

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

Minutes of Meeting August 8, 2017

Community Room, Oxford City Hall

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

Attendance

Present – Members Cheryl Ready, LaTrelle Oliver, Sallie Robinson, Laura McCanless,
Anderson Wright

City Manager Matt Pepper

Assistant City Manager Matt Pepper

City Superintendent Jody Reid

City Arborist Beryl Budd GUFC

GUFC Community Forester Seth Hawkins

Oxford College Senior Manager of Operations Kendra Mayfield

Planning Commission Vice Chairman Guest Jeff Wearing,

Absent – Members Andrea O'Toole, Glenda Stewart

Agenda for meeting, accepted.

Minutes from meetings of June 13 and April 11, 2017, approved.

Reports and updates:

1. Continuation of privet control along Wesley and Fletcher Streets - Jody: Privet responding as expected from first application of Roundup; second application now due; then, bush-hog will mow.
2. Replacement trees for Emory Street - Beryl and Jody: Stage one of selective removal of sprouts completed; continuation required. Concern expressed about unsightly appearance of the required DOT species for this state highway corridor (red bud and crepe myrtle).
3. Mitchell Street Park (Rosenwald School Memorial) - Anderson and Jody: Jody reiterated that requested drainage culvert at entrance would not perform as desired because of grade. The swale is not deep enough (according to requirements for volume of water) to warrant a culvert. Prior suggestion was not discussed: *parking should be restricted to street for 2 reasons: vehicular intrusion into the small park limits view of the small area and future of the City's lease is uncertain.* Discussion reminded that former City Manager Schwartz stated he had seen the original lease. Consensus suggestion: plant a pink dogwood in memory of former Councilman Frank Davis who championed establishing the site years ago.
4. George Street Park (Murphy Arboretum) – Jody: "Rising Sun" redbud planted in memory of former Mayor Jack Atkinson was severely damaged (weak broken branches) and had to be removed. Future plantings should exclude fragile species due to their inherent weaknesses.
5. Asbury Street Park ad hoc committee's recommendations for park; seek approval from TPR and recommendation to present to City Council – Cheryl: If plans have been submitted by designer and engineer, TPR Board will meet with Asbury Park Committee at a called meeting in September for the purpose of reviewing and final plans before they are presented to Council for final approval before initiating construction.
6. Pruning issues – Jody, Beryl, Cheryl: Recommendation to update existing inventory of City trees that Arborist Connie Head directed years ago, documenting trees that have been removed, mature trees that have been maintained by crown pruning, and identifying mature trees remaining to be

pruned. Risk assessment of these trees recommended. Seth will prepare a letter recommending a budget for updating our tree inventory. Following preliminary discussion of TPR's **current annual budget, the following motion moved forward:**

Motion #1 by Laura McCanless and seconded by Sallie Robinson - to include Arborist's identification and risk assessment of mature trees. **Unanimous approval.**

Motion # 2 by Laura McCanless and seconded by Sallie Robinson - to split the FY 2018 TPR budget with two-thirds to crown pruning and one-third to planting new trees after required amounts for Arbor Day expenses and Arborist fees. **Unanimous approval.**

7. Arbor Day in Oxford, Saturday, February 3, 2018

Reading of *The Giving Tree* - Cheryl working on approval from Cousins Middle School Drama Club Poetry contest - Sallie working with elementary students

Appropriate prizes will be acquired.

If Asbury Park is ready enough, Oxford College students can plant understory dogwoods among canopy trees during MLK activities. Beryl will order these from Forestry Service.

Arbor Day from all past years should be identified.

8. Oxford College's interests and concerns the arboretum concept - Cheryl, Kendra

Arboretum to extend from College quadrangle, all the way through Asbury Park.

Create app accessed by personal smart phones – College IT would develop.

Purpose: engage participants in tangible and intangible values of the trees.

Scientific identifications, economic worth, aesthetic appeal, poetry, song, reading, video.

Use specific content: eg. benefits of trees, biographies of memorial trees, Yarbrough Oak Sonnet, identify all trees, music.

9. Concerns and announcements -

(a) Cheryl announced that at next meeting Board will consider possible ordinance or position on citizens' planting new trees on right-of-way without TPR consultation. Our current ordinance prohibits citizens' cutting of trees on City rights-of-way. Reminder: City maintains rights-of-way.

(b) Beryl reports that Sandy Morehouse (of Burge Plantation, Newborn) has offspring grown from acorns of the Yarbrough Oak seedling he purchased from the City of Oxford during our propagation project begun in 1999. Suggestion was made that one of these could be planted in/near the original Oak's site.

(c) Regarding identification markers, note was given of the substantial one for the Bond Fleming memorial tree near the Clark Street trail head.

(d) GUFC College Canopy Conference , Clayton State College, September 12, 2017.

Topic: *How changing landscapes – including college campuses – affect human risk to West Nile Virus and Zika.*

(e) GUFC Urban Forest Conference at Callaway Garden, Nov. 8-9, 2017.

Topic: *Urban Forests: A Natural History of Trees and People in the American Cityscape*

Adjournment 6:10 PM

Next scheduled meeting October 10, 2017

LaTrelle Oliver, Secretary