



Urban Forestry Commission

Meeting Minutes

Date Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2024

Time 6 p.m.

Location City Hall

Aspen Conference Room

415 W. 6th St

Vancouver, WA 98668-1995

Commissioners/Board Members Present:

Melissa Johnston, Clif Barnes, Susan Law, Jamie Beyer, Jeff Kessenich, Khanh Tran

Commissioners/Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Jessica George, Charles Ray, Ian Bonham

Guests: Heather Day-Melgar, AmeriCorps and Urban Forestry; interns Eric and Fuller; Steve Worley, Public Works Director, City of Vancouver; Riley Schleiss, AmeriCorps; Rose White, AmeriCorps

ITEM 1: Call to Order and Roll Call – Chair/Vice Chair

The February 21, 2024 meeting of the Urban Forestry Commission was called to order at 6:04pm by Melissa Johnston (Chair). This meeting was held both in-person and online.

ITEM 2: Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2024

Motion by Susan Law, seconded by Jamie Beyer, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2024 Commission meeting.

ITEM 3: Introductions

The Commission offered introductions for community members present.

ITEM 4: Special Guest-Heather Day-Melgar presenting “Radical Urban Natures: Mitigating Urban Heat with Nature Based Techniques in Portland, Oregon”

Members

Melissa Johnston Chair

Clif Barnes Vice Chair

Susan Law Past Chair

Jamie Beyer

Jeff Kessenich

Khanh Tran

Vacant

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AmeriCorps member Heather Day-Melgar presented graduate research on urban heat with Q&A.

ITEM 5: Review Heritage Trees Program Nominations Form – Commission to discuss

Based on feedback from recent cycle, Commission is spending meetings reviewing elements of the program, including criteria, nomination form, and scorecard.

Revised additions proposed for the nomination form include: a timeframe of the process; frequency of the program cycles; and revised wording of criteria on form.

Further discussion included the program intentions, such as the aims of protection vs. honoring a tree, reviewing language on fruit trees in relation to heritage tree longevity, possibility of creating an example of a strong nomination form, obtaining more information on the tree from the start; and sources where community members can find historical information related to their tree.

Public comment offered feedback on adding an additional line for a second nominator's name on the form.

Next steps include staff updating the paper Heritage Tree program nomination form with new CoV branding, reviewing the online format, and bringing draft of new nomination form for Commission to review.

At the March UFC meeting, the commission will review the scorecard, including usage and verbiage.

ITEM 6: Program Updates

Sent by email

In-meeting updates include:

Staff is currently completing the annual report.

Commission member Khanh Tran will accept the Arbor Day Proclamation from City Council on behalf of the UFC during ceremony on April 8th.

Corridor Committee will be canvassing on the upcoming weekend for tree plantings taking place in two upcoming traffic calming projects. In addition, on Saturday, February 24th, 12 trees will be planted in Fruit Valley thanks to a grant from the Watershed Alliance.

The Pollinator Committee is currently working on creating a charter for the group and achieving Bee City USA status in 2024.

ITEM 7: Community & Arborist Communications

Public comment was made on concern for protections of older trees being threatened by ivy; the Commission asked staff to reach out to Parks Department as follow-up.

ITEM 8: Urban Forestry Report

Included in email packets

ITEM 9: Commission Communications

Clif shared of Outreach and Pollinator Subcommittee meetings, Farmer's Market, and an upcoming Friends of Trees planting.

Susan shared of attending a tree pruning on Columbia, working as Friends of Trees coordinator for several neighborhoods, and following a study on the health outcomes of planting trees in neighborhoods of lower median income.

Khanh shared of an upcoming westside planting with Friends of Trees.

Jamie shared of Pollinator Committee meeting and new City of Vancouver grants.

Jeff shared of attending presentations on grants, including possibility of partnering with neighborhood associations on allocating select funding towards Tree of Heaven removal, as well as current status of Spotted Lantern Fly.

Melissa shared of Outreach Committee meeting.

ITEM 10: New Business/Agenda topics for future meetings

Announcement was made of an upcoming planting between Urban Forestry and Fort Vancouver High School horticulture class on Campus Drive.

ADJOURNMENT

7:45pm

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.