



City of Tigard Tree Board Minutes

MEETING DATE: September 28, 2011, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
MEETING LOCATION: Tigard Library, 2nd Floor Conference Room,
13500 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard, OR 97223

Members Present –Bret Lieuallen, Wayne Gross, Dave Walsh, Mort Ettelstein & Paul Jackson

Members Absent – None

Council/Staff Present – Todd Prager, Cheryl Caines

Visitors – None

1. Introduction and Opening Remarks

Cheryl Caines opened the meeting because the Tree Board was without a chair (Tony Tycer resigned from the Tree Board).

2. Review and Approval of May 25, 2011 and July 27, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Due to lack of a quorum at the July meeting, minutes from both the May 25, 2011 and July 27, 2011 meetings were considered. Ms. Caines asked if everyone agreed with the draft version of the meeting minutes. There were no questions or changes and the minutes were approved as presented.

3. Election of Tree Board Chair

Bret Lieuallen nominated Wayne Gross for Chair and Paul Jackson seconded that nomination. The board voted unanimously to elect Mr. Gross as Chair.

3. Urban Forestry Program Funding

Cheryl Caines outlined the activities leading up to this discussion, including the adoption of Resolution 11-06 passed in May 2011 renaming the Urban Forestry Fund and activities supported by this fund, which included three year maintenance for trees planted using Urban Forestry funds. The next part of this discussion is to look at future funding of the Urban Forestry Program, including the following activities: planting/restoration, preservation, maintenance, education/outreach and planning.

Mort Ettelstein asked about the three year maintenance period and how that related to the growing number of trees within the city. He also asked how the concerns and budgetary needs of staff doing the activities are considered within the budgeting process. Toby LaFrance, Finance Director, explained that these staff members are in contact with their managers, who will make the budget requests as part of the budgetary process.

Todd Prager noted that the Tree Board had a conversation back in 2010 recommending the Urban Forestry Fund (then Tree Replacement Fund) be used for activities other than planting trees and three year maintenance of those trees. These activities included the preservation and long term maintenance of trees. When this recommendation went to the Urban Forestry Code Revision Citizen Advisory Committee, the members of that committee strongly recommended that existing funds be used for planting trees and that uses be expanded only for future funds collected under the revised code.

Mr. LaFrance stated the resolution clarified how the Urban Forestry funds can be used, but also noted that there is no legal reason that that resolution cannot be review/amended to expand allowed uses of the fund. He made the observation that the information on current funding practices shows that many of the city's tree related activities are secondary outgrowth of other primary activities.

Brett Lieuallen expressed concern over the expansion of allowed uses since it dilutes the fund and the impact that money could have over time. Hearing this concern, Mr. LaFrance reminded the Board that they will be making a recommendation on the expansion of allowed uses. Paul Jackson pointed out the importance of maintenance of the trees is equally as important, if not more than, as planting.

Ms. Caines pointed to the summary chart (Attachment 3 in the packet) in the Tree Board packet as a starting point for the discussion since there the activities as a means to easily focus on the activities. This chart outlines which departments are currently responsible for each of the tree related activities, the current level of funding and the funding source.

Mr. Ettelstein stated that maintenance being done by four different crews in the Public Works Department without arborist supervision indicates a major management problem. Action should be taken to improve the arrangement. Guidance for improvement action can be obtained from a number of sources, such as APWA Guide for Urban Forest Management, Urban Forest plans of Eugene and other cities and the state of Oregon Urban Forest office.

Discussion then followed about what types of activities could be recommended by the Tree Board including planting on private property. Clarification was requested from staff on who chooses planting sites now. Mr. Prager cautioned that a more systematic approach needs to be explored when it comes to planting on private property. Dave Walsh suggested an incentive program or focusing on approaching property owners that are lacking trees as possible planting sites.

Mr. Gross brought the conversation back to the issue of preparing a recommendation for the November joint meeting with City Council. Mr. LaFrance reiterated that it is important to prioritize activities to take forward to the City Council for funding recommendations.

Discussion moved onto preservation of trees – specifically tree groves. Ms. Caines noted that this has been a recurring concern of Tree Board members. She also mentioned other activities to encourage preservation such as the Significant Tree Program that is a lower level of designation than Heritage Trees. Mr. Prager noted that this program and criteria are included in the proposed Urban Forestry Code revisions. Many members of the Board expressed interest in pursuing this program and having the Board play a significant role. The members offered up the Planning Commission budgeted funds of \$750.00 toward the program as education and outreach – possibly recognition.

The next topic of discussion was maintenance. Ms. Caines and Mr. Prager outlined the current maintenance program and how it is more reactive than proactive. There is no regular maintenance schedule. Maintenance (including pruning and removal) occurs only when necessary. Mr. Ettelstein reiterated that a centralized urban forestry program with regular maintenance schedules occurs in other cities and is the best way to administer such a

TIGARD TREE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – September 28, 2011

program. Mr. Prager said that due to funding issues that a reactive program is the norm for most cities regardless of size, but he also noted that there are cities where centralized programs have been designated as a priority. Mr. LaFrance pointed out that this sort of recommendation would require that City Council would have to re-prioritize and direct Directors to spend less time on other programs and more on Urban Forestry. Mr. Ettlstein suggested not taking away resources from other programs but rather looking at quantitative means to improve the existing program.

Mr. Lieuallen said that the Tree Board should advocate for improved Urban Forestry management programs but at the same time must recognize that there are deficiencies within the current program. He feels that preservation of existing trees is a deficiency. Mr. Prager expressed that the City of Tigard has a significant program compared to other cities throughout the state, but acknowledged that there are two deficiencies: 1) long term maintenance and 2) preservation of tree groves. He said that maintenance is the number one issue amongst the departments; therefore he limits planting trees on city property to not add to the problem.

Discussion then led to planting on private property, which would not require the city be responsible for long term maintenance, and tree preservation. Mr. Ettlstein asked about the cost of purchasing easements on these properties. Ms. Caines said that staff did not have that information. Mr. Prager noted that City Council may be interested in doing a study regarding this issue and an estimate may not be difficult to obtain.

Mr. LaFrance suggested a pilot project as a recommendation, e.g. Durham Road right-of-way. He said that if the Tree Board would like to obtain more money from the street fund for maintenance, then the Urban Forestry Fund could be used as a bridge to that other funding source. The pilot program would help with advocating for the other funding resource. Then City Council would see the results and raise the street maintenance fee to cover more tree maintenance along streets.

Mr. Gross recognized time was running out for the discussion, and Ms. Caines explained that two of the activities had not been discussed (Education and Outreach and Planning). She asked if these activities were as important to the group considering the amount of effort and time the city already puts toward these activities. Mr. Walsh expressed that he felt these activities are important to the Tree Board, and Mr. Ettlstein tied education and outreach to as a means to encourage citizen maintenance of trees on private property. Both agreed that a pilot project for education and outreach would be of interest to them.

Ms. Caines asked what sort of information from staff would be helpful to the Board for setting funding priorities or recommending a pilot project. She noted that Mr. Gross had suggested a city organization chart may be helpful to know which departments are involved and how many staff. Mr. Ettlstein was interested in a means to help Home Owners Associations improve maintenance of trees in their neighborhood. Mr. Lieuallen asked about information about what sort of education and outreach would be covered by the 5% from the Urban Forestry Fund discussed in past Board meetings, what steps need to happen for a pilot project, and possibilities of private/public partnerships.

Discussion went back to Durham Road as a possible pilot project, and the cost of purchasing tree groves.

6. Scheduling, Closing Remarks, and Adjournment

The Board agreed that an October meeting was necessary in order to be prepared for the joint meeting with City Council in November. The fourth Wednesday was discussed as the meeting date. The meeting was adjourned.