

TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
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CONVENE: 7:08 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Trent Grantham and Boardmembers Brent Chapman, Tanya Nozawa, and Jim Sedore.

Excused: Boardmember Michael Jackson.

Staff: Sustainability Coordinator Alyssa Jones Wood.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 13, 2023 MEETING MINUTES: A minor change was requested correcting “redcedar” on page two within the first sentence of the fourth paragraph to reflect “Red cedar.”

MOTION: **Chair Grantham moved, seconded by Boardmember Sedore, to approve the minutes of February 12, 2023 as amended. A voice vote approved the motion.**

TREE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS: Boardmember Sedore reported on a recent meeting with staff from the Thurston Conservation District to discuss efforts by the District. The District hosts an annual native plant sale during the first Saturday in March. The District also hosts a website that sells native plants online either as bare root or plugs. He visited the sale and was surprised at the number of people who participated and purchased trees. Following a conversation on the source of the plants, he was provided with information on nurseries and organizations in the state that sell native plants and seeds. The information also included information on six other native plant sales. Although the City does not sell plants during the Arbor Day tree giveaway, he suggested including the information on a list for the tree giveaway. The Native Salvage Plant Foundation and the Native Plant Society host two native plant sales each year in the spring and fall. Boardmember Sedore said he also shared information about membership on the Tumwater Tree Board.

Boardmember Chapman commented that should the Board wish to increase the diversity of plants during the annual giveaway, the District could be a good source of plants, as the timing would coincide with the City’s Arbor Day celebration.

Boardmember Sedore shared information on the plant species the Conservation District sells.

Boardmember Sedore cited a report provided by staff from the Climate Action Steering Committee. He was surprised that Tumwater was mentioned as well as urban forestry. He asked about the possibility of

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inviting someone from the committee to provide an update on its work and how it might apply to the Tree Board. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she is not a member of the committee but is a member of the multijurisdictional staff team. She offered to follow up with staff from Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) to schedule a briefing.

Boardmember Sedore commented that the information within the report was not optimistic as the report cited a goal with commentary on the difficulty of achieving the goal by 2050. Coordinator Jones Wood said the goal was established during the development of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan. Prior to the development of the plan, several years of stakeholder engagement was completed to determine all actions to include in the plan. A wedge analysis was completed on greenhouse gas emissions and the amount necessary to reduce to achieve the goals established by each jurisdiction. Each participating jurisdiction committed to reducing emissions. A wedge analysis was completed of all buildings, transportation, waste, and water systems and other actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The white paper reflects the need for additional actions to meet the goals to make up the difference. The Thurston Climate Action Plan was developed on the assumption that not all jurisdictions have the necessary staffing resources, yet all the jurisdictions now have dedicated staff resulting in a need to change the implementation structure. The work necessary to change the implementation structure has been underway over the last six months.

Boardmember Sedore noted the plan includes information about conservation and restoration efforts included in the Brush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) under development for land within the Tumwater urban growth area. The plan also assumes an approach that includes planting trees on large areas of urban open space. The plan mentions stormwater facilities and places to plant trees and vegetation.

Coordinator Jones Wood advised that stormwater staff will present information to the Board at its May meeting on stormwater restoration efforts.

Chair Grantham suggested any requirements for plantings near and around stormwater facilities should be included in the code. Today, there are no requirements to plant vegetation around storm facilities.

Discussion ensued on the Department of Ecology's requirements for stormwater facilities in terms of not impeding the design effectiveness of stormwater ponds.

Boardmember Sedore suggested the possibility of planting trees in place of grass in front of many new large buildings. Other ways to increase plantings require code changes, such as doubling the islands within parking

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lots. Increasing the number of trees planted within parking lots would benefit both the environment and shoppers.

Members discussed strengthening the landscape code. Coordinator Jones Wood noted the state is issuing new guidelines for charging stations for electric cars and that it could entail combing changes for charging stations in parking lots with additional canopy.

Boardmember Chapman reported the State Capitol Campus has been recognized as a nationally accredited arboretum.

Boardmember Sedore asked about any plans to plant more trees on the campus. Boardmember Chapman affirmed that one goal is planting trees on campus that are currently planted in the City of Olympia.

Boardmember Chapman remarked on other communities that are promoting outreach, education, and promoting the protection and enhancement of urban forests.

**COORDINATOR'S
REPORT:**

Coordinator Jones Wood said she would contact TRPC to schedule a briefing on the Carbon Sequestration White Paper.

She shared several card options to consider for recognizing Boardmember Olson's departure.

Chair Grantham and Mayor Sullivan interviewed two individuals for filling two vacancies on the Board. Mayor Sullivan has moved forward to appoint the individuals to the Board.

Coordinator Jones Wood reported she received a draft of the tree and vegetation preservation ordinance. The second draft will be released after comments have been incorporated. The second draft will be presented to the Board in May. The first stakeholder meeting for the landscape code update is scheduled later in the evening. A public meeting on the Street Tree Plan and ordinance was held on February 27, 2023. Chair Grantham was one of two members of the public who attended the meeting. Another public meeting is scheduled on Monday, March 20, 2023.

The giveaway plants for Arbor Day have been ordered.

A proposal is under development for submission to the Department of Natural Resources for an Urban and Community Forestry grant. The grant would fund an inventory of trees on City-owned properties to include parks, buildings, and stormwater facilities. The in-depth inventory would assist in producing a story map on trees and a report to create a four-year rotating schedule for maintenance and estimated costs. The maximum grant award is \$40,000. Because one of the City's census tracts has a high

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environmental health disparity score, the match is only 50% instead of 100% creating a \$60,000 project budget. The match would be from the Tree Fund. Coordinator Jones Wood said she is working in close coordination with a volunteer who will be leading volunteer plantings.

Boardmember Sedore recommended publicizing the planting events. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that the number of volunteers is maintained to no more than 30 to 50 people because of the difficulty of managing too many volunteers. Restoration planting is scheduled at wetlands near the Palermo neighborhood. The site was subject to illegal dumping requiring clean up. The planting is one of many multi-year successional plantings scheduled later in the month.

Boardmember Chapman asked about the availability of staff to identify areas within the City to plant trees. Coordinator Jones Wood responded that if the grant is awarded, one of the outcomes from the report in addition to proper maintenance of existing trees is also identifying priority-planting areas, especially in areas with high environmental health disparity scores.

Boardmember Sedore commented on several multi-story apartment complexes under construction or planned for construction and the importance of retaining trees. Coordinator Jones Wood said the issue is of focus in the work on the update of the tree and vegetation preservation ordinance and the landscape code update by including some specific requirements for retaining existing trees.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT:**

There were no public comments.

**DISCUSSION –
HERITAGE TREE
NOMINATION AT
1500 79TH AVE SE:**

Chair Grantham reported on the nomination of a tree located at 1500 79th Avenue SE on City property.

Coordinator Jones Wood displayed an aerial photograph of the tree and surrounding area located on the property of the City's future maintenance facility. The nominated tree is located in an area slated to become a park. Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Denney provided consent to the nomination. The tree was assessed by the City's Tree Professional who indicated the tree had been damaged by prior grading but not to the point of affecting the longevity of the tree.

Boardmember Sedore said the Garry oak tree was likely in the area of a grove of trees near an area of a camping site on the former Trails End property. The area is an example of prairie habitat dominated by Garry oaks. The Department of Fish and Wildlife has published several articles about the value of the species for habitat and the prevalence of the trees in the area's history.

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Chair Grantham noted that the City of Lakewood included the protection of Garry oak trees within city codes.

Boardmember Sedore added that Oakville near Whidbey Island is home to a society that collects acorns under oak trees. He noted Pioneer Park has many beautiful Red oak trees but no Garry oaks. He asked how the City selects the species of trees to plant in parks. Coordinator Jones Wood noted that the City has a list of tree species for parks. Chair Grantham pointed out the difficulty of locating Garry oaks as well as the difficulty of transplanting the trees, as they are a slow growing species. Boardmember Sedore supported efforts to advocate for planting Garry oaks in areas that are conducive to support the trees.

Boardmember Chapman said the state is planting a grove of Garry oak near the entrance to Capitol Campus at a site of a new building.

Chair Grantham mentioned recent plantings of Garry oaks off Tilley Road near Thurston County's maintenance facility.

MOTION:

Chair Grantham moved, seconded by Boardmember Chapman, to recommend the City Council designate the tree located at 1500 79th Avenue SE as a Heritage Tree. Motion carried unanimously.

Coordinator Jones Wood reported Boardmember Sedore has also submitted tree nominations for a tree on the Walmart site and a tree located near the Panda Express restaurant. The City's forester is scheduled to assess the trees.

Boardmember Sedore commented on other trees under consideration for nomination located east of the Starbucks on Capitol Boulevard comprised of several oak trees located near the sidewalk within a residential area. He plans to contact the homeowners to obtain permission to nominate the trees. Another tree under consideration is based on a recommendation by the Heritage Association located at the Schmidt House. The tree, a Japanese Magnolia, is potentially the largest Japanese Magnolia in the world, based on his research. A website lists the largest trees of different species in the world. The website address is www.monumentaltrees.com.

DISCUSSION –
MEMORANDUM ON
TREE PLANTING &
RETENTION
INCENTIVES:

Coordinator Jones Wood reported two actions in the Urban Forestry Management Plan included exploring non-regulatory programs and incentives to engage the community, plant more trees, reforest property owned by the City, and explore non-regulatory programs and incentives to engage the community and allow for the retention, planting, and replanting of more trees. The actions are included in the work program. She researched other similar programs and actions by other jurisdictions in the Pacific Northwest, as well as outside the region.

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The City of Tacoma's Grit City Program provides free street trees and supporting supplies with the intention for them to be placed in City right-of-way. Applications are available online with no set deadline. Fifty-nine percent of trees are planted in communities with the greatest need as identified in the City of Tacoma's Equity Index Map. The city provides free street trees to be planted in the right-of-way, tree stakes, ties, compost, and watering supplies for the dry months.

The City of Tacoma also offers multiple neighborhood-scale grants including the Make a Splash Grant, Neighborhood Innovative Grants, Spark Grant, Grants from Alliance for Community Trees, or the Sustainability Small Grant Program to support tree planting and care. Example projects include new street plantings, pruning existing street trees for crown clearing and crown raising, removal of stumps or hazardous/dying trees especially with replanting, reclaiming planting strips, and starting a community orchard. Education is available on the program webpage including recommended Street Tree Lists and information on how to properly select, plant, maintain, and prune trees.

The City of Vancouver offers a Street Tree Refund program. The value of the refund is 50% of the cost of the tree, up to \$50. The application process includes applying for a street tree work permit. City staff measures the right-of-way and assigns a list of appropriate list of trees to plant. Following a site inspection of the planting site, the city sends a check. The city also collaborates with non-profit Friends of Trees for volunteer tree planting events. Gloves, tools, and training are provided.

The City of Seattle's Green Seattle Partnership is a collaboration between the City of Seattle, community groups, non-profits, businesses, schools, and thousands of volunteers working together to restore and actively maintain the City's forested parklands.

Outside the Pacific Northwest, multiple examples of municipal-led reforestation goals and efforts exist. None of the programs includes any reporting on the success of the initiatives.

Multiple cities throughout the Pacific Northwest provide incentives to facilitate tree plantings on private property. The City of Kirkland has two programs, a rebate and certificate program. Both programs are managed by the city's storm & surface water division. The programs have a rolling deadline for applications to receive up to \$500 per property with a lifetime maximum of \$1,000 per property. The certificate program is designed so there is little to no out-of-pocket costs for the property owner or tenant. The rebate program is simpler and allows applicants to purchase trees anywhere, but it does require out-of-pocket costs. Both programs require applicants to purchase trees that are included on a pre-approved tree list. The city's website includes a webpage with links to a Tree Planting PDF and Tree

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Care PDF guide. The City does not provide additional rebates for trees that do not survive. Rebates or certificates cannot be used to remove/replace existing trees on the property. All trees planted must be within the City of Kirkland city limits and must conform to a set of spacing requirements.

The City of Lynwood offers a certificate program. The program appears to have a rolling deadline and is valued up to \$500. City residents can apply for the program once per year. The program can only be utilized with WSNLA nurseries. There are no tree species or planting location restrictions.

The City of Portland has a “Treebate” program administered by its stormwater utility. The program is open from September 1 to April 30 each year. The Treebate program credits up to \$10 for edible fruit trees, \$20 for small trees, \$30 for medium trees, and \$40 for large trees. The credit is applied to the property owner’s city utility bill. Trees planted and credited under the Treebate program are intended to be planted in the yard of a single-family home or duplex. Tree species planted cannot be on the City’s Nuisance Tree list and must be 4 feet tall measured from the top of the soil. Tenants of rental properties can participate in the program with permission of the property owner; however, the rebate is issued to the utility account holder. Treebate is for new trees only and cannot be used to replace existing or dead trees. The program has no education component.

Coordinator Jones Wood said the City would like to connect stormwater efforts with urban forestry efforts. Any projects funded through the stormwater program would be conducive to a “Treebate” program because it educates people on the effectiveness of trees to manage stormwater. She supports future options that focus on areas of the City that have lower canopy or lack trees by providing tree watering bags, compost, and mulch. Addresses could be collected to track progress on the health of the tree as well as documenting the viability of the program.

Boardmember Sedore said he supports the City approving the location of plantings because it could avoid problems in future years if the wrong trees are planted in the wrong locations. Additionally, property owners may be unaware of the location of underground utilities. He also supports the City providing a list of approved trees and prefers owners investing both financially and in planting the trees. He suggested property owners take photographs of the planted tree with family members to document the planting. Coordinator Jones Wood cautioned that the City does not have the capacity to visit each site or for any type of follow-up.

Comments, suggestions, and ideas offered by the Board and staff included:

- It may be possible for property owner to identify the location of the planting when applying for the program.
- Boardmembers and staff discussed equity and diversity within any

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program the City might sponsor.

- Staff should prepare a proposal for the Board to consider.
- The urban forest goal of restore and enhance urban forests may be ambiguous as restoration does not necessarily mean restoring a boulevard to a condition it was 100 years ago. Urban forestry today also must account for climate change and carbon sequestration. Urban forestry programs should be multi-faceted to retain and enhance urban forests.
- A city in Oregon and the state of Hawaii are examples where the retention of trees on private property is emphasized through various incentive programs.
- Implement a process during the Arbor Day event for people to apply to participate in a City tree program.
- The Board discussed desired goals of encouraging more planting of trees, record keeping of planted trees, questions as to the legality of expending City funds, whether the cost of a tree serves as a barrier for planting trees, and whether labor to plant trees is another barrier. A prior survey by the City asked residents whether the City has a sufficient number of trees. Many participants responded that the City lacks trees but many were unwilling to plant trees on their property. There is a perception of insufficient trees in the City, but residents are hesitant to plant trees.
- Increase marketing efforts of City urban forestry programs. Consider a separate mailer program to generate an increased response or include an insert in water bills.
- Consider alternatives to the City Arbor Day tree giveaway program.
- Partner in a program with the school district, Garden Raised Bounty (GRuB), and Tumwater FRESH students.
- Consider a program addressing street trees that have not survived or that have been hit by vehicles.
- Consider a process that identifies a person in different settings, such as a school, homeowner's association, or other private property to serve as a tree steward and advocate who could serve as a point of contact with the City.
- Consider a short telephone survey during the Arbor Day event.

Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she would meet with other staff members to solicit additional feedback and prepare a draft proposal.

DISCUSSION –
HERITAGE TREE
STORYMAP:

Coordinator Jones Wood described improvements on the website for the Heritage Tree Program. The webpage includes an interactive map of heritage trees in the City along with a photograph and description of each tree. Boardmember Sedore suggested affording more room for the description of each tree to highlight the environmental benefits each tree contributes, as well as including information on surrounding landmarks in lieu of neighborhood names.

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DISCUSSION - 2023
ARBOR DAY:

The Board discussed the photo collage of the four species of plants for the Arbor Day plant giveaway featuring Vine Maple, Pacific Crabapple, Saskatoon Serviceberry, and dwarf Western Red cedar. Boardmembers supported the proposal to include plant seeds as part of the giveaway.

Coordinator Jones Wood said she contacted two nurseries for costs and availability of the plant species. The seeds will be in packets with planting instructions featuring Showy Milkweed (Native), Native Pollinator Mix (Native), and Northwest Prairie Mix (Native).

Boardmembers offered some suggested changes to the plant photographs and discussed the correct description of each plant. Other recommendations included printing a flyer for each species rather featuring all species on one flyer. Members offered additional suggestions for information to include within each plant description.

NEXT MEETING
DATE:

The next meeting is on April 10, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Chair Grantham adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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