

***CITY OF BILOXI
TREE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Location: Community Development Conference Room

Minutes

May 7, 2025

- I. The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m.
Members present: Debra Carr (1), Doug Deluca (6), Jeremy Herring (7), Wendy Lally (5), Susan Peterson (4), and Jamie Tamburo (2).
Excused: Mark Dubaz (3).
City Council or Staff present: Mr. Jerry Creel, Director of Community Development and Paul Tisdale, Ward 5 Council Representative.
- II. Minutes: May minutes were approved.
- III. Public Comment: I welcomed the guests that were in attendance and asked them to sign in. I reminded everyone that they have a total of 10 minutes to speak. We do not usually allow discussion but if you would like to speak, please wait to be recognized. There were no comments or questions. Several people attended (see attached sign in sheet.) I thanked everyone for attending.
- IV. Ongoing Business:
 - A. Updates / Comments from City Arborist: Mr. Creel told us the City Arborist position is posted and is still not filled. There have been some applicants but they are not qualified. The City has increased the pay. He has found a local arborist that is certified and will work as needed. Mr. Creel is acting as temporary arborist but with restrictions for granting tree permits. He is only approving permits for removal of protected dead or diseased trees and for trees that need to be removed because of insurance requirements. He has made sure they have photos of these trees. No protected trees that are healthy have been removed. He has provided a printed list of the trees that have been granted permits. This list will be attached to the minutes. He spoke about a Beauvoir live oak that had fallen by their cemetery and that Beauvoir needed a letter from the city giving them permission to remove the dead tree. They are required by the state to have this letter of permission and it needs to have a certified arborist report. Mr. Creel

has contacted the arborist he spoke about earlier and received the certified report required for him to send with the letter to Beauvoir. Wendy Lally wanted the name of the arborist and his qualifications. Mr. Creel stated he would check with the arborist to make sure he could share the information since this arborist works another entity and get back to her.

B. Action Tracking (15 min): Temporarily on hold.

C. Site Visits and Recommendations:

Hawk Creek subdivision tree survey is on hold. A working tree committee meeting will be scheduled when we have the required paperwork.

D. Committee Reports:

- DRC Attendance: Susan Peterson attended these DRC meetings: March 26th, April 9th, April 23rd, April 30th and May 7th. Several of these may have tree mitigation requirements. No one attended on April 16th. There were no trees on the agenda.

- PR/ Communications and Upcoming Events:

I have met with several Biloxi residents about the Majestic Tree program after our City of Biloxi Tree Registration Workshop. Additionally, other citizens have contacted me about registering their protected trees.

Jamie Tomburo (Ward 2 tree representative) has assisted Bell Kessler, owner of Piece by Piece Quilting Shop on Howard Ave, who she met at my City of Biloxi Tree Registration Workshop register her trees. These trees are located across the street and include Live Oaks and one Magnolia Tree. She is naming the trees after children who went to Lopez School and will follow up with registering with the City of Biloxi Majestic Tree Program.

An article was written by Susan Peterson about the Old Brick House Live Oak tree for the May BNews. These trees, Danny Guice Live Oak, Old Brick House Live Oak Tree and the Querens Magnolia will be included along with the Mary Mahoney "Patriarch" Live Oak Tree in the Preservation in May Program sponsored by the City of Biloxi. I am very excited they have chosen to highlight our Majestic Tree Program. The next article for the B News will be the Danny Guice Live Oak Tree.

- Majestic Tree Program:

*I have a copy of the Danny Guice Live Oak Tree certificate and am waiting for the Querens Magnolia certificate from the Societe des Arbres certificate.

*A request for 6 Mitigation Live Oak Trees has been submitted to the Planning Office, the Mayor and the City Council for approval. We are still waiting for this to process. These trees were requested by David Shoemaker

for the Eagle Point Park in his ward (7). We discussed this request at an earlier Tree Committee meeting.

*I have submitted a request for Slim Chickens to replant the three or four trees that have died that they were requested to plant when they built. Their three-year time frame is approaching and without an arborist to track their status we want to be proactive about the City landscaping requirements.

- City Beautification Plan:
Temporarily on hold.

V. Current Business:

A. Tree Committee Comments: None

B. Chairperson / Secretary Comments:

I've been tracking down tree information from our past tree arborist didn't have time to share before he resigned. I've recently met again with the MS State Forestry Commission Urban and Community Partnership Coordinator, Loren Erickson. He has arranged to come to Biloxi several times and always gives me notice so we can work on our Biloxi protected trees. He is working on assisting with the Danny Guice Tree and the Querens Magnolia Tree as both need additional protection and health assistance. Tree mitigation funds may be used for this. He will continue assisting us as needed since we do not have a City Arborist.

I have been in contact with the Pass Christian Historical Society and their tree group about our Majestic Tree Program

C. Committee Reports: None

D. Reports to the City: None

VI. Old Business:

There was no old business since we did not have all of our tree committee members present.

VII. Meeting adjourned at 3:58 pm.

Submitted by:

Susan Peterson
Tree Committee Chairperson/Secretary