

Winterville Tree Commission Annual Report to City Council - 2018

January 2, 2019

Tree Commission Members – Holly Campbell (Chair), Bob Bonsall (Treasurer), Averil Bonsall (Secretary); Ex Officio – Roger Cauthen (City Arborist), Tom Doonan (City Works Manager), Seth Hawkins (Georgia Forestry Arborist)

Meetings – Held monthly except for June and October.

Events:

- **Arbor Day** (Feb.20) - Tree planting and pruning demonstration, and presentation of the Winterville *Tree City USA* sign. About 15 people participated, including our Mayor and two City Council members, City Arborist, Tree Commission, Seth Hawkins and other Georgia Forestry Commission members, and city residents. (A photo of this event appeared in the GFC 2019 planner, the Winterville Gazette, and the Marigold Festival Program).
- **Second Annual Winterville Tree Tour** (April 14)- This focused on invasive plant awareness and management in our woodlands, and was held on the property of Jack Eisenman, who kindly offered the use of his woods for this event. Information was presented at stops along the walk by three experts, and we had a demonstration of prescribed grazing by sheep. There were about 30 participants. The event was two hours long, and finished with a light reception and Q&A time. Seth provided three trees for “door” prizes. (This was held alongside the Athens Home and Garden Show, and we promoted it in and around Athens and Winterville with our own posters and outreach).
- **Marigold Festival** (May 12) - We prepared 15 tree “tags” (educational information about individual trees and their value to the environment). We received great feedback about these, including requests for permanent installation.
- **First Winterville Tree Talk** (Oct 22) – This was a pot-luck dinner meeting that followed up on the invasive plant theme of the Tree Tour. The program was introduced by Mayor Dodd Ferrelle. Tom Doonan described our Commemorative Tree Program, and Bob Bonsall gave the first presentation to set the stage for talks by our invited experts, Lauren Muller (Athens Land Trust Invasive Plant Manager), Gary Crider (Invasive plant management expert), Joey Allen (State Botanical Garden Native Plant Garden curator), Seth Hawkins (Georgia Forestry Commission), and Roger Cauthen (City Arborist).

Outreach:

- Created Tree Commission webpage on the Winterville website (Many thanks to JoAnn Snow for all her patient help!). Have also set up a WTC email address.

- Provided entries for quarterly Winterville Gazette newsletters, including tree tips and events
- Were featured on local NPR station (Bob Bonsall and Seth Hawkins chatted to Alexia Ridley to promote our Winterville Tree Talk)
- Met with the Athens Tree Council to show a PowerPoint presentation about our accomplishments, and to discuss how we might collaborate.
- Added web links related to trees and their management to our WTC webpage.

Business:

- Voted in officers and ex-officio members
- Prepared WTC Bylaws for approval by City Council
- Prepared WTC Budget for 2019
- Met with City Arborist to walk the Winterville section of the Firefly Trail and to discuss preservation/replacement of trees affected by construction of the Trail

Professional development:

- Attended the start-up meeting for NGIPC (North Georgia Invasive Plant Cooperative) – (Averil & Bob); and the follow-up workshop at Sandy Creek (Bob)
- Attended GFC annual conference (Holly, Seth)
- Visited the Augusta Arboretum to determine the usefulness of QR codes (Averil and Bob)
- GAA fall workshop (Roger)
- Visited Atlanta Beltway visit to view trees (many installed by Trees Atlanta) and garden plantings (Averil & Bob)
- Visited Mars Hill University (NC) to review progress on their arboretum walks and plaques (Averil & Bob)

Plans for 2019:

- MLK Day tree planting/ Making the Shade – at Winterville Elementary School (Jan 21)
- Arbor Day tree planting and Elementary School activity (Feb 20)
- Third Winterville Tree Tour (Spring)
- Second Winterville Tree Talk (Fall?)
- Complete the mapping and identification of the trees that make our tree canopy
- Develop a brochure for Winterville residents giving an overview of the Winterville Tree Ordinance
- Develop an arboretum walk with labels, and possibly with QR codes
- Work on some revisions of the Tree Ordinance, and request the removal of the “draft” designation
- Add more members to the Tree Commission, and increase awareness of its existence