

CITY OF BILOXI TREE COMMITTEE MEETING

Location: Community Development Conference Room

Minutes

October 1, 2025

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:43 p.m.

Members present: Debra Carr (1), Doug Deluca (6), Jeremy Herring (7), Wendy Lally (5), Jamie Tamburo (2) and Susan Peterson (4).

City Council or Staff present: Mr. Jerry Creel, Director of Community Development, Brad Manus, City contracted arborist and Paul Tisdale, Ward 5 Council Representative.

Guests: See attached sign in sheet.

II. Minutes: September minutes were approved

III. Public Comment: I welcomed the guests that were in attendance and asked them to sign in. I reminded them that there is a total of 10 minutes to speak. If they would like to speak or ask questions later during the meeting, please wait to be recognized. Several people attended. There were a few questions, suggestions and comments. I thanked everyone for attending. This guest sign in will be attached to the minutes.

IV. Ongoing Business: Updates / Comments from the City Arborist:

A. Mr. Creel reminded us the City of Biloxi has not hired an arborist and the job is still posted. Mr. Creel presented the List of Trees removed/ trimmed or pruned. He went over the list and reminded us that trees removed were only removed for insurance requests, disease, and building issues. No healthy trees have been removed. All trees have documented with photos. If there is a questionable tree he contacts Brad Manus our contracted tree arborist. This list will be attached to the minutes. There were a few comments which Brad Manus and Mr. Creel addressed. Questions were asked about Kim Falgout's Magnolia tree. This was the tree that was ringed. This tree was granted a tree permit with the condition that a live oak tree be planted according to our mitigation requirements after she met with Mr. Creel. The owner agreed.

B. Site Visits and Recommendations:

- **Past Tree Hearing:** There were none.

- **Upcoming Tree Hearing:** Hawk Creek Phase 2 subdivision was addressed by Jordan Bursch on behalf of Meritage Homes. He presented facts on the 21 acres and the removal of 27 protected trees. His discussion involved talking about this company being then largest in the US and that they build quality homes and that it would take up to two years for the first home to be built as there is a lot of infrastructure work that has to be done first. They have already finished their plans with MDOT, the State and Federal Government pertaining to the subdivision have completed and the required environmental impact study. Before our tree committee meeting he met with Mr. Creel to discuss some of the options the tree committee had emailed earlier. He reminded everyone that they will be addressing the drainage problems and moving the entrance. He has agreed to save the **Anchor Tree** (live oak) by having the design plans reroute the road. He agreed to letting Mr. Creel use his Administrative Authority to adjust the Building Setbacks requirement for the Land Development Ordinances by 20% for the 7 lots and for up to 18 protected trees that were to be removed of the 27 trees. He agreed to a sound barrier made of trees to be placed along I110. They will mitigate and protect the protected trees according to our City LDO requirements. He reminded everyone they are not clear cutting this property to build their homes but are keeping many of the trees. He answered questions from the tree committee and from the guests. Mr. Bursch will have the adjusted subdivision designs completed as soon as possible. A motion was made to allow 26 protected trees to be removed with our tree committee's recommendations and seconded. Our Tree Committee voted by majority vote (4) to pass the motion to allow the Hawk Creek Phase 2 subdivision to be presented to the Planning Commission Tree Hearing on October 10, 2025. One Tree Committee member was not in attendance and two Tree Committee members abstained.

C. **Committee Reports:**

- DRC Attendance: Debra Carr attended the September 10th meeting. Susan Peterson attended the September 17th, 24th, and October 1st DRC meetings.
- PRC/ Communications: An article was written for the October BNews on the Osage Orange Tree located on the Tullis Manor property in Biloxi by Susan Peterson. Additionally, two other Osage Orange trees have been located in Biloxi. The November BNews article will be on the "Trees of Keesler AFB" in honor of Veterans Day.
- Majestic Tree Program / City of Biloxi Majestic Tree Program: Paperwork has been submitted by Susan Peterson to the Societe Des Arbres for two Majestic

Live Oak trees located on Hopkins Blvd. She added a second tree after measuring and discovered it was older than the first tree. These trees will be registered as the "Greater Hopkins Tree" and the "Lesser Hopkins Tree."

She presented a City of Biloxi Majestic Tree program to the Beach Garden Club on September 10th. There were over 40 members in attendance. It was held at the Bayou Bluff Tennis Club in Gulfport. Many of their members live in Biloxi and all were tasked by their Program Manager to register a Majestic Tree.

Susan Peterson assisted Avonna Cain register 4 Majestic Live Oak Trees on her property in Biloxi with the Societe Des Arbres and the City of Biloxi Majestic Tree Program for consideration.

Additionally, Dr. Mason and Milton Grishman have submitted their live oak trees for the City of Biloxi Majestic Tree Program. Paperwork was emailed to all the Tree Committee members for our meeting today so we could vote on their submission to the City of Biloxi Majestic Tree Program.

After discussion a motion was made to accept all three of these applications for the City of Biloxi Majestic Tree Program and seconded. The motion carried.

Current Business:

- . Tree Committee Member Comments: Wendy Lally reminded Susan Peterson that she did not receive a copy of the recommendations for the Hawk Creek Phase 2 subdivision. Mrs. Peterson stated she brought copies to the site visit and Wendy Lally did not attend. It was an oversight. She gave her a copy at the beginning of the meeting today but it didn't print correctly. She will email a complete copy after the meeting to both Wendy and Jamie Tamburo as hers wasn't printed correctly either.

- . Chairperson / Secretary Comments: None

- . Reports to the City: None

Meeting Adjourned: 4:27 pm

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