



Tree Board – Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Town Council Chambers, Town Hall

The Tree Board held a regular meeting on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Town Council Chambers, 30 S. Main Street, Weaverville, N.C.

1. Call to Order

Present: Chairman Russ Kantner, Pauline Griffith, Inger Stallmann Jorgensen, Jeff Colavecchia, Caroline Lord, Gary Harmon, and Greg Sanfilippo.

Absent: Caleb Hudson

Staff Present: Tamara Mercer, Town Clerk

2. Adopt or Amend Agenda

Without objection, Chairman Kantner moved to adopt the agenda.

Carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

Without objection Ms. Stallmann Jorgensen moved to approve and adopt the meeting minutes of November 6, 2024.

Carried unanimously.

4. Code Chapter 32, Species List- trees and vegetation

- 4.1 General discussion began wherein Ms. Griffith questioned why perennials were not included in the preferred species list as there are

invasive perennials. Further discussion regarding vines such as winter creeper and other invasive species and grasses sold at garden centers were noted.

In response to Mr. Harmon's question regarding not allowing invasive species to be planted, Ms. Mercer stated that as far as code enforcement, fines, or penalties, these were not defined in the code, and as such would need to be addressed by the Attorney's Office and Planning Department for code enforcement. The purview of the Tree Board as a recommending body, is to revise the species list with a favorable recommendation presented to Town Council. It is upon the Town Council to consider the adoption of an updated species list.

Also noted by Ms. Griffith was the need for a comprehensive species list addressing soil types, sub straights, dampness, shade, loams, slopes and native bird friendly plants versus non-native types.

Mr. Harmon noted the Red Oak were adversely impacted by the Helene storm and due to climate change. Grant opportunities maybe found at www.retreet.org and United Way, stated Ms. Griffith.

After further deliberations, Ms. Griffith volunteered to research the species list categories for: vines, small, medium and large shrubs, and ferns. Ms. Stallmann Jorgensen volunteered to work on the grasses, sedges, and ground cover species list. Mr. Harmon volunteered to concentrate on the trees categories for small to medium and medium to large trees.

Recommendations to be discussed at the January 8, 2025, Tree Board meeting.

Mr. Harmon pointed out his notes in the excel spreadsheet for the changes of species names, website links notations, and possible removal of non-native species on the list.

5. Prioritize section of Town to conduct Tree Inventory

- 5.1 Chairman Kantner reviewed the importance of conducting the tree inventory especially in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene's destruction of the tree canopy. Discussion ensued regarding the Main Street Nature Park, which is contiguous to the Town Hall facility, invasive plants, and public education, and the pollinator garden in the Nature Park which is maintained by the Garden Club.

Ms. Stallmann commented that Lake Louise Park should have more shade trees to enhance the summer environment creating a more positive impact.

Chairman Kantner polled the board members as to their priority focus and there was general consensus to begin at Lake Louise Lakeshore Drive with the Phase I location from the waterwheel to the Outdoor Recreation courts and Phase II inventory would be the Town's property from Lake Louise to the open space past the Public Works facility on Quarry Road.

Ms. Lord also suggested that the inventory surrounding Lake Louise would include tree plaque identifiers. An emphasis on conducting the tree inventory includes identifying heritage trees.

Mr. Colavecchia volunteered to draft an RFQ (request for quote) for contracting for a tree inventory, the deliverables to include methodology specs, and GIS mapping locations. The tree survey within the defined area should include size, species, location, and overall health and condition of the Town's trees.

6. Other Business- Board member appointment re-visit

Ms. Mercer reviewed the timeline for a possible Tree Board appointments at the upcoming Town Council's January meeting in 2025.

Chairman Kantner noted that February 24 - 28 is native species week, and this information will be dispersed in order to educate the public through the Town's social media posts. Upcoming seminars will also be posted in the social media accounts for December which address the topics of conservancy and forest recovery in the wake of Hurricane Helene, notably a December 18th seminar by EcoForesters.

7. Adjournment

- 7.1 There being no further business, Chairman Kantner adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.



Tamara Mercer, Town Clerk