

TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
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CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Trent Grantham and Boardmembers Brent Chapman, Brodrick Coval, Michael Jackson, Hannah Ohman, and Tanya Nozawa.

Excused: Boardmember Jim Sedore.

Staff: Sustainability Coordinator Alyssa Jones Wood.

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

TREE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS: Coordinator Jones Wood reported on the status of the potential removal of the historic Davis-Meeker oak tree from the City's Historic and Heritage Tree Registers. Members of the Historic Preservation Commission will consider the request on March 21, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. The Board is invited to attend. The purpose of the meeting is to review the Forester's report on the condition and health of the Davis Meeker Garry oak located off Old Highway 99.

Boardmember Chapman asked about any seedlings produced from the tree. Coordinator Jones Wood said she believes there are a number of younger Garry oaks located on the opposite side of the highway. The City's code for protected habitat and species refers to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Management Plan. On January 4, 2024, a new management plan was developed by WDFW that includes Garry oak trees, which require replacement of a tree(s) based on the diameter of the tree.

Boardmember Nozawa noted that the information on the website for the Davis Meeker oak tree indicates the tree is approximately 400 years old. Coordinator Jones Wood noted that the tree was placed on the historic register because it was deemed a landmark along the Oregon Trail.

Boardmember Nozawa commented that she reviewed the Forester's report, which contained some conflicting information about the condition of the tree with a recommendation to remove the tree.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Coordinator Jones Wood reported on February 28, 2024 the City is hosting the first of three quarterly trainings for staff from 9 a.m. to noon on the Principles of Urban Forestry. Staff from Community Development Department, Transportation and Engineering, Parks and Recreation Department, and Water Resources and Sustainability have been invited to participate. Boardmembers are welcome to attend. Four individuals from the Tumwater School District are attending the training as well. A representative from the Department

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of Natural Resources (DNR) is conducting the training. The training includes two hours in-class training and one hour outside near City Hall.

The City received a federal grant to fund an urban forester position. The grant is considered a pass-through grant from the River Network, a non-profit organization. The organization executed the agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. Staff is scheduled to meet with the non-profit representatives on March 7, 2024 to discuss the scope of work. As part of the pass-through grant, all non-profits receiving federal funding also received match waivers. All awardees of the grant were also to receive match waivers; however, the City did not qualify for a match waiver. Staff is reviewing the scope to ensure the City qualifies for a match waiver. She initiated some conversations with representatives from the U.S. Forest Service on the possibility of utilizing the Washington Department of Health Environmental Health Disparities Map as a match for the grant based on an existing federal tool for environmental justice. It may be possible to utilize the tool to enable the City to qualify to receive the funding.

Coordinator Jones Wood updated members on the status of the Tree Inventory and Maintenance Plan and the Washington State Wildland-Urban Interface Code (WUI). A draft of the Tree Inventory and Maintenance Plan Report was completed. The Board will receive a copy of the report at its March meeting. The report includes the analysis of the tree inventory as requested by Boardmember Sedore, i-Tree analysis for species diversity, composition and species richness, management investments, information on ecosystem services, a section on urban forest pests and pathogens, tree care needs and costs sections, budget, and potential planting areas based on equity, stormwater, and urban heat. The report is under review by other City staff.

Boardmember Chapman asked whether the report includes recommendations on street tree species. Coordinator Jones Wood said the street tree list is included in the Street Tree Plan. The list is scheduled for review by the Board over the course of several meetings.

Coordinator Jones Wood reported on the results of a public hearing on the proposed Washington State Wildland-Urban Interface Code. Many individuals testified offering different perspectives to include one individual who is a member of the Technical Advisory Committee. On Friday, February 16, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., a public hearing is scheduled by the Legislature to vote on the amendments to the code. The two options for amendments include

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retaining the existing code and the second would remove all Washington amendments leaving the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code as the state's requirements within the International Building Code.

Coordinator Jones Wood reviewed some of the proposed amendments including changes to defensible space to ensure urban areas have adequate fire protection, changes to building official discretions, distance between trees and structures, and removal of mature tree dead wood and litter. The City prefers the second option of removing the Washington amendments and following the International Building Code. Manager Medrud testified in support of the changes in defensible space and amendments to the International Building Code.

Concurrently, Senate Bill 6120 is moving forward addressing the map used in the Washington State Wildland-Urban Interface Code. The bill directs DNR to establish and maintain a statewide wildfire hazard map and a base-level wildfire risk map for each county based on criteria established in coordination with the State Fire Marshal Office. Local governments may update the risk map based on local assessments and with approval by the jurisdiction's fire marshal. Pending the state map from DNR, local jurisdictions would be able to create a wildfire hazard and base level wildfire risk map until a new map is developed by the state.

Discussion ensued on the status of the legislative review process. Unless the Legislature elects to continue delaying a decision on the code, the effective date of the new code would be March 15, 2024. Based on the timing of the code's implementation (Legislature or State Building Code Council), staff plans to re-initiate reviews of the urban forestry sections of City codes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.

ARBOR DAY: Coordinator Jones Wood updated members on the status of preparing for the Arbor Day event.

The City Council is scheduled to issue the Arbor Day proclamation on April 16, 2024. Historical Park has been reserved for the Arbor Day event on April 20, 2024. Plants and seeds have been ordered from a local vendor. Materials on planting instructions are available. A single page for each species will be provided to the public for each plant giveaway. Coordinator Jones Wood requested feedback on information contained in the materials.

Boardmember Chapman suggested including "recognized" names of

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each plant in addition to its botanical name. Members offered several suggested name additions.

Boardmember Coval inquired about the possibility of adding information that speaks to traditional uses or cultural importance of any of the plant species. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she would include a citation of the source of the information. Boardmember Coval offered to provide information on sources of information. Local tribes were mentioned as a good source of information.

Boardmember Coval recommended adding dimensional width information for vine maple plants. Members and staff discussed the pros and cons of adding information on the mature widths of plants.

Coordinator Jones Wood said the seeds include showy milkweed and Pacific Northwest wildflower. One hundred seed packets of each will be available to giveaway during the event.

Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she would make the suggested changes and present an updated version of the materials during the March meeting.

Boardmember Chapman inquired about any feedback on scheduling formal tree planting ceremonies. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that staff would be informed of any future plantings to coordinate assistance by the Board to ensure plantings are completed properly. The Parks and Recreation Department filled the Volunteer Coordinator position. The full-time Coordinator is managing Earth Day activities. She is meeting with the Coordinator to review joint Arbor Day and Earth Day activities and to discuss volunteering. A tree was donated by the PARC Foundation.

**NEXT MEETING
DATE:**

The next meeting is scheduled on Monday, March January 11, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Chair Grantham adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.