

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
UNIVERSITY CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024**

Agenda Item A: Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

Agenda Item B: Roll Call

Those in attendance included Commission President Timothy Schroeder, Vice President Dana Barhard, Commission Members Kathy Freese, Linda Fried, Jane Zeni, Araon Bitzer and Roger McFarland were absent from the meeting. City staff liaison Jacob Kaiser and Council Liaison Dennis Fuller were present.

Agenda Item C: Approval of Agenda

Vice President Barhard motioned, Commission Member Fried seconded to accept the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D: Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Freese motioned, and VP Barhard seconded to accept the minutes from May 8th meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item E: Citizens' Comments

None.

Agenda Item F: Department Report – Forestry Supervisor, Jacob Kaiser reported on the Forestry Division.

KPI's were discussed and total number of trees were 10765 and there are currently 491 vacant sites. Diameter class distribution was discussed for street trees and staff liaison Kaiser reported that the diameter class was trending in the right direction for a healthy urban forest, but the data did not include condition or primary maintenance needs for each diameter class. The commission request that at the next meeting park tree diameter class be presented. Commission President Schroeder informed Council Liaison Dennis Fuller about the commission's intentions to keep track of KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) for the division hopefully to someday present something to City Council regard needs for the division. Council Liaison Fuller mentioned that a study session would be a good place to start. Staff Liaison Kaiser reported on budget cuts that will affect the division for this fiscal year including being denied a new staff member and cutting funding for hazard tree removal. Council Liaison Fuller asked what the most urgent need for the division is to which Staff Liaison Kaiser would be answered manpower. Staff Liaison Kaiser stated that if the current equipment was to be upgraded that he could efficiently run a staff of 6 tree trimmers and cut costs on outside contracts. Staff Liaison Kaiser reported that fall planting season might be affected due to a lower number of hazardous trees being removed by contractors putting stress on city staff.

Agenda Item G: Council Liaison Report –

This meeting was Council Liaison Fuller's first meeting. His report consisted of introductions and discussing some of the work that is being done to the River Des Peres to prevent catastrophic flooding in the future. Councilmen Fuller's report was mostly discussed after agenda item D.

Agenda Item H: Unfinished Business

A. Communication Plan Update

- i. Vice President Barhard explained the purpose of the communications sub-committee was to inform the public of the Forestry Division and its purpose as well as get out some information to educate the public on the importance of trees and how to care for them on their own properties. VP Barhard also discussed the city website and how the previous Communications Director made some improvements with flow and added an environmental section which could be a good starting point for adding information about trees. Staff Liaison Kaiser mentioned that a new Communications Director would be starting on Monday July 15th. Some discussion was had regarding seeing what other commissions were doing about communications and possibly working in tandem with them.

B. County Owned Trees

- i. Staff Liaison Kaiser reported on the number of county owned trees in University City. These numbers were gathered by Staff Liaison Kaiser by driving down each road and counting the trees. The numbers are as follows:
 1. Delmar-230
 2. Hanley-64
 3. Midland-158
 4. North and South-22
 5. McKnight/Woodson-12
 6. Pennsylvania-2
 7. Vernon-31
- ii. The commission had a brief discussion about whether the city should adopt the trees and the consensus was that this is not the best time to approach that due to unforeseen factors and the possibility of being better equipped to care for these additional trees once the division was better staffed.

Agenda Item I: New Business

- A. None

Agenda Item J: Commission Comments

None

Agenda Item K: Next Meeting Date

The commission decided to hold a special meeting to discuss KPI's to prepare for the possibility of a presentation to council at a study session in the future. This meeting is scheduled for August 14th at 6pm in Centennial Commons Board room.

Agenda Item L:

Commission Member Freese motioned, and Commission Member Fried seconded to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously at 7:37 pm.

DRAFT