

Parks and Parkways Commission

September 12, 2022

Page 1 of 6

Chairman Scott Discon called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

The secretary called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Scott Discon, Will Afton, Brien Croff, Lee Frederick, Shelley Winstead, and Christy Kervin (absent at roll call, present at 6:08)

Absent: Anne Marie Fargason

Staff Present: Catherine Fuselier, City Arborist; Alex Weiner, Secretary

Minutes

Ms. Winstead made a motion to adopt the minutes from the August 1st meeting, Mr. Croff seconded, and all were in favor.

New Business:

Commission Discussion

Mr. Discon suggested introducing the commissioners introduce themselves as there were two new commissioners at the meeting.

Mr. Discon said that he has been on the board for about 8 years and was serving as the chair. Mr. Croff said that he was new to the board, and this was only his third month. Ms. Frederick said that she has been a member of the board since the inception. Ms. Kervin said that she was a landscape architect, and this was her first meeting as a commissioner. Mr. Afton said he was a county agent and has been on the board since 2019. Ms. Winstead said this was her first meeting as a commissioner, she was a master gardener apprentice and moved to Mandeville in 2014.

Mr. Weiner reminded the commission members about the yearly requirement of completing ethics and sexual harassment prevention training and said that link would be emailed out the following day.

Meeting and Event Dates

Mr. Discon suggested moving the July meeting to the 10th instead of the 3rd in order to give people more time around the holiday.

Ms. Winstead made a motion to move the July meeting to July 10th, Ms. Kervin seconded, and all were in favor.

Ms. Fuselier also recommended scheduling the dates for the Arbor Day seedling giveaway and a spring education event. The Arbor Day event is usually done on the first Saturday in February, which would be February 4th.

Mr. Afton suggested having the Arbor Day event on the last Saturday of January, the 28th, in order to not conflict with the district livestock show.

Mr. Discon made a motion to have the arbor day event on January 28th, Mr. Afton seconded, and all were in favor.

Mr. Discon suggested that Ms. Winstead, Ms. Kervin and Ms. Frederick work with Bonnie Abbey to figure out the spring education event. Ms. Fuselier said that internally Earth Day was suggested, which would be April 22nd.

Mr. Afton agreed with the date, as there would be more options for stock for people to sell at the event.

Mr. Croff made a motion to have the spring education event on Earth Day, April 22nd, Ms. Kervin seconded, and all were in favor.

Mr. Discon said that they needed speakers and possibly some people selling plants. Ms. Fuselier said that the NOLA Bug Lady attended last time and sold some of her wares.

Mr. Discon said that he believed that 5 speaker slots with 20min talks was decided. Ms. Fuselier clarified that the talks were for 30min segments but would only be 20min to give time for setup.

Mr. Afton suggested getting anything plant related for speakers or guests.

Budget Projects 22-23

Mr. Discon said that multiple places needed to take some budget cuts this year as the City was still waiting for Ida reimbursement. This year would be more focused on finalizing plans for projects, then going for a budget adjustment for each project independently once everything was finalized. The goal is to make sure a project is finalized before going for any budget adjustments. Mr. Discon then went through the list of projects and explained them to the new commissioners.

Four Corners Project: This is made up of the four intersections at Hwy 22 and Causeway. The plan was done by Franklin Kyle

Causeway Underpass Phase II: The underpass by Monroe St. An identical plan is being done by Franklin Kyle for the opposite side. Ms. Fuselier added that the goal was to have a master plan for the entire area and then fund certain areas as allowed by the budget. Mr. Discon said that a lot of positive feedback was received about the project.

Hwy 190 Phase II: Planting drought resistant plants on each side of the highway. The location is by Coffee St. and Lafayette St.

Marigny Avenue Entrance: The plan is to add some crepe myrtles around the two signs.

Marigny Avenue Project: This has been moved to the capital projects budget due to the curbing. There was one special meeting held to discuss the project with the public already and the commission will pick another date at the October meeting.

Savanna Pine Conservation Area: This is located at the corner of Hwy 190 and East Causeway Approach. The plan is to add some more longleaf pines to the site, along with a small garden at the corner by the new sign. Ms. Fuselier said the idea was to add some low growing stuff to anchor the sign.

Ms. Frederick suggested some rudbeckia.

Ms. Frederick also said that, while she was pleased with the sign at the area, it was incorrect. It did not have "Savanna" on the sign. Ms. Fuselier said she would check with Melissa Barclay, the mayor's assistant, as to what happened as the planning department is not involved in the actual ordering of the signs. Mr. Frederick said it was important to include Savanna on the sign for educational purposes.

Ms. Frederick added that there were some oaks that needed to be moved. Ms. Fuselier said that would be done in the winter.

Mr. Discon said that there was a natural theme throughout the City that was wanting to be kept. Ms. Fuselier added that they were planting more grasses and willows to also have some movement.

Neutral Ground at East and West Causeway: The Japanese Magnolia that was planted is not doing well so they are going to be changed out.

Ms. Frederick asked if this was on West Approach, Ms. Fuselier clarified it was on both East and West Approach.

Mr. Afton noted that there were some half dead plants in the area.

Fence Plan: Refence the area between Causeway and the service road, from Times Grill and heading to the Lake. The plan is to get the fence up first and then possibly do some grass planting.

Tree Inventory: Ms. Fuselier said the goal is to inventory every tree in the City. Ms. Frederick asked if it was on private and public land, Ms. Fuselier said it was just public. They were currently at 2,000 trees and were waiting on the purchase of a side-by-side to speed the process up.

Ms. Frederick asked who was heading up the project and if there was a grant involved. Ms. Fuselier said that Dr. Malcolm Guidry and Dr. Fred Feldner were leading the project. She also said there was a 50/50 grant in place to help with the cost.

Mr. Afton asked if each tree would be numbered, Ms. Fuselier said that they were using the software tree plotter so there would be a number and it would be online. The public could also add comments and report issues. The idea is to get the public involved.

Mr. Discon said that this has been a long time in the making, Ms. Fuselier said the last one was done in the early 1990s.

Mr. Afton asked if this was a requirement for anything. Ms. Fuselier said that Baton Rouge Green was pushing for cities above a certain classification to have an inventory in place in order to get grants, along with some other internal stuff.

Mr. Afton asked if any other cities have done this, Ms. Fuselier said no.

Mr. Discon asked if it was costly, Ms. Fuselier replied that when you looked at everything that was gained, then it was not crazy.

Mr. Afton asked if there was an update on the cemetery. Ms. Fuselier said it was moved to the Capital Projects Budget but was on hold after Ida.

Ms. Kervin asked what the project was. Ms. Fuselier said that the cemetery was currently full so the City was trying to expand for more mausoleums and plots, along with a memorial garden where people could spread ashes. It is taking a bit for funds and the design. It has been a process, but since it is in the Capital Budget it does not have to be re-budgeted every year.

Ms. Kervin asked if the commission could suggest examples, Ms. Fuselier said she would find out for the next meeting.

Ms. Kervin said that the ~~Arnold Abertorium~~ in Massachusetts is the most beautiful cemetery she has seen. Ms. Fuselier said she would get an update and then see about the plans. *Ms. Kervin asked to strikethrough the earlier statement and correct it with Mt. Auburn Cemetery at 7:32pm*

Mr. Discon asked if the City has bought the adjoining property, Mr. Abbey said the property across from Monroe was bought.

Pesticide Disposal Event

Mr. Afton said that there would be a pesticide disposal event on November 9th in Franklinton. The Department of Agriculture and Forestry was doing the disposal, and it would be open to residents and commercial.

Ms. Frederick also said that the Parish was doing a hazardous waste collection on November 15th at Koop Drive.

Mr. Afton asked if there was a flyer, Ms. Fuselier said that she would distribute it and put it on the website once it was available.

Seedling List

Mr. Discon wanted to open the agenda to discuss the seedling list.

Mr. Afton made a motion to open the agenda to discuss the seedling list, Ms. Winstead seconded, and all were in favor.

Ms. Fuselier said that in the past they have gotten 100 of each species, and two species per category. It was bumped up to 300 last year.

Ms. Winstead suggested going up to 400 if possible.

Mr. Discon asked if they were choosing two per color, Ms. Fuselier said yes and she needed to get the order in by the end of the week.

Ms. Winstead asked if anyone had some suggestions.

Mr. Afton said that he had some notes.

Buck Abbey, 1129 Villere: This program should not be about planting yards but reestablishing the urban forest canopy, there should be no shrubs or small trees on the list. Superior canopy trees need to be handed out as those are what will be missed as there are only 2,000 counted trees on public property. Ms. Fuselier said that was not the final count, just a small percentage. Mr. Abbey advised large trees to get them on private property.

Patty Zebrick, 370 Moss: Agree with bringing canopy trees, but thinks that people want to plant trees that they will see a benefit from. She is not sure how to convince people to plant canopy trees.

Ms. Fuselier said there has been an issue in the past of having leftover trees that still need to be planted and cared for, and the City does not have the support system in place to take care of them. Ms. Frederick added that they usually offer an assortment to fit a variety of lot sizes and issues like powerlines.

Ms. Zebrick suggested adding that education factor into the Arbor Day event.

Mr. Discon suggested picking trees that were simple, stupid to grow. He likes cypress for that reason.

Mr. Afton had some suggestions: For the Large Trees, Bald Cypress and Pond Cypress are good. Swamp Oak and Spruce Pine are also good, with Spruce Pine being native to the parish. For the Small Trees he suggested Buckeye, Fringetree, and Magnolia Ash. For the Shrubs he suggested a deciduous holly and the Chinese sumac.

Ms. Kervin liked the Nuttall Oak. Shumard Oak, and the Longleaf Pine Bareroot.

Ms. Fuselier suggested that if they were doing all large trees, the amount should be scaled back.

Ms. Frederick suggested offering alternatives just in case.

Mr. Abbey said that spruce pine would be good.

Ms. Zebrick said that if it was limited to only tall trees it would last longer and they could do some education as there needed to be an opportunity to educate people.

The trees chosen were Spruce Pine, Nuttall Oak, pond Cypress, Southern Red Cedar, Live Oak, and Fringetree (4"-12")

Ms. Kervin asked if both male and female fringetrees would be gotten. Ms. Fuselier said she would ask.

Ms. Frederick suggested an amount of 300 for the big trees and 500 for the fringetrees.

Mr. Afton suggested advertising four weeks out, and then every week until the event.

Staff Update

Ms. Fuselier said there was no staff update as it was covered in the project recap

Public Comment

Bonnie Abbey, 1129 Villere: Asked about the removal of the gator bags. Mr. Discon said it was discussed internally it just slipped his mind to bring it up. They were going to pick a date to remove the bags and see if any could be reused.

Ms. Fuselier said Keep Mandeville Beautiful might be able to help.

Ms. Frederick suggested sometime in October or November since it would be cooler.

Ms. Winstead suggested Saturday November 5th.

Ms. Frederick asked if anything could be done about the trees that are leaning. Ms. Fuselier replied that since they were planted on private property nothing could be done. Even collecting the bags was pushing it.

Ms. Abbey said that education was the point of the commission and suggested some signage that included the commission name on it as most people did not know about it. Mr. Discon said he would talk with Ms. Bartholomew about it.

Mr. Abbey agreed with Ms. Abbey. The commission is one of the few groups of people in the state doing what they are doing. The public just does not know the commission exists. They should have a landscape summit to educate and enlighten people. They should convince people that Mandeville is a park where people live. They have to work to maintain the environment for the children and grandchildren. He said there is a Planning and Zoning meeting on the 21st at the Community Center about the LSU project near Mariners Village. He suggested looking at the plans on the website in order to help people in the community understand what it is about.

Ms. Zebrick said she admires the longleaf conservation site and thinks that some rattlesnake-master would look nice at the site. Ms. Fuselier said they have some planted already

Ms. Zebrick said that there were some at Sunset Point getting crushed by machinery. Ms. Kervin suggested collecting the seeds or removing the plants around them. Ms. Zebrick said they should be removed as they are dying.

Parks and Parkways Commission

September 12, 2022

Page 6 of 6

Mr. Discon said that they are waiting for the work to finish at Sunset Point before planning anything. Ms. Fuselier added that the pier situation needs to be addressed since they lost their pier in Ida, and that the Mayor is putting together a master recreation plan that incorporates the pier.

Ms. Winstead motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:44pm, seconded by Mr. Afton and was unanimously approved.



Alex Weiner, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman
Parks and Parkways Commission