

**KNOXVILLE TREE BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 1, 2022**

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The meeting was called to order by Dan Steinhoff at 8:33 am. Other board members present were Charles Kwit, Gordon Coker, Charles Batey, Jessie Hillman, Jessica Rodocker, Dale Madden, Kelsey Jones, and Nick Bridgeman.

Ex-Officio members present were Kasey Krouse, Lee Rumble, Sophie Carter, Ben Nanny, and Melanie Overall.

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**Action Items for December**

- Correction to add Christopher Weaver as new Trees Knoxville board member. Motion to approve November minutes as corrected made by Dan Steinhoff. All in favor and none opposed.

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**City Update with Kasey Krouse**

- Kasey displayed the Urban and Community Forestry Excellence award that was presented to the City of Knoxville Tree Board. Next year's meeting will be at Fall Creek Falls. It is a good opportunity to meet and greet others.
- Congratulations for the great strides made over the past 10 years.
- Nick Bridgeman and Natalia Almonacid are rotating off the board. Elaine Reed and Sylvia McLaurin are replacing them. Elaine is with KUB and is looking forward to working with the board. Sylvia was not able to attend today, but is a master gardener, lives in Holston Hills and her husband was a horticultural professor at UGA.
- The new trees are in our holding yard behind Facilities, if anyone would like to go see them after the meeting.
- COK Engineering is working on sidewalk replacements. Kasey will assess for tree issues before it goes to contract.
- The city is wrapping up downtown pruning. They train for pruning new trees when they reach 3 and 7 years old.

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**Trees Knoxville Update with Dale Madden**

- Urban Forestry Council meeting – it was good to see what other cities are doing.
- We are in the beginning stages of the master plan. Advisory, steering and project committees are being formed.
- Launch Party - December 14<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 at the coliseum
- It is planting season with a lot of projects coming up.
- Website will be launched soon.
- Kasey provided the project timeline (document attached to minutes). The consultant will be here to lead the 3 advisory group meetings in February, March and April. There

will be a different topic each meeting. There are 3 phases of the project and we are in the launch phase.

- Tree plantings starting this month after the holiday, eight of them in total. Charles Kwit may have students who will need to help plant before semester's end.
- Forestry classes start in January.
- Dale is posting project updates on Facebook. The master plan will have its own website and the goal is to have it live by December 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Arbor Day Update with Jessica Rodocker**

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- The Arbor Day Event was great with perfect weather. There was a big attendance. Parking didn't seem to be an issue. First time we had vendors and that went well.
- The summit also went well.
- Kasey stated that it was much easier to hold event at a park than at a school. The feedback he received was that it was the best Arbor Day event to date.

#### **Ex-Officio Reports and Others**

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- Charles Batey
  - He stated he hasn't been fulfilling his responsibility as education chair. Kayla Stuart has expressed interest in filling vacancy. Will be put on agenda for next meeting to get that filled.
- Nick Bridgeman
  - KUB is working in the Holston Hills, Rocky Hill and Blaine areas. They haven't had many issues over the past few months until the storms this past weekend.
  - The summer drought issues have affected the pine trees in the area.
  - They are in the middle of tree planting/replacement season.
  - Things slow down this time of year due to the wet weather.
  - He has enjoyed being on the board and said Elaine will take over for him. He stated he would be available if we need anything.
- Jessie Hillman
  - She is looking forward to getting busy with the master plan.
  - She expressed concern over the tree topping trends in neighborhoods. Would like to see some education campaigns. Kasey stated he felt like we have tried different things, like showing proper tree maintenance by not topping in ROW and city trees. The city is regulating more on brush pickup and more education needs to be done.
  - Gordon stated there are no restrictions on private property. We need enforcement of landscaping ordinance in shopping centers.

- Ben Nanny
  - Ijams has performed 7 acres of invasive removal this year. The volunteer program has really improved this year. Weed wrangle sites are being planned for the end of February.
- Lee Rumble
  - Joe Mack with Knox County Parks and Rec wants to reduce mowing by 50% in parks next year and go from 2 mowing crews to 1 crew. The 2<sup>nd</sup> crew will do more maintenance. He would like to create more natural areas with native plantings. The 3,000 park acres will be reduced by 750 acres for this project, being a 3 year project. They are looking at embankments and low lying areas that are hard to mow. Yesterday was the first meeting and future ones will be the last Wednesday of the month. The plan is to have public education and signage in these natural areas. There are several entities who are meeting as an advisory board under Parks and Rec. Seven Islands is a good example of their plan, with natural areas for species viewing.
- Gordon Coker
  - Gordon mentioned the native areas at 4<sup>th</sup> and Gill. Area residents weren't too happy at first, but it looks good now. There was also mention of the native area at UT Gardens and Suttree Landing as good examples.
  - Kasey stated City Codes Enforcement is meeting today to look at how to enforce private natural areas that may not look very good.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 am.

### Upcoming Events

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- December 8<sup>th</sup> – Tree Walk at Forest Hills, 4:30pm
- December 13-16 – conference in Nashville on invasive plants
- December 14<sup>th</sup> – project launch party, 5:30-7:00pm at the Coliseum
- January 5<sup>th</sup> - Tree Board Meeting at the Public Works Service Center at 8:30am.