

Chairman Scott Discon called the meeting to order at 6:06pm

The secretary called the roll.

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

Absent: Anne Marie Fargason and Will Afton

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

Minutes

Ms. Frederick made a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 12th meeting, Ms. Winstead seconded, and all were in favor.

New Business:

Spring Education Event Update

Ms. Winstead said that Ms. Kervin, Ms. Abbey and herself met a few weeks ago to discuss the event. It is scheduled for April 22 with a rain date of April 29. The ideas for topics are Hummingbirds, Creating a pollinator garden, Bee "hotels", and Native/organic pesticides. They wanted to have more vendors than speakers and they were thinking about having three speakers. Some ideas for kids were coloring and making seed bombs. Ms. Winstead also reached out to the Childrens Museum of St. Tammany to see if they would be interested in hosting some stuff for the kids. For promoting the event there is a Facebook page that can be shared, along with the information being posted on the City website. There was also the suggestion of having a sign that with the ability to change out the dates. Mr. Discon suggested something with Velcro to swap it out.

Ms. Frederick asked if the commission still had the banner from last year, Ms. Fuselier said no.

Skelly Kreller, District II: Asked what was wrong with it, Ms. Fuselier replied that the dates were incorrect.

Ms. Winstead asked if they did not use all the budget for the event would it roll over or was it a use it or lose it. Ms. Fuselier said it was a use it or lose it situation and that it gets re-budgeted every year. Mr. Discon added that the budget could be increased for future years

Ms. Winstead also mentioned that a honey tasting competition was considered. Mr. Discon asked who would bring the honey, Ms. Winstead said that maybe the vendors could.

Ms. Kervin said that Heidelberg Honey was a good local source located in Folsom. Ms. Frederick suggested using local beekeepers.

Ms. Kervin said that one speaker has been lined up. Mr. Discon asked how many they were planning, Ms. Kervin said they were thinking about three. She also called natural pest control and is waiting on a callback from them. Ms. Kervin said she also talked to Wild Ones about them maybe collecting seeds to be used in the seed bombs.

Mr. Discon asked if the kids would make them, Ms. Winstead replied they would.

Ms. Fuselier said that if the seed bombs did not pan out, they could do seed packets like last year.

Ms. Frederick asked if seed purchases would come from another budget, Ms. Fuselier replied they would.

Ms. Kervin asked what the attendance for the last event was so they could have an idea of what to plan for. Ms. Fuselier replied that there was a large turnout last time, and they should plan for 100-200 people.

Florida St. Water Bag Pickup

Mr. Discon said they would meet to remove the bags from the oaks on Florida St. and asked if a date was picked. Ms. Fuselier said that November 5th was chosen, but no time was picked. Mr. Discon suggested 8:30 at the Book and the Bean coffee shop on Girod St.

Business Corridor Tree Planting

Mr. Discon said there is an existing form they could send out. Ms. Fuselier asked if they wanted to open the plantings up to more than just live oaks. If so, they could adjust the form before sending out.

Ms. Kervin asked if Mr. Discon could elaborate on the program.

Mr. Discon said that there were no trees on Highway 190 so the idea was that the City would buy and plant the trees on businesses property, and all the businesses had to do was take care of the watering. The program was not utilized the last two years due to COVID and focusing on the street tree program after Ida.

Ms. Frederick asked where they would be located, Mr. Discon said from the four corners all the way to Jackson Avenue. He mentioned that there were none by the new target and the post office could use some more.

Mr. Discon added that lots of live oaks were removed back in the '80s on Mardi Gras day.

Ms. Fuselier asked if they would be sticking to only live oaks, Ms. Kervin said they should.

Mr. Discon called for a vote by a show of hands to see who wanted to keep it only live oaks, and the vote was unanimous.

East and West Causeway Median Replacement

Mr. Discon said the area was planted by the commission. Ms. Fuselier added that it was done about seven years ago.

Mr. Discon said that there are about 24 trees that are dead or dying and he wants to replace them with Vitex trees. Ms. Kervin asked if this was the area by the Rouses, Mr. Discon said it was just the median.

Ms. Fuselier mentioned that DOTD specifically asked for breakaway trees and noted that due to utilities in the area nothing planted could be very tall. She also mentioned that there is no irrigation in place on the medians, so whatever is planted needs to be drought resistant.

Mr. Discon said that he wants to get the replacements in place soon. Ms. Fuselier said the issue is with the Japanese Magnolias in place. Mr. Discon added that there are about 7 dead on East Causeway, and about 17 dead on West Causeway, possibly due to the heat.

Mr. Kreller mentioned that the area is construction soil, which needs to be considered, so the right trees need to be picked. Ms. Fuselier agreed it was harsh soil.

Mr. Discon said the commission would vote at the next meeting, and suggested commission members look at the surrounding trees in the area as the idea is to create and maintain a tree canopy. He also mentioned that they had to fill the water bags in the past, but that is a big commitment and a little dangerous.

Ms. Kervin asked if they were wearing high visibility vests, Mr. Discon said they were not as the watering was on the side of the highway. Ms. Fuselier added that the interns who went out to water were fully equipped with safety gear.

Ms. Frederick asked if the area was mulched, Ms. Fuselier said it was mulched once a year, but they could only do a small amount due to the mowers.

Ms. Fuselier said she could send out the plans so everyone would have an idea of the location.

North Causeway Service Road Landscape Enhancement project

Mr. Discon said the area is in front of the Perlis store. The land has dead and dying crape myrtles. The idea is to mimic the area opposite and to keep a natural look to it.

Ms. Frederick asked if the fence would be taken down, Mr. Discon said that if we buy the fence DOTD will install it. He added that this was the largest area of unplanted land in Mandeville.

Ms. Frederick suggested maybe planting some fringetrees or palmettos.

Ms. Kervin asked how the pine trees were able to be planted at the Savanna Conservation site. Ms. Fuselier said that area was far enough back that DOTD was ok with it.

Staff Update

Ms. Fuselier said that she was looking into what happened with the sign at the conservation area and trying to see where the mistake came from.

Mr. Kreller said the location of the sign looked too close if there was a burn done.

Mr. Weiner reminded the commission to complete their ethics and sexual harassment prevention training by December 31st and said he would send out the links in the morning.

Public Comment

Mr. Kreller said the area on Florida Extension by Golden Glen lost lots of trees and asked if the City could order and plant some trees in the area. Ms. Fuselier said Public Works would have to be consulted to see if they had any issues.

Mr. Kreller said that a green buffer was needed as the fence and some houses were visible. Mr. Discon said that when a sidewalk is implemented, they could do the trees.

Ms. Fuselier added that as long as the order is small, they can be bought internally.

Ms. Frederick asked about the development across from City Hall, if they left the required 25ft buffer. Ms. Fuselier replied that as far as she knew they were compliant, however she did not review the plans as she was out sick.

Mr. Kreller said he has asked about this but has not gotten a solid answer.

Ms. Frederick said the area was clear cut. Mr. Kreller guarantees that there was an oak in there that got removed.

Ms. Frederick said it was good the commission came up with the resolution for the required 25ft greenspace.

Mr. Discon said that people were clear cutting for developments. Ms. Fuselier said that there was an old requirement for a sidewalk to be installed which was killing the trees, so the commission made a resolution to the city council to add a no cut buffer requirement.

Parks and Parkways Commission

October 3, 2022

Page 4 of 4

Mr. Kreller said the development would be a spa in the front with an office complex in the rear. Ms. Frederick asked if the entire thing would be a spa, Mr. Kreller replied that just the front area would be a spa.

Ms. Winstead motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:52pm, seconded by Ms. Kervin and was unanimously approved.



Alex Weiner, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman
Parks and Parkways Commission