

CITY OF BILOXI TREE COMMITTEE MEETING

Time / Location: Community Development Conference Room
3:30 – 4:30 pm

MINUTES

MARCH 13, 2023

I. The meeting was called to Order at 3:30 p.m.

Members present: Tracy Wyman (ex officio member Chair); Shirley Robinson (2); Susan Peterson (4); Wendy Lally (5)

City Council or Staff present: Zack Harris, City Arborist

II. Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

III. January 2023 minutes were shared in an email immediately following the meeting. Motion was made by Wendy Lally to approve the January minutes. Shirley Robinson seconded the motion. All approved.

IV. Ongoing Business

A. Action Tracking:

- One project was added this period:
 - Popp's Ferry Road Strip Mall (DRC, needs tree survey).
 - Concerns were raised regarding the Reef Gas Station on Dubuys and 90, And why they TC did not know the project was moving forward after it had been tabled by the Planning Commission. The CA explained that in response to this, he has placed a stop-work order for that project, and requested the changes be resubmitted through DRC.
- No projects were moved to "closed" this period.

B. Site Visits & Recommendations

2023_TR-23-001_Sonny Bhakta_570 Beach Blvd. This project was NOT APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMISSION.

As always, the full Recommendations are available on the Tree Committee web page.

D. Committee Reports

- PR / Communications – Tracy will prepare an article "*The Communities Role in Public Meetings: Your Opportunity to be Heard*". The CA has agreed that the TC may continue to prepare articles for the BNews, and that he will review the articles prior to submission to Cecilia.
- Majestic Tree Program – The Director of Community Development has not arrived at framing a resolution for majestic tree nominations to be heard before the City Council. The new CA was asked to help the TC move this process forward.
- City Beautification Program – No report.

- Permits: The CA provided the TC with all recent permits that had not been sent out. Tracy will update the TC spreadsheet. Additionally, the CA will ensure that future permits and photographs will be emailed to the TC in a timely manner, such as has been the process prior to the position vacancy.
- DRC Report: Shirley has been attending DRC meetings when she can. She reports the Popp's Ferry Strip Mall project requires a Tree Survey, and added this item to the Action Tracker.

VI. Outstanding Issues

There has been no progress in getting the draft report to the Director of Community Development. Tracy will get the draft to the committee later in the week.

VII. Current Business

- A. The open position for City Arborist has been filled by Zachary Harris, who was present in today's meeting. Some comments/commitments by the CA included:
- Plans to attend TC meetings regularly;
 - Plans to incorporate education/awareness as a component of his position;
 - Will assist the TC to move forward the Majestic Tree Program;
 - Will assist the TC to report determinations at Tree Hearings to the Committee;
 - Will review articles for BNews drafted by the Committee;

Additionally, the CA shared with the Committee his background in the Tree Care Industry as well as his training at MSU/CAAD and UGA's Environmental Design program.

The Tree Committee wholeheartedly welcomes "Zack" Harris as our new City Arborist and looks forward to working with him.

- B. Ward 3 and Ward 7 Vacancies. Mark Dubaz is interested in filling the Ward 3 position, but this has not been finalized yet. Tracy reached out to the Mayor and City Council during January regarding filling these positions, and will reach out to them again.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned: 4:50 p.m.