



AMANDA FRITZ, COMMISSIONER

MIKE ABBATÉ, DIRECTOR

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2018

City Hall, Lovejoy Room

**Commission Members
present:**

Chair Vivek Shandas, Vice Chair Barbara Hollenbeck, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Meryl Redisch, Damon Schrosk, Thuy Tu, Gregg Everhart, Daniel Newberry, Brian French

**Commission Members
Absent:**

**Urban Forestry staff
present:**

Jenn Cairo, City Forester; Brian Landoe, Asst. Program Specialist

City staff present:

Tony Garcia, City Attorney's Office; Bill Cunningham, BPS; and other city staff

Guests present:

Chair Report

- Gregg noted Heritage Tree meeting on the 29th
- Vivek identified three primary priorities for the Urban Forestry Commission:
 - Street Tree Maintenance Task Force,
 - Streets 2035,
 - Citywide Tree Planting Strategy.
- Meryl noted that she has served as the liaison to the Parks Board. A replacement will need to be named when she terms off the Urban Forestry Commission at the end of February 2018. The commitment is every other month for two hours, with committee obligations in the off months.
 - It would be helpful to have someone with a strong natural resources background serve in this position.
 - Jenn: The Parks Board has wide responsibility and its helpful for a UFC member to serve as a liaison to keep urban forestry issues front and center.

Urban Forestry Report – Jenn Cairo, City Forester

- Three new members of the Urban Forestry Commission will be announced soon. Their four-year terms will begin March 1, 2018.
- Staff updates include the following:
 - Nik Desai is now a Botanic Specialist II,
 - Daniel Gleason, currently a Development Tree Inspector, is moving into the Botanic Specialist I position,
 - Eric Smith has been promoted from Arborist I to Arborist II,
 - Rick Bunch's temporary position as an Arborist I is now permanent,
 - UF is in the process of hiring for two vacant Arborist III positions,

- Alicia Bashir joined UF as a sponsored intern through the Tualatin Riverkeepers Urban Forestry Job Training Program.
- Jenn provided updates on the status of the Street Tree Task Force:
 - Jamie Waltz, who had been identified as the facilitator of the task force, has accepted a new position outside of the City;
 - The process is currently underway to identify a replacement for Jamie's role.
- Streets 2035 (PBOT Tool Kit)
 - PBOT is currently in the process of developing and issuing the RFP for this project.
- Mayor's Fast Track Development Permit Pilot
 - All of the permitting infrastructure bureaus (BES, PBOT, Water Bureau, and BDS) are working at the division manager and director level to speed up the permitting process.
 - Several projects have been identified as pilots for the proposed new system:
 - This has had an impact on workload as staffing resources have had to be dedicated to this project.
- Meryl: Does UF have evaluation mechanisms in place for determining the effectiveness of the partnership with the Tualatin Riverkeepers?
 - Jenn: Will check with Angie as she supervises this group.
- Daniel: Will the Mayor's pilot project will result in a reduced public comment period?
 - Jenn: No, and those periods are set by City Code.

Urban Forestry FY19 Budget Development – Jenn Cairo, City Forester

The Mayor has directed general fund bureaus to propose cuts of 5%. PP&R Director Mike Abatté asked for divisions to develop 7.5% cut packages to provide more options.

- Jenn highlighted the Budget Advisory Committee's role in advising on the development of the Parks budget. Brian French served as the UFC's representative on the committee.
- Two Urban Forestry budget packages have been accepted by the BAC and will be included:
 - Cut Package: Urban Forestry will begin to bill PBOT, ODOT, and Trimet for tree emergency response in the Right-of-Way
 - Add Package: Increase development fees (from 44% to 85% cost recovery) to hire three Tree Inspectors, one Tree Tech, four Arborists (one crew), and convert a Senior Administrative Specialist position from limited term to permanent. This package would also shift responsibility for emergency response from the Tree Inspectors to Arborists.
- UF also had a cut package which reduced the Education & Science group by one FTE. This package was not accepted by the BAC.
- Brian French presented additional details from the Budget Advisory Committee:
 - The Education & Science staff reduction would have impacted Neighborhood Tree Stewards, Youth Conservation Crew, tree inventory, and other programs. This reduction would have significantly impacted Urban Forestry and it was not supported by the BAC.
 - The proposal to bill other agencies for emergency response in the right-of-way was the BAC's second most preferred package.
 - The BAC noted that PP&R has made many cuts over the years and the packages under consideration now reflect "muscle and bones" rather than "fat."
 - Meryl: Do other bureaus accommodate financial hardship when imposing permit and other fees?
 - Jenn: Yes, most other bureaus have some sort of low-income program. They usually apply more to non-development than development fees.
 - Barbara: Is the city in a trend of promoting more of a user-pays system?
 - Jenn: Generally, yes, this is increasing, particularly in Parks & Recreation. While the services PP&R provided have historically been

provided by general fund, increasing fees has become necessary to make up for ongoing cuts.

- Damon: Are any System Development Charges directed to Urban Forestry?
 - Jenn: SDCs can only be used for developing new infrastructure. PP&R uses them to build new parks to meet increased demand. They cannot be used for maintenance of current assets.
- Catherine: Will the UFC have a conversation about the policy implications in the Education & Science budget?
 - Vivek: We should find time to come back and have this conversation in the future.
 - Catherine: Until now, without a Science, Policy, and Outreach Supervisor, the direction of those efforts and how they relate to policy has been difficult to capture.
- Gregg: Would it be possible to see the entire PP&R budget?
 - Brian will send the link after the meeting.
- Daniel: It would be helpful if the PP&R budget is accompanied with a memo that details what impacts these cuts will have on services.

Policy Committee Update – Daniel

- The policy committee discussed the Street Tree Task Force and noted the need for a UFC representative to still be identified.

Better Housing By Design – Bill Cunningham, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

- This project comes on the heels of the Comprehensive Plan and focuses on improving outcomes in multi-dwelling zone;
- The focus is outside of the Central City, primarily in East Portland.
- Bill provided a presentation on the Better Housing by Design concept. Additional materials and the full presentation are available on the UFC website:
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/75618>
- Meryl: Very impressed with the ideas and creativity of the proposal. Did the idea for the transfer of density credits in exchange for tree preservation come from BPS or the development committee?
 - Bill: BPS heard from community members that tree preservation was important to them. Also heard from developers that majority are choosing to pay into the Tree Planting and Preservation Fund rather than preserving the trees. BPS came up with the transfer concept in order to preserve more trees because the current tools are not working.
- Catherine: When transferring tree preservation credits to different development sites, can this be aligned with existing infrastructure which reduces available space for trees to ensure the density credit is applied primarily where space for trees is limited? Additionally, is there a potential for conservation easements in this plan?
 - Bill: Yes, this is among the opportunities which will be discussed.
- Daniel: Exchanging space for trees for green roofs can sacrifice the air quality improvements offered by trees. Concerns about the implications of this aspect of the plan.
 - Bill: The balance between eco roofs and space for trees is a focus. The allowance for eco roof is not 1 for 1 – developers will be required to offer 4 square feet of eco roofs for each square foot of open space. Also, Title 11 tree density requirements would still be applicable.
- Jenn: Clarified that there is no requirement for developers to retain trees. Title 11 only requires that developers pay into the Tree Planting and Preservation Fund for required trees not retained.

- Damon: In terms of parking, allowing higher building heights to accommodate parking garages is preferable to surface lots. Encourages BPS to require permeable paving to allow space for tree roots.

Meeting Minutes Review and Approval

- Motion to approve minutes as amended by Damon. Greg seconded the motion. Motion pass unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 10:15 AM