

# **TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING**

## **MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**

**March 14, 2022 Page 1**

**CONVENE:** 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Trent Grantham and Commissioners Brent Chapman, Joel Hecker, Jim Sedore, and Dennis Olson.

Excused absence: Commissioners Michael Jackson and Tanya Nozawa.

Staff: Planning Manager Brad Medrud.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 8, 2021:**

**MOTION:** **Chair Grantham moved, seconded by Commissioner Sedore, to approve the minutes of November 8, 2021 as published. A voice vote unanimously approved the motion.**

Chair Grantham reported The City Council reappointed Trent Grantham, Joel Hecker, and Dennis Olson to the Tree Board on February 15, 2022.

**TREE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:** There were no reports.

**MANAGER'S REPORT:**

**NEW SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR ANNOUNCEMENT:** Manager Medrud reported the City hired Alyssa Jones-Wood as the City's Sustainability Coordinator. She will join the City in May. Ms. Jones-Wood is from south Florida where she currently works as a Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Hallandale Beach, Florida. She has a master's degree in geoscience with a focus on human environment and sustainability.

**ONGOING 2022 TREE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE:** Manager Medrud referred to Tree Board meeting schedule, which is subject to change based on staff workload. The April meeting includes Mayor Sullivan for a meet and greet and question and answer session with the Board. Future meetings will be held virtually until further notice although the City lifted the mask mandate effective earlier in the day at City Hall. The next phase is for City Administrator Doan and the reopening committee to work out some of the details for future City meetings for hybrid remote/in-person meeting options.

Commissioner Sedore recommended providing the Mayor with a copy of each Commissioner's resume prior to the April meeting.

## **TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING**

### **MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**

**March 14, 2022 Page 2**

Manager Medrud reported the City issued the RFP for the tree preservation consultant scheduled to close at the end of the month. Several firms have inquired with questions. The next step is releasing the landscaping consultant RFP followed by the Street Tree Plan RFP. If one consultant is capable of providing services for all three updates, provisions in the RFP enable that possibility.

Commissioner Sedore asked whether contracting with a consultant is dependent upon the City receiving the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grant. Manager Medrud advised that the grant would supplement City funds; however, hiring of the consultant is not dependent upon the City receiving the grant. The City anticipates receiving notification of a grant award by the end of April.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments.

#### **TREE BOARD TRAINING PROGRAM DISCUSSION:**

Manager Medrud reported on the discussion with the Planning Commission on training for new Planning Commissioners and ongoing training and education for the Commission. Based on that conversation, he believed it was important to query the Tree Board to determine training and education needs for both new members and existing members. Staff identified five topics that would also be appropriate for the Tree Board. They include a basic review of the legal basis for the Tree Board and how the Board aligns within City government, required Open Meetings Act training, meeting management to ensure productive meetings, and specific urban forestry topics based on the Board's annual work program. He invited feedback for ongoing education and new member training.

Commissioner Chapman suggested training on the City's regulatory implementation of the City's tree protection, landscaping, and street tree plans to afford a better understanding of the Board's responsibilities and City staff responsible for implementing the regulations. Manager Medrud affirmed that the Board is scheduled to receive a presentation on the development review process for a project proposal.

Commissioner Sedore offered that it would be helpful for the training to cover the authority and responsibility of the Tree Board, sharing the resumes of current Commissioners with newly appointed Commissioners, as well as the Board annually reviewing each member's background and expertise to afford an opportunity to learn about each other in a less formal setting to help expedite the Board's efforts. He suggested reviewing the history of the Tree Board, which could be a white paper of the Tree Board with the date of establishment and major milestones the Board has accomplished since its formation.

## **TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING**

### **MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**

**March 14, 2022 Page 3**

Commissioner Hecker supported the recommendations as it would be helpful for him to have that information as a new member. Commissioner Olson agreed and added that providing an in-depth review of the role and responsibilities of the Tree Board versus the Planning Commission would also be beneficial.

Manager Medrud noted that with the advent of the new Sustainability Coordinator joining the City as part of the Water Resources and Sustainability Department, the timing would assist in defining and expanding the Board's role within the new framework as the pending work on the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan will overlap with many of the Board's efforts.

Commissioner Sedore requested a listing of affiliate organizations that would be beneficial for new members, such as DNR's Urban Forestry Program, the International Organization on Urban Forestry, and the Olympia Native Plant Society as those organizations have expertise and interest in urban forestry issues. Manager Medrud recommended adding the Municipal Research and Service Center (MRSC). He plans to develop a one page document with a listing of organizations for review during the April meeting.

Manager Medrud noted that as part of the Planning Commission's training discussion, he prepared an acronym list that could be similarly prepared for the Board. He encouraged the Board to submit other ideas. The first training session will cover the development review process.

#### **2022 ARBOR DAY DISCUSSION:**

Manager Medrud reviewed the status of the order for Arbor Day plants and supplies. Commissioner Sedore forwarded information on order information from DNR's Webster Nursery on Douglas fir tree seedlings (18"-21") and 4-inch plugs. The current inventory includes 100 one-gallon pots of four different native plants. He asked whether the Board is interested in ordering Douglas fir plugs in addition to the gallon-sized plants.

Commissioner Sedore cited an example of how Douglas fir trees can be planted on smaller lots if the intent is to trim the tree over the course of several years for a future Christmas tree while other larger lots could accommodate full grown Douglas fir trees. Commissioner Chapman pointed out the possibility of people moving resulting in the growth of a tree intended to serve as a Christmas tree growing as a large tree on a small City lot. Although he supports the idea of providing native larger trees, he would be concerned about unintended consequences for both the homeowner and the City.

Chair Grantham agreed as many people have avoided planting larger trees because of the limited size of their property. A future option of

## **TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING**

### **MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**

**March 14, 2022 Page 4**

offering Doug firs or other fir trees as a potential Christmas tree could be considered. Commissioner Olson suggested using a Douglas fir as a demonstration project for raising a Christmas tree.

The Commission agreed not to pursue a purchase of Douglas fir trees this year but consider a purchase in future years.

Manager Medrud reviewed an outline of the Arbor Day event. The Arbor Day proclamation is scheduled for release during the Council's April 5, 2022 meeting. The Council is scheduled to announce the combined Arbor Day and Earth Day celebration at the same time.

The joint Arbor Day/Earth Day celebration will be hosted at Tumwater Historical Park on April 23, 2022 with a celebration following at noon with sandwiches served to Earth Day volunteers and the Tree Board. Set-up for Arbor Day is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. at the large picnic shelter at Historical Park. Parks and Recreation crews are scheduled to set up tables and. Manager Medrud said he is coordinating the installation of banners in the City. The banner across Tumwater Boulevard requires advance notice to the City. The City was unable to display the banner this year. Existing COVID restrictions on April 23, 2022 will be followed by the City. The City received materials for the grab bags. Grab bag materials include coloring books, temporary tattoos, pencils, crayons, buttons, newest version on Planting Trees for America from the Arbor Day Foundation, and an updated version of plant descriptions, planting tips, and ongoing care. Commissioner Sedore offered to draft the document and forward to the Board for review. Chair Grantham offered to provide newspapers to wrap the gallon plants to avoid providing bags.

The Board discussed labeling the plant type on each pot by tying different colored flagging tape on each plant.

Manager Medrud reported Mayor Sullivan and Councilmembers Schneider and Agabi are scheduled to attend the tree planting event at Historical Park at 11 a.m. The event will provide a photo opportunity. A group picture of the Tree Board has been coordinated at that time as well.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about the status of adding the plants featured this year to a map of Arbor Day trees on the website. Manager Medrud said he is working with the GIS Department to develop a map for Heritage Trees and would include that task on the list of pending items to complete.

Manager Medrud reported the Communications Department forwarded a flyer to the Tumwater School District for distribution by students. A tag for social media will be included in the information sheet for each plant.

## **TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING**

### **MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**

**March 14, 2022 Page 5**

The department is working on efforts to contact community members who have previously planted seedlings to share photos of the plants/trees. Other advertising includes an article in *Thurston Talk, Tumwater On Tap (e-newsletter)*, as well as smaller banners at placed at City Hall, Old Town Center, and Tumwater Library. The map of historic and heritage trees is under development.

All Commissioners with exception of Commissioner Hecker confirmed their attendance on Arbor Day to help set-up and cover the event.

Commissioner Chapman asked about any plans for any trees remaining from the tree giveaway. Manager Medrud affirmed the Parks and Recreation Department's willingness to plant any remaining trees/plants.

**NEXT MEETING  
DATE:**

The next meeting is scheduled on April 11, 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Chair Grantham adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.**

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