

Winterville Tree Commission
Thursday, August 1st, 2019
Meeting Minutes
Averil and Bob Bonsall's Residence

Present: Holly Campbell, Bob Bonsall, Averil Bonsall, Roger Cauthen, Lea Clark, Seth Hawkins

Approval of June 13 Minutes: The June meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Updates from Roger:

- Wendy should have received the revised Tree Ordinance from him. Holly will check.
- Commemorative Trees – the Blackgum trees are looking weak. This is typical of this type of tree because they don't transplant easily, have slower root growth than the other trees. They should be OK.
- One of the oaks is completely defoliated by caterpillars. Roger will spray.
- Two of the trees are looking chlorotic (Holly). Roger will check them. He did a soil test when they were planted – showed a pH of 5.5, which should be OK, but nutrients were low, so they could be fertilized now, though maybe not the best time of year to do this, but probably not too late.
- It was suggested that we organize a Commemorative Trees Program workday in October to add compost and mulch to the new trees.
- It was suggested that we organize a workday at the Elementary School, with Dr. Elder taking the lead on volunteers, to do an initial light pruning on the new trees and set up a watering program. September and October are usually fairly dry months and the trees need watering for good root development.

Pollinator/Natural area of Pittard Park:

- Bob and Roger will evaluate this area and come up with a plan.
- Mowing will suppress forest development and succession, but will also cut down all other vegetation, so an agreement with Tom needs to be reached. Currently there is no natural area, and there are no clear habitats.
- Linda Chafin, State Botanical Garden, is willing to come out to the Park in the Fall and identify any plants that are growing there.
- The original grant was mainly for walking trails. These should be ADA compliant, so a surface much firmer than the current wood chips is necessary.
- We are hoping to set up a collaboration with the ACC Parks Department, the Connect to Protect program, and the Master Gardeners to "piggyback" onto a similar project (Dudley Park) that the Master Gardeners have planned.

WTC Webpage update (Holly)

Holly will add the latest approved minutes to the webpage, and add the updated Final Winterville Tree Ordinance.

SPLOST – Final Report (Bob)

- SPLOST was increased to 11 years, which added about \$300,000 to our funding. This means that the Tree Commission's proposal, greenspace acquisition, will be fully funded, and will allow the Pittard Park renovation and wetlands rehabilitation to go forward, provided that the SPLOST is voted in.
- The final list, as voted on by the City Council, will be available on the City website.

New Tree Commission members

- There was a unanimous vote to request that Mayor Ferrelle and the City Council approve Lea Clark as a voting member of the Tree Commission. She has already been a valuable participant.
- Interest from two other Winterville residents was discussed, and it was decided that an Application Form/Questionnaire is necessary. This will be prepared and discussed by email, with the hope that these prospective new members will be able to attend our next meeting.
- Averil will notify those interested they will receive this form as soon as it is available.

Tree People Program

- There has been no response from residents about this program, but it was suggested that Jack Eisenman and George Chandler be approached, since they both have trees worthy of note.
- Seth will check the information on Champion Trees in Winterville.

Tree Talk #2

- It was suggested that our next Tree Talk be about tree planting and pruning, possibly with an outdoor demo.
- A second suggestion was to discuss the beauty and reasons for fall color ('The Beauty of Senescence'), to include suggestions for good trees to plant for fall color in the garden.
- It would perhaps be possible to include both these topics in one presentation. Roger and Seth agreed to organize this.
- The date for this would be in early November, i.e. before tree-planting time. *(It has now been set for November 14, 6-8 p.m.)*

Also from Roger:

- Cherry trees on Main Street. The middle of the three trees has defoliated earlier than normal, and is probably not too healthy. However, they are beautiful when in bloom so they probably should be left as long as possible. There will probably be a public outcry if they are removed at the same time, so diplomatically they should be removed one year at a time, preferably when they are at their least beautiful! They could be left for now, but taking lower limbs off would be an option for now.
- Construction of the Firefly Trail will start soon, and it is important to put a very visible protective barrier around vulnerable trees. Roger will check to see if this is in the FFT budget, and if not, his department will do this.

Next meeting – Friday, August 30th, 7:30 a.m. (breakfast at the Bonsalls)