



**URBAN FORESTRY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, March 20, 2013 - 5:30 p.m.
Northwest Recreation Center
2913 Northland
Austin, Texas**

**URBAN FORESTRY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2013**

Board Members in Attendance:

Tom Hayes, Vice Chair. Board Members Nicholas Classen, Peggy Maceo, Chris Kite, Daniel vanTreeck. Board Chair Brewer and Board Member Fleming absent.

Staff in Attendance:

Parks and Recreation Department:

Pat Fuller, Division Manager, Park Ranger Division
Angela Hanson, Executive Liaison)
Robert Clawson, Staff Liaison

Austin Energy Department

Ray Henning

Ex-Officio Members in Attendance:

Jessica Wilson, Environmental Conservation Manager, Watershed Protection Department
Director Designee
Michael Embesi, City Arborist, Planning and Development Review Department

MEETING MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

Board Vice-Chair Hayes called the meeting to order at 5:50PM.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion made by Board Member Classen, seconded by Board member vanTreeck to approve the UFB meeting minutes of February 20, 2013. Board Vice-Chair Hayes noted the Urban Forestry Board Document Procedures approved at the February 20, 2013 were not attached. He asked that approval of the minutes be tabled and resubmitted at the April 17, 2013 meeting when the document could be attached to the draft meeting minutes. Motion amended to table approval of the minutes until the next meeting. Motion made by Board Member Classen, seconded by Board Member Kite. All in favor. Board Member Maceo abstained. Board Chair Brewer and Board member Fleming absent. Angela Hanson noted new Board and Commission posting rules that will be effective April 1, 2013.

C. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

The first 4 (four) speakers signed up prior to the calling of the meeting to order are allowed a three-minute allotment each to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

Michael Fossum – Project duration ordinances – City Council Item #22 for tomorrow's meeting. Opposed to the item. Requesting UFB members to contact City Council to voice opinion.

Zoila Vega – Parker Lane Trees. Concerned about amount of mulch around the trees. At some points, up to eight inches.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jessica Wilson – provided information on Watershed Protection ordinance regarding trail distances. Next Watershed Protection meeting will be April 1, 2013.

Outsmart the Drought training tonight at One Texas Center.

March 28, 2013 – talk at Recycled Reads regarding Grow Zones.

April 6-7, 2013 – Zilker Botanical Gardens Festival.

First Invasive Plant Trainings underway. Saturday will be first of four volunteer training.

Four Watershed walks planned.

Angela Hanson – Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan to be discussed at the trainings.

HB 1377 and HB 1858 to be presented at the Capital.

Board Vice-Chair Hayes – Special Called meeting of the Urban Forestry Board to be held Saturday, April 13, 2013, 9:00AM to 12:00PM at the Parks and Recreation Annex Building, 919 W. 28 ½ Street, Shoal Creek Room. To develop Strategic Goals for next year.

E. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Discuss and approve Resolution to City Council Containing Recommendations for Maintenance of Live Oak Trees.

Board Member Kite presented information posted. Photographs of the trees viewed. Motion made by Board Member Maceo to adopt the resolution and recommendations of the UFB Working Group submitted in the backup information. Seconded by Board Member Classen. Angela Hanson, Program Manager, PARD Forestry Unit, stated that the cuts to the trees presented would violate the ANSI A300 Pruning Standards for Care of Trees on Public Property. Existing power lines were discussed regarding location to the trees in question. LCRA lines carry 69,000 volts. Board Vice-Chair Hayes stated that the resolution proposes pruning to leave half of the sprouts as an interim measure until study is completed. Look at cost study to possibly raise the lines. Michael Embesi, City Arborist, stated that the proposed pruning would cause less than 25%. Ray Henning, Line Clearance Supervisor, stated concern of being asked to violate standards set and accepted by the City. Stated pruning should be in accordance with the ANSI standards. Craig Nazor, board member of the Gracywoods Neighborhood Association, countered staff recommendations and requested that pruning be limited to partial removal of vertical regrowth, as an interim measure until a study and a decision is made regarding raising the transmission lines. He emphasized the importance of the park facility as the only de facto public open space in the Gracywoods neighborhood and adjacent neighborhoods. To protect this recreational resource, Mr. Nazor urged that the feasibility and cost of raising the lines be studied, that affected trees be pruned less on a shorter cycle, and that mulch be provided out to the drip line under each of the six most impacted live oaks. Amendments to resolution discussed. Resolution to be included in the body of a memo to City Council. Board Member Maceo made a motion to approve the resolution and recommendations as amended by Board Vice-Chair Hayes, seconded by Board Member vanTreeck. All Board members present in favor.

F. BRIEFINGS – 10 Minute Limit For Each Briefing

2. Austin Energy Line Clearance Monthly Update -- Ray Henning, Line Clearance Superintendent, Austin Energy.
Thirty-five line miles cleared. Number of trees distributed: 107. Number of calls for service up due to storm season.
3. City Arborist Program Tree Presentation and Replenishment Monthly Update – Michael Embesi, City Arborist, Planning and Development Review Department.
Michael Embesi presented the monthly report.
4. City Arborist Program Heritage Tree Monthly Update – Michael Embesi, City Arborist, Planning and Development Review Department.
Number of permits issued: 218. Monthly report reviewed. Projected bike path for part of Shoal Creek Trail and Pease Park discussed.
5. Update on Urban Forestry Board Management Plan Working Group. Presenter: Patrick Brewer, Board Chair.
Board Chair Brewer absent.

G. URBAN FORESTER EXECUTIVE LIAISON REPORT – Angela Hanson Program Manager, Forestry Unit, Parks and Recreation Department, Urban Forestry Program, including:

- Monthly Notification: Removal of protected size trees on parkland that constitute an imminent public safety risk.
Photos of Live Oak and Mesquite trees removed for emergency reasons at Zilker Park requested by the Board at last month's meeting viewed.
- Update on Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan progress. Backup documentation discussed. Past and future timeline for completion of the plan reviewed. Deadline moved to September 2013. PARD staff working with Public Information Office on education campaign about the plan.
- Update on Community Wildfire Protection Plan progress.
- Imagine Austin Green Infrastructure Priority Program Implementation Team (GIPPIT) overview. Angela Hanson is co-leading the Public Lands Management Plan subteam. Board Vice-Chair Hayes noted the GIPPIT has a big emphasis on public lands. Goal of Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan serves as model to be considered public education tool.
- Cutting of vegetation by volunteers and others on city properties adjacent to residential areas implemented as part of Firewise program. PARD partnering with AFD to implement the Firewise program. Board Vice-Chair Hayes requested a briefing at the next meeting.

H. FUTURE ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

- Briefing regarding the projected bike path for Shoal Creek Trail and Pease Park requested by Board Member vanTreeck.
- Briefing on Duncan Park BMX Trail requested by Board Member Maceo.
- Briefing on Cutting of vegetation by volunteers and others on city properties adjacent to residential areas implemented as part of Firewise program requested by Board Vice-Chair Hayes.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Board Member vanTreeck, seconded by Board Member Kite. All in favor. Board Vice-Chair Hayes adjourned the meeting at 8:50PM without objection.

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications are provided upon request. Meeting locations are planned with wheelchair access. If requiring Sign Language Interpreters or alternative formats, please give notice at least 4 (four) days before the meeting date. Please call Robert Clawson at the Parks and Recreation Department, at 978-2600, for additional information; TTY users route through Relay Texas at 711.

For more information on the Urban Forestry Board, please contact Angela Hanson at angela.hanson@austintexas.gov or by phone at 974-9551.