



AMANDA FRITZ, COMMISSIONER

MIKE ABBATÉ, DIRECTOR

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2017

City Hall, Lovejoy Room

**Commission Members
present:**

Chair Mark Bello, Vice-Chair Barbara Hollenbeck, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Meryl Redisch, Damon Schrosk, Vivek Shandas, Brian French, Gregg Everhart

**Commission Members
Absent:**

**Urban Forestry staff
present:**

Jenn Cairo, City Forester; Casey Jogerst, Permitting Supervisor; Brian Landoe, Asst. Program Specialist; Charlie Carroll, Tree Inspector; Kasey Yturalde, Botanic Specialist II; Leanne Wells, Botanic Specialist II; Mason Wordell, Tree Plan Coordinator

City staff present:

Guests present:

Bruce Nelson, Shara Alexander

Call to Order and Public Comments: UFC Chair Mark Bello

Mark called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM.

- Bruce Nelson, using Neighborhood Tree Inventory data, provided public comment, expressing concern about unimproved areas that have mature trees in the right of way that are vulnerable to future street development. His analysis demonstrated that outer east side neighborhoods are especially vulnerable.
 - In Cully, 60% of the streets are unimproved.
- Shara Alexander, resident of the Elliott neighborhood, shared concerns about tree grates causing damage to street trees on MLK. UF will look into the locations she provided and provide an update.
- Daniel Newberry and Thuy Tu introduced themselves as new Urban Forestry Commissioners.

Urban Forestry Report: City Forester Jenn Cairo

Winter Storm Response

- Since December 9th, UF staff have responded to more than 900 tree emergencies.
- In all of calendar year 2015, UF responded to 1,192 tree emergencies.
- Jenn complimented UF staff who have been dedicated and flexible throughout the winter storms.
- Jenn also noted that many tree failures could have been avoided through proactive maintenance.
- Gregg asked if emergencies mean those trees are gone. Jenn responded that many are partial tree failures, and that UF staff follow up to assess the health of the tree.

2017/18 Budget Update

- Jenn reiterated that Parks & Recreation has been asked to come up with 1% and 5% cut scenarios. Departments have been directed to look at efficiency improvements and realignments.
- With PP&R, the goal is to address equity and improve service to underserved areas of the city
- At present, two UF packages are being considered:
 - Permit Increases: UF will increase permit fees to off-set a \$100,000 general fund budget reduction. Permit fees do not currently cover full UF costs associated with permitting. The plan is to gradually increase fees to reach full cost recovery. UF would normally use increased fee revenue to hire more tree inspectors.
 - Dutch Elm Disease Realignment: Title 11 requires that UF maintain Heritage Trees on public property. In order to meet this code requirement, UF will no longer remove DED infected street trees. Responsibility for removing DED infected trees will revert to the adjacent property owner, as is current city policy for all other street trees (except Heritage Trees). DED removal by the adjacent property owner is required in Title 11.1160.060. The vast majority of DED infected trees are in affluent Portland neighborhoods. Ending this practice allows UF to dedicate more resources to historically underserved areas of Portland.
 - Meryl asked if UF anticipates push back from property owners with elm trees. Jenn responded that there have been public meetings and surveys throughout the budget process to allow for input.

November Minutes Review and Approval

- Several changes were requested, including minor typos. Minutes were approved as amended.

Policy Committee Update: Commissioner Meryl Redisch

- The Policy Committee is currently working on a Portland Street Tree Management Asset Strategy.
- A presentation to City Council on the Street Tree Inventory is planned. Date will be confirmed soon. Policy Committee and UF staff are working collaboratively on this presentation.
- Ultimate goal of this effort is to emphasize the importance of street trees and establish a street tree maintenance program.
- Gregg noted that the PBOT Pedestrian Advisory Committee is interested in more narrow streets, which could facilitate larger planting strips.
- Catherine said we need to be sure we don't alienate people with the way we talk about street trees. We should not make people who plant small trees feel like they are not doing their civic duty, and we need to be mindful of not pitting space for trees against vehicle parking.

2016 UFC Annual Report

- Barbara presented the complete report, which is intended to be a summary of the Commission's accomplishments over the past year.
- Accomplishments were submitted by committee chairs with a focus on the impact of those activities. These accomplishments were organized by work area, rather than committee.
- The report includes a Looking Ahead section, which is intended to provide the UFC with broad, multi-year works areas. This list was provided to the UFC as a basis for discussion.
- The report is with UF staff for edits and formatting.

Annual UFC Workshop

- The workshop, which will be facilitated by Steve Faust, is set for February 16th from 9 to 3pm.

Mark adjourned the meeting at 10:20am.