



URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Vancouver City Hall – Aspen Conference Room
415 W. 6th Street
PO Box 1995 – Vancouver, Washington 98668-1995
www.cityofvancouver.us

Melissa Johnston - Chair, Clif Barnes - Vice Chair
Susan Law - Immediate Past Chair, Jamie Beyer, Jeff Kessenich, Khanh Tran, (Vacancy)

November 15, 2023

REGULAR MEETING (Aspen Room at City Hall and remote via Microsoft Teams)

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The November 15, 2023 meeting of the Urban Forestry Commission was called to order at 6:06pm by Melissa Johnston (Chair) in the Aspen Room at City Hall. This meeting was held in person and online.

Present: Melissa Johnston – Chair, Clif Barnes – Vice Chair, Jeff Kessenich, Jamie Beyer, Jessica George – Urban Forestry, Charles Ray – Urban Forestry, Riley Lynch—AmeriCorps, Heather – AmeriCorp, Ian Bonham – Urban Forestry, Andrew Land – Urban Forestry, Hudson’s Bay High School students Tanner and Shannon

Excused: Susan Law, Khanh Tran

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Jeff Kessenich, seconded by Jamie Beyer, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the October 18, 2023 Commission meeting and Heritage Tree Program Public Hearing.

ITEM 3: INTRODUCTIONS & NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Commission met and exchanged introductions with new Urban Forestry staff members, Ian Bonham and Andrew Land, and AmeriCorp member Heather.

ITEM 4: DEBRIEF HERITAGE TREES

Commission debriefed about this year's Heritage Tree Program experience, expressing thanks to all who participated. Discussion included areas of improvement of the program, including: group discussion of program aims and alignment of criteria for heritage trees; "historical" vs. "protected" tree priority in applications and overall program; defining a heritage tree and its ideal; an improved nomination form with ways to empower public nominators to justify how tree meets the criteria, including research and history of tree in submission; scorecard given ahead of time in order for commissioners to review and familiarize; scorecard system modified to enable clearer grading, with possibility to test new scorecard model out ahead of time on sample trees in Esther Short Park; during tour, on-site discussion of every tree; include nomination form in packet while viewing tree; and additional workshop discussion time for commissioners before public hearing.

In upcoming winter meetings, Commission plans to review nomination form and scorecard.

ITEM 5: PROGRAM UPDATES

Emailed out.

In-meeting program updates include:

- Corridor Committee emailed in confirmation of Watershed Alliance grant for 33 trees and water bags, gaining a sponsor for the grant from the Lincoln neighborhood, and receiving six sign-ups.
- Pollinator Committee has decided to meet the first Tuesday of the month at 4pm. Work continues in formalizing the structure of the committee, drafting a charter for the group, defining what is an official vs. an observing member, and completing criteria to qualify for Bee City USA. Additionally, Port project meadow is now complete.
- Invasive Species Committee reviewed 2023 activities, is increasing meeting cadence to every other month, plans to postpone winter invasive tree "leaves-off" ID walks with staff until leaves return in summer, and in that time, would like to plan an Eastside tree ID walk.
- December 13th will be the Holiday Social at Firehouse Axes; no commission meeting will take place.

ITEM 6: COMMUNITY & ARBORIST COMMUNICATION

Hudson Bay high school students Tanner and Shannon were in attendance to learn more about UFC after involvement with horticulture studies and Friends of Trees internship.

ITEM 7: URBAN FORESTRY REPORT

None

ITEM 8: COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

Clif attended Outreach Committee meeting and is working on outline of tree owner’s manual.

Jeff attended Friends of Trees planting, wrapped up summer Tree of Heaven activities, including multiple days treating in Bingen and White Salmon, and completed street tree removal.

Jamie attended Friends of Trees planting, meadow planting, and Pollinator Committee meeting.

Melissa attended Outreach Subcommittee meeting, is reviewing website updates, and emailed out images to Commission from visit to tree exhibit at historical museum on Bainbridge Island.

ITEM 9: NEW BUSINESS

Commission requested a master subcommittee list of staff and commissioners on each.

City Manager’s Office will be advertising current vacancy on Commission within the coming months.

ADJOURNMENT

6:53pm

Melissa Johnston, Chair

Meetings of the Urban Forestry Commission are electronically recorded on audio. The audio tapes are kept on file in the office of the City Clerk for a period of six years.



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City Manager’s Office

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