

Jacksonville Tree Commission
Urban Forest Master Plan Committee Minutes

Thursday, May 18, 2023, 9:30AM

For Approval June 22, 2023

Ed Ball Bldg., 10th Floor, Conference Room 5

Attendees:

Susan Fraser, Tree Commissioner
Jonathan Colburn, Urban Forestry Manager
Justin Gearhart, City Arborist
Nancy Powell, Scenic Jacksonville
Kathleen McGovern, Parks Dept.
Scott Sauder, JEA
Fred Pope, Scene Jacksonville

- 1. Call to Order** – Ms. Fraser
- 2. Roll Call** – Ms. Fraser
- 3. Introductions For New Urban Forestry Manager** – All Attendees
 - a. Summary of previous meetings
 - b. Each person’s background.
 - c. Common issues each attendee believes are relevant to the city and urban forest planning.
 - i. Ms. Powell- a lot of data but no analysis is a problem the city faces. Additionally, would like to see goal setting as an aspect of tree planning.
 - ii. Ms. McGovern- doesn’t see why there is a rush to spend all the money if trees are actively being planted. Ms. Powell responded with potential legal issues of not spending more money and that trees are constantly being taken down.
 - iii. Mr. Souder- Jacksonville does a good job regarding the right tree for the right place.
 - iv. Ms. Fraser- there needs to be a look at the efficiency/effectiveness of our current tree planting programs.

- d. Mr. Colburn- What are Jacksonville's best and worst qualities?
 - i. Ms. Fraser- Jacksonville could do better in equity.
 - ii. Mr. Souder- Florida has more property rights than some other states, and it's a balance.
 - iii. Ms. Fraser and Mr. Souder- Insurance is telling people to remove trees.
 - iv. Ms. Fraser- Lack of permitting or enforcement for tree removals is an issue in the city.
 - v. Mr. Pope- Uneven canopy and clear-cutting large properties is an ongoing issue. Additionally, while wetlands are preserved, uplands are not.
 - vi. Ms. Powell- We have funding but no plan.
 - 1. Mr. Pope-Politics are a hinderance, red tape.
 - 2. Ms. Powell- We need a champion.
 - 3. Mr. Pope- Limited staff is a hinderance.
 - 4. Ms. Powell- Parks are a major asset.
- e. Mr. Colburn- What are your impressions of a 20-year goal? What would you like to see?
 - i. Mr. Pope- Good regulations that are enforced.
 - ii. Ms. Powell- Walkability, shaded sidewalks that add to the quality of life.
 - 1. Mr. Colburn- Walkability is achievable.
 - iii. Mr. Pope- The core is denser with trees that people realize, we need to consider perspective.
 - iv. Ms. Powell- FDOT is absent from all of the planning.
- f. Ms. Fraser- What do we need to get a rough draft of scope of work done?
 - i. Mr. Colburn- We need a champion.
 - 1. Ms. Powell- Ron Salem
 - ii. Ms. Fraser- We need consensus, then decide how to get money.
 - iii. Mr. Pope- We need a whitepaper to present, covers why the Master Plan is needed.
 - iv. Ms. Fraser- Focus on existing data, what conclusions can we do without more data. Do these conclusions create a problem statement?

- v. Ms. Powell- Need ambitious goals.
- vi. Mr. Colburn- Community engagement is key.
- vii. Ms. Powell- Check the resiliency report.
- viii. Ms. Fraser- To conclude we need a two page whitepaper stating what we have done so far, our problem, and how a master plan would help.

4. Adjourned. The next meeting will held Thursday, June 15th at 9:30am or to be announced at a different time if the scope of work will be need more time. This will be an in-person meeting in Ed Ball Building, 10th Floor, Public Works Office, conference room 5.

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