



**Street Tree Advisory Committee
Wednesday, December 19, 2018
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
Financial Services Conference Room**

Member Attendees:

Fremont Latimer
Mark Jacoby
Gina Burrell
Cathy Brown
Ann Derby
Peter Williams
Greg Dunn, Forestry Advisor
Dan Lippi, Certified Master Arborist

City Staff

Holly Donahue, Public Works
Amanda Anderson, Public Works
Kim Mayo, Public Affairs and Events
Bobby Van Mierop, Code Enforcement
Mark Hartley, Manager of Streets and Grounds
Todd Grant, Deputy Director of Public Works
David Birchim, Director of Planning and Building
John Cary, Esq., Assistant City Attorney

1. **Quorum:** Roll was taken and quorum was established.
2. **Public Comment:** Ms. Nancy Pellicer of the City of St. Augustine brought photos of a large, old, Live Oak, referred to as an “Angel Tree”, located on Anastasia Boulevard and Busam Street, next to Simple Gestures, an art and gift store, and south of the Gypsy Cab restaurant. She asked if it was old enough to preserve in some way as the property is for sale. Mr. Lippi responded that he himself had assessed the tree and stated that it was healthy and a perfect Live Oak. He

shared that it does not meet the criteria of a specimen tree under County specifications and regulations; and that the diameter was not large enough.

Staff introduced Mark Hartley, the Manager of Streets and Grounds, who oversees the landscape within the public right-of-way (ROW). Mr. Hartley replaced Ms. Char Putz who retired with the City of St. Augustine.

3. **Minutes:** Minutes from the last meeting held on September 19, 2018 were reviewed by the Committee. A motion was made to approve the minutes as written by Ms. Brown, seconded by Ms. Burrell; with all in favor.

4. **City Standardized Form for Arboriculture Reports:** Mr. Latimer provided the Committee with an update of the PZB meeting held in November 2018 regarding "Tree Removal in St. Augustine". He explained the difference between the words "preserved" and "significant" tree removal. The Planning and Zoning Board proposes to change the title in the code to "significant" and remove "preserved". Other changes include the elimination of the words "protected" and "historically significant". These changes will be presented at the PZB meeting to be held January 8, 2019, along with a hand-out to the public outlining the Tree Removal Process and a Standardized Arborist Report.

5. **Tree Bank Fund:** Ms. Burrell asked for an update regarding the creation of a Tree Bank Fund. She stated that in the past, the City had fined her neighbor \$4,000 per non-permitted removal of trees, and had paid the City \$8,000 in penalty fees for the two (2) removed trees. Mr. Birchim explained that the penalty fees for these two trees were placed in the General Fund which is part of the City's standard operating expenses. The General Fund is the fund that existed, as there was no Tree Mitigation Fund when the fees were collected from the resident. The City cannot go back in time and remove the fees, in order to place them in a newly created Tree Mitigation Fund. Going forward, from the time of its creation, funds collected from tree removal penalties, can be added to the Tree Mitigation Fund, if approved by the Commission.

There was further discussion explaining the process for creating a Tree Mitigation Fund, budgeting funds for trees in ROWs per the existing budget, and dedicated funds for planting trees. Resolution 2018-46 was explained to the Committee where an Owner or Developer can pay a fee into the Tree Mitigation Fund in lieu of planting trees on the site if the City agrees with the Owner or Developer that the site may not be possible, or feasible, for the development to meet the existing tree planting landscape requirements of the City.

Also, fines collected from residents for the unpermitted removal of trees shall be placed in the Tree Mitigation Funds, going forward. The accumulated Tree Mitigation Funds would be used by the City to plant and maintain trees in appropriate locations and support the City's tree program within the City ROW or on City or other public property.

6. **FSDB Hazardous Trees:** It was reported by a Committee member that the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind removed the two hazardous Live Oak trees on their property as permitted.

7. **2018 Tree City USA Certification and Growth Award Certification:** It was reported by Ms. Donahue that the City had received both certifications for 2018.

8. **2019 Arbor Day Event:** The COSA Event and Venue Coordinator, Kim Mayo, updated the Committee on the 2019 Arbor Day festivities to be held at Lighthouse Park; and explained that RB Hunt Elementary children would be singing at the event, five (5) Southern Red Cedar trees would be planted; and tree saplings would be distributed to residents.

9. **2015 Florida Grades and Standards:** Mr. Lippi provided the Committee with a copy of the 2015 Florida Grades and Standards for Nursery Plants before the meeting. Mr. Birchim explained that the City of St. Augustine has the same provisions in the Trees and Landscaping Ordinance, Chapter 25 of the City Code. Sec. 25-53 (c) (1), Grades and Standards for Nursery Plants; and also, referring to the State of Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for additional and updated information.

10. **New Items:**

- a. Ms. Brown recommended that the Committee and City do a Public Outreach program regarding proper planting of trees.
- b. Ms. Derby pointed out that the Crepe Myrtle trees on US1 and King Street did not look good.
- c. Ms. Brown asked about the STAC's position under Sunshine Law, or not. They do not report to the Commission, therefore, are they really under Sunshine Law? If not, then can they talk with one another about tree and planting improvements and problems?

11. **Next Meeting Date:**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at the COSA 50 Bridge Street Conference Room.

12. **Adjournment:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 p.m. by Ms. Burrell, seconded by Ms. Derby; with all in favor. Meeting Adjourned.