



**URBAN FORESTRY BOARD
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
20, October, 2010**

The Urban Forestry Board convened in a regular meeting on 20, October, 2010, 200 S. Lamar Blvd. in Austin, Texas.

Chair Halley called the Board Meeting to order at 6:43 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Shannon Halley, Peggy Maceo, Ryan Fleming, Nick Classen, Nevic Donnelly, Jessica Wilson

Staff in Attendance: PARD: Walter Passmore, Urban Forestry Program Manager; Anthony Cardenas, Administrative Assistant, Austin Energy: Ray Henning, Line Clearance Superintendent, PDRD: Michael Embesi, City Arborist, Office of the City Manager: John Steiner, Integrity Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Member Fleming motioned to accept minutes, seconded by Board Member Maceo. Motion passed 5-0-1 (Board Member Wilson abstained).

3. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL - none

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. STAFF BRIEFINGS

- a. The presentation was made by Walter Passmore, Urban Forestry Program Manager, PARD regarding Forestry Department's move to Central Parks Division. Zilker Tree Rescue went faster than expected. There will be a healthier population of trees than there has been in a long time. Most likely, there will be similar projects performed at other parks.
- b. The presentation was made by Ray Henning, Line Clearance Superintendent, AE regarding Austin Energy's numbers for fiscal year 2010. The miles completed are down from previous months. There were no trees distributed due to contract issues. 13,323 properties were touched throughout the year and there were an estimated 60,000 trees worked. AE is currently working in bird habitat areas in Lakeway.
- c. Michael Embesi, City Arborist, PDRD gave the report on monthly numbers as well as heritage tree report for fiscal year. Keith Mars was hired to PDRD and will be handling impacts to heritage trees.

6. OLD BUSINESS – DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. Briefing on Urban Forestry Management Plan
 - 1) Walter Passmore, PARD, stated that there are documents being gathered to post to the website, including a citywide comprehensive plan and how Austin will develop over the next 30 years.
- b. Strategic Work Plan – no discussion
- c. Professional licensing of tree care professionals – no discussion
- d. Education sign about why we leave snags

- 1) Board Member Fleming inquired if a tree is removed for safety reasons if it was left on site. Walter Passmore stated that they have to balance between leaving material in woods and leaving a seed bank. Forestry will leave as much as possible.
- e. Heritage Tree Ordinance
 - 1) Board Member Halley and Maceo attended a Zoning and Planning Committee meeting regarding mitigation for impacted heritage trees and the possible mitigation and enforcement when assessing penalties.
- f. State of the Urban Forest Summit
 - 1) Board Member Halley stated that Keep Austin Beautiful agreed to write the grant on behalf of the Summit. There are also a couple of speakers lined up. However, Halley will not be able to plan this gathering.
 - 2) Walter Passmore offered to provide as much staff support as was necessary to anyone willing to take on the role.
 - 3) There will be a follow up meeting on November 4th to discuss divvying up responsibilities.
- g. Heritage trees species list update
 - 1) Board Members Fleming and Wilson discussed possible directions in which to take the focus of their work and inevitably bring it before City Council as a recommendation for expanding the species list on the Heritage Tree Ordinance.
 - 2) Board Member Halley noted that this research will be valuable even though the UFB does not have the power to expand the list themselves.
- h. Discussion of Tree Overlay Subcommittee – no discussion
- i. Consideration of proposed language about oak wilt intended for public outreach and information
 - 1) Citizen Communication
 - a) Keith Brown hopes that the language adopted by the UFB is taken to and adopted by City Council and he would like to throw out the blanket date of February through June.
 - b) Guy LeBlanc agrees with Ron Billings' amendments to the adopted language from April and only disagrees with the line regarding pruning from February through June.
 - c) Pat Wentworth would like to simplify wording with a three-fold handout with a diagram. He believes it would be more beneficial than splitting hairs on specific trees.
 - d) Roy Waley states that the public wants to know when the best time to prune is and that the best idea would be to ID tree value and how it affects property value.
 - 2) Board Member Classen presented wording built on Ron Billings' wording. He also presented diagrams of oak wilt areas around the nation and in Texas. The diagrams illustrated tree mortality ratings and the probability of the presence of beetles in central Texas being greatest during February to June to demonstrate the greater risk to oak trees if pruned during these months.
 - 3) Board Member Donnelly moved to re-adopt the previous wording from April with the edits made by Dr. Ron Billings and to submit to City Council and ask them to adopt it as public recommendation. Board Member Fleming proposed that an edit be made to consult a City of Austin oak wilt specialist or a Texas oak wilt certified arborist in the last sentence. Board agreed. Board Member Fleming seconded. Motion passed 6-0-0.

(Board decided to move all presentations after announcements for future agendas)

7. NEW BUSINESS – DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

(Item 7d was below item 6i)

- d. Presentation by Susan Rankin, Trail Foundation, of Urban Forest Grant Program application for approval
 - 1) Susan Rankin informed the board of 179 trees to be planted on Longhorn Shores as well as the irrigation system for planting.
 - 2) Board Member Halley asked that in the future, to please add a maintenance plan of who would be responsible.

3) Board Member Wilson motioned to grant application as proposed, seconded by Board Member Fleming. Motioned passed 6-0-0.

a. Organizing a workday schedule for Urban Forest Steward graduates

1) Board Member Halley stated that Zoila Vega adopted tree registry as a duty of Austin Tree Foundation. Proposes that they get training on how to measure trees as well as updating the tree registry. Also proposes that stewards assist with the aeration and mulching projects at Northwest District Park and other similarly compacted parks.

b. Urban forest grant fund contract issues – no discussion

c. Presentation on ethics, compliance, and conflicts of interest by City Integrity Officer, John Steiner – no discussion

e. Request for new agenda items

1) Presentation by Don Gardner regarding Treaty Oak – Board Member Maceo

2) Discussion of invasive tree of the year by Board Member Wilson

3) Presentation by Shirley Gentry, City Clerk's Office, regarding proper procedures during boards and commissions meetings

4) Schedule John Steiner, City Integrity Officer, for December meeting

8. ADJOURN: Chair Halley adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m. without objection