

Parks and Parkways Commission

February 3, 2025

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Commissioner Shelley Winstead called the meeting to order at 6:02pm

The secretary called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Brien Croff, Lee Frederick, Christy Kervin, Shelley Winstead and Patricia Zebrick

Absent: Shawn Potter, Will Afton (Will Afton arrived at 6:12)

Staff Present: Rad Dickson, Planner; Tina Myers, Secretary

Minutes

Mr. Croff made a motion to adopt the minutes from the January 6 meeting, Ms. Zebrick seconded, and all were in favor.

New Business

Presentation of plaque certifying our Cypress Tupelo Swamp by the Native Plant Society of Louisiana

Council member Jill Lane for District III was in attendance on behalf of the city

Bylaws

Mr. Croff said the structure was similar to bylaws but after the discussion at the last meeting he has adjusted it to more of an orientation guide structure. Ms. Frederick asked if this was a revision to what is in the CLURO. Mr. Croff said it is based on CLRUO section 2.4 for the Parks and Parkways Commission, it is not a revision to the CLURO, it is more of an overview, guidance for what a new member would need to know. Ms. Zebrick said this document should include something for the committee to look at the ecological value of native plants. Ms. Fredrick and Ms. Winstead are in favor of adding that to the orientation guide.

Staff Update

Mr. Dickson shows photos of the completed project along North Causeway in front of Perlis and discusses what was planted. Ms. Kervin said one of the trees have been damaged and the incorrect trees were planted. Mr. Afton asked if they can replace the tree that has been damaged, Mr. Dickson replied it was actually four trees and he is already working on replacements with what is currently in stock, Sweetbay Magnolia and Live Oaks. Ms. Kervin said she does not recommend doing that, the spacing too close.

Seedling Giveaway

Mr. Dickson said they gave away a lot of seedling, he had help from Patty and they stayed busy the entire time. Ms. Frederick said she didn't know about it. Ms. Kervin said it was kind of last minute. Mr. Dickson said he sent an email about a month ago, they gave away about 1,000. Ms. Zebrick said the feedback she received was signage for the giveaway is wanted. Mr. Dickson recommended maybe a banner they can use for all events they give away stuff. Ms. Frederick suggested flyers at the trailhead. Ms. Winstead suggested posting online. Mr. Dickson said it was shared on Facebook.

Updated Meeting Dates

Ms. Winstead asked if there is not going to be an April meeting. Mr. Dickson said we are moving to quarterly meetings; we will have March then every three months. Ms. Kervin said no, who is in charge of that. Mr. Dickson said the Mayor and Cara talked to him about it and he said it was good. Ms. Kervin said not it's not we do not get anything done as is, how can we go to quarterly. Ms. Winstead asked Mr. Dickson to pass along to the Mayor and Cara that the commission feels they need to meet monthly. Mr. Dickson asked if moving the meetings to the second Monday of the month would help, is there another week that works better for everyone because last year we had to cancel four months last year because we couldn't meet quorum so we would like to find a time that is best for everyone.

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Tree City USA Approval

Ms. Zebrick asked Mr. Dickson to tell her about that. Mr. Dickson said he thinks it is our twenty-sixth year straight, we have to give away a certain number of trees, have a tree board, a tree ordinance and provide a certain dollar number per number of residents in your municipality for trees.

Public Comment

Buck Abby 1129 Villere: said they should resist going to quarterly meetings because they represent the urban forest. We don't know what the thinking is behind this, but it is telling the people in this room, the citizens don't know we exist. He wanted to talk about the Thrive 2045, think of how much tree canopy we lost since 2007, they're going to come out with a new comprehensive plan and if the urban forest isn't strongly addressed in that plan, it may disappear completely.

Ms. Winstead asked how they can be part of the comprehensive plan. Mr. Dickson said he believes they would go to the public meetings. Ms. Kervin said they requested to have a seat at the table, and they were denied.

Bonnie Abby 1129 Villere: said the public just doesn't know they exist. Somebody needs to show up from this commission. If you want to get on the council agenda you need to go to a council at large. It's just that they haven't heard from you, there hasn't been a push.

Mr. Dickson said even the tree giveaway the past weekend only one member helped out. Ms. Frederick said she did not get an email. Ms. Kervin said maybe you sent it a month ago, but a week is not enough time. When Catherine was here it was planned months in advance. Mr. Dickson said we have always gone for the arbor day and the reason why it became play it by ear was because of the snowstorm that week. It was the same last year with only one person coming to help. Ms. Kervin said there needs to be more buy in to the commission for dates and what trees will be given out. Mr. Dickson said next year he will delegate that task to a couple members and they can place the order, he will help with the PO and purchasing. Ms. Frederick said Thrive 2045 is a priority, is there a place for Parks and Parkways in the plan and how do we submit something to them. Ms. Kervin said the city needs a landscape architect because there are things they do and are trained to do that arborist and planners are not trained to do. Ms. Frederick asked if that is what Franklin Kyle does? Ms. Kervin said he is not a city landscape architect, is private. Ms. Frederick said new construction just wipes everything out. Ms. Zebrick said someone requested to remove trees next to their newly built house because they were concerned about them falling, if you build and it kills the trees on the neighboring lot then we are going to vote to take all the trees down because we don't want people hurt.

Mr. Afton announced LSU Center and Master Gardner have a few events coming up. Thursday March 13th Spring Seminar at the Castine Center and Northshore Garden Show and Plant Sale March 28th and 29th at the Parish Fair Grounds.

Mr. Afton motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:19pm, seconded by Ms. Frederick and was unanimously approved.

Tina Myers, Secretary

Shelley Winstead, Chairwoman
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