

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Discon and the secretary called roll. The meeting was held on the Zoom platform as allowed by Executive Proclamation 2020-175 by Governor John Bel Edwards.

Commissioners Present: Scott Discon, Lee Frederick, Will Afton, Anne Marie Fargason, Karen Crosby, and Leslie Marcello

Absent: Eric McQuiston

Also Present: Catherine Casanova, City Arborist, and Louissette Scott, Planning Director, Council Members: Skelly Kreller, and Jill McGuire

Ms. Fargason motioned to defer the adoption of the minutes of the December 7, 2020 meeting to the next Commission meeting on February 1st, seconded by Ms. Crosby and was unanimously approved.

**New Business:**

**1. Election of New Chairman**

Ms. Fargason nominated Scott Discon to be re-elected Chairman of the Parks and Parkways Commission. Ms. Frederick seconded and was unanimously approved.

**Election of Vice Chairman**

Ms. Crosby nominated Leslie Marcello to be Vice Chairwoman of the Parks and Parkways Commission, Ms. Frederick seconded and was unanimously approved.

**2. Arbor Day Tree Giveaway Procedure**

Ms. Casanova indicated the tree giveaway will be held on February 6<sup>th</sup> and would like to have contingencies in case of new executive orders. The trees are due to come in on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Discon suggested moving the giveaway to Lafitte Market and turn it into a drive-by.

Ms. Crosby made mention that the City of Covington will have their tree giveaway on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and are looking for volunteers to help bundle.

Mr. Discon suggested a Facebook live feed and Ms. Casanova said she will check with Ms. Trilby Lenfant.

Ms. Casanova listed the species that will be given out in the giveaway: Pawpaw, Beautyberry, Southern Catalpa, Buttonbush, American Beech, Dahoon Holly. She is looking for volunteers to help bundle and distribute.

Ms. Frederick asked if we could pre-bundle them and hand out that way.

Ms. Casanova said her concern is having them dry out if they are to be pre-bundled.

Ms. Crosby suggested perhaps having them set up behind City Hall by the mailbox and do a drive-by from there along with a live feed on Facebook. Mr. Discon said he will talk to the Mayor's Assistant, Ms. Trilby Lenfant. Additionally, in the event it is raining tents could be used. Based on previous years, it is expected to draw approximately 300 people. Ms. Fargason suggested having it at the Trailhead. Ms. Casanova will follow up with Ms. Alia Casborne, the Cultural Affairs Director. Ms. Casanova said once it has been decided she will post on the website, Facebook, and City Hall. There will also be signs at E. Causeway Approach, W. Causeway Approach, and Causeway Boulevard. Mr. Discon suggested having a back-up contingency plan such as a drive by, due to the possibility of going back to Phase 1 COVID restrictions.

Staff Update:

1. Causeway Underpass Design
  1. Ms. Casanova said the Council will review the plans at the meeting on January 15<sup>th</sup>.
2. Florida Street Landscape Plan, Phase 1
  1. Ms. Casanova indicated the plans were sent out to bid – Bids are due on the 27<sup>th</sup>. She said she should have an update at the next meeting. There are no limits on however many would like to bid. Ms. Casanova said the planting is expected to be in February.
3. Marigny Ave
  1. Finishing the 100 Blk of Marigny. There is a mixture of citrus and figs. All the materials have been ordered. Need to make beds to plant them with 6" of mulch.

Mr. Discon commented that lantanas would look nice if planted under all fruit trees instead of mulch since the mulch gets bleached from the sun and doesn't look that attractive. It would be nice to see some type of ground cover and pollinators. Ms. Frederick said end caps would be ok. Mr. Discon said there would need to be contrast in there. Ms. Crosby suggested rosemary. Ms. Scott suggested sticking to the plan for now and see how it grows for a year.

4. Proposed projects for 2021/2022 budget year

Ms. Marcello suggested teams of 2 people from the Commission to meet at a location to discuss some of the projects. Ms. Scott noted this can be up to 3 people to not be considered a quorum.

Mr. Discon suggested assigning captains for each of the projects, and each captain can schedule an in-person meeting and then come back to discuss with the Board. Ms. Scott recommended coming up with a list of projects, create a statement as to the value of the projects as a benefit to the City, and include the description of the project and prioritize it, identify the projects for next year's budget and come up with an estimated cost.

Mr. Discon would like to apply a steward for each project from the Commission. Need a list of parameters on the projects and be more specific on the projects to get the look that we are looking for.

Ms. Crosby said to use a master plant list so we can decide which ones are reused a lot.

Ms. Casanova will send a master list of all the plants that have been used on projects to the Commission and will take a vote from that list.

Mr. Afton suggested the list become an official document and be put on a letterhead. Ms. Scott said we can provide that list to the contractors and that it should be a broad list and one that has the preferred plants starred. Ms. Frederick would love to see native azaleas in some of the landscaping, and if possible, to have those incorporated in the list. Ms. Crosby said she would like to see a fringe tree in there and stated it would give a stunning appearance, with a contrast in colors and better dichotomy throughout the year and not just flowers. Ms. Casanova will put the list together and will include those species mentioned and then that list will be given to the contractor.



Mr. Discon said to perhaps add more perennials instead of just all annuals, and it would help provide a selection of colors to use for each season. He said we should have a choice on what the 4 seasons will be and what colors we see. He would like a list of which annuals we would like planted and the colors. Ms. Crosby noted it would reduce maintenance costs if perennials were used. Mr. Afton suggested to perhaps go to the Stelz Nursery in Covington, and they would be able to purchase it and have it ready for us for the next season. Ms. Crosby suggested to include grasses and not just trees and shrubs on the list.

Ms. Marcello would like to review the final project list and discuss at the next meeting and then decide which projects they would like to work on.

The Planning Department will resend the final project list and to include two additional projects: Pottery Hill clean up and partial clearing and pollinator garden planting at the Trailhead.

Ms. Scott would like to also add the entry ways to the list of projects to remove the fence, under the overpass and entry way to Hwy 22.

Mr. Discon said Ms. Trilby Lenfant would like a copy of the project list. She is working with Public Works to help get the benches.

Mr. Afton informed everyone that St. Tammany Parish is doing Christmas tree recycling program in Covington. Unflocked trees with no lights or ornaments can be dropped off. It goes to coast restoration program. The address to drop off the trees is confirmed to be at 1515 N. Florida St., Covington, LA 70433.

Staff Update:

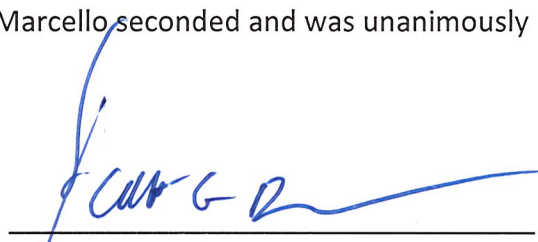
Tyler Thomas Park – Planted with fruit in approved areas. Public Works will let us plant only 1 or 2 more trees.

Mr. Crosby motioned to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Marcello seconded and was unanimously approved.



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Marcia Frye, Secretary



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Scott Discon, Chairman  
Parks and Parkways Commission