowing. Native shrubs could be introduced to enhance the area.

D. 6153 Emory Street ideas for "park" - Board agrees that this site should clearly mark the entrance to town by letting travelers know they are here - without impeding traffic flow now and in the future! It should be well-lit, open, welcoming, uncluttered - perhaps marked by a sizable but simple sculpture. Suggestions could be solicited from local and regional artists as well as both Emory's and Oxford's art departments and landscape professionals.

## **Pruning Issues**

- A. We need a visual document that shows where maintenance pruning has already been done.
- B. See Motions 1 and 2 in October minutes. Beryl and Jody will provide this info. *Cheryl and Matt will present proposal for FY18-19 to include 2/3 of budget for structural pruning and 1/3 for new planting, while increasing the budget to re-new the Longstreet Circle lot as a public green-space vista.*

## **Arbor Day Foundation and Georgia Urban Forest Council**

TPR Board now holds membership in each, as does the City. This allows information to go to both.

## **Emory Street revitalization plan**

Motion to approve moving forward with developing the project made by Mike; seconded by Laura. Discussion developed with excitement as Emory representatives Kendra and James declared the University's commitment to enhancing the tree canopy in all of Oxford (campus and city) by providing and installing sizeable, healthy trees as needed. James introduced concept of "right of entry" compared with "easement" - former is much simpler, less intimidating!  
Unanimous approval.

1. Committee to proceed with developing plan to contact homeowners on Emory Street: Laura, Teresa, Mike, Beryl.
2. James and Beryl will go together to Bold Springs tree farm to select and tag any trees needed for planting in the autumn/winter of 2018/2019 - including the 2019 Arbor Day tree. This collaboration and commitment insures that the best specimen can be secured in ample time.
3. James will send "right of entry" information to Matt.

## **Oxford College's interests and concerns**

The proposed walking tour of "the arboretum trail" from campus to cemetery is on hold due to other extensive projects now in planning. The Pierce Street project has current precedence. James and Kendra presented details of that plan which City Council has approved. Copy of the accompanying drawing is attached to these minutes. Following a thorough discussion with participation of all members, the TPR Board understands and accepts the Pierce Street plan as presented to Council. A formal letter of TPR Board approval can be provided to University (James Johnson) and City (Matt Pepper), when the new City of Oxford ordinance is approved by City Council. The second reading of this new ordinance regarding planting on rights-of-way will be heard at the council meeting of 3/5/18.

## **Concerns and Announcements**

1. Oxford's Arbor Day, celebrating the City's 20th anniversary as a Tree City USA, was Saturday, February 3, 2018, See printed program and digital photographs in TPR file at City Hall. Huge attendance, thanks to participation of students, parents, and leaders from Flint Hill Elementary School, Montessori (MSC) Middle School, and Washington Street Community Center!
2. State Arbor Day is Thursday, Feb. 15. Cheryl and LaTrelle will attend the Athens celebration led by GUFCA Community Forester Seth Hawkins.

**Motion to adjourn made by LaTrelle Oliver; second by Laura McCanless. Adjournment 6:25.**

**Next Board meeting April 10, 2018.**

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LaTrelle Oliver, Secretary