

**City of Apalachicola Tree Committee  
Meeting Summary  
January 24, 2023, at 3 p.m.  
Battery Park Community Center**

1. Attendees.

Sam Berkheiser, Committee member,  
Scott Davis, Committee member,  
Pam Richardson, Committee member,  
Rebecca Stafford, Committee member, and  
Dennis Winterringer, Committee chairperson and preparer of summary for this meeting.

2. Summary of Committee's December 20, 2022, meeting (prepared by Ms. Richardson).

The Committee adopted without revision the draft summary for the December 20, 2022, meeting.

3. Addition of Tree Committee member.

At its January 3, 2023, meeting, the City Commission unanimously appointed Rebecca Stafford to the Committee.

4. Recap of January 14, 2023, Arbor Day event; suggestions for next year.

At the Scipio Creek farmers market on January 14, 2023, the Committee held another successful Arbor Day event.

The Committee handed out 71 free trees supplied by the Florida Forest Service.

- 20 pond cypresses,
- 15 sand live oaks,
- 15 myrtle oaks,
- 11 sweetbay magnolias, and
- 10 longleaf pines.

With the exception of 2021 when a public event was not held because of the Covid pandemic, the Committee has for several years given away trees at the farmers market as its Arbor Day observance. In consideration of whether to do something different next year, the consensus of members is that this event is one the Committee should continue. But a few months before January 2024, the members think it's worth discussing whether to also do something else (such as planting a tree with an ABC School class on the school grounds and involving a science teacher to teach about trees in the time leading up to the planting).

5. Committee's tree plantings – hopefully this coming weekend.

The Tree Committee wants to plant the four live oaks donated by We Love Land Studio (Sam and Liz Berkheiser) at City and Franklin Squares (two in each location). Mr. Winterringer will

meet with Rhett Butler, City of Apalachicola water and sewer department, to ensure that there are not water irrigation lines or buried electrical lines in the four locations of the proposed tree plantings.

Mr. Davis made arrangements to obtain an unspecified number of sand live oaks that Wakulla County did not give away at its Arbor Day event. The Tree Committee wants to plant these trees at City-owned Chestnut Street Cemetery. Mr. Winterringer will talk to Shan Raetzloff, chairperson of the Apalachicola Area Historical Society cemetery committee to ensure that she agrees.

For all three sites, Mr. Winterringer will contact City Manager Travis Wade and get his permission before the trees are planted.

Assuming Mr. Winterringer meets with Mr. Butler and obtains Mr. Wade's permission this week, the Committee will plant the trees this coming Saturday, January 28 at 9 a.m.

#### 6. Landscaping plan for Lafayette Park.

Tree Committee members Sam Berkheiser, Scott Davis, Rebecca Stafford, and Dennis Winterringer attended the Park and Recreation Committee's (PRC's) January 24 meeting where PRC discussed its intent to develop plans for four to six parks. City Commissioner Despina George and City Manager Travis Wade attended.

As has been previously discussed by this Tree Committee and with PRC, the Tree Committee wants to develop a tree planting plan for Lafayette Park. Prior to the meeting, Mr. Winterringer:

- Talked to Marie Marshall whose husband Willoughby prepared a plan for the park's infrastructure in 2010.
- Located a paper copy of Willoughby's plan set that City planner Bree Robinson had and brought it to the meeting.
- Obtained through Ms. Marshall a landscaping plan that Tallahassee Nurseries prepared in 2011 for the Avenue B entrance to the park, the area around the gazebo, and along the walkway paralleling the bay.

At the PRC meeting, Mr. Winterringer handed out copies of Tallahassee Nurseries landscaping plan and talked about the Tree Committee preparing a proposed tree planting plan for Lafayette Park.

The first step in the Tree Committee preparing a Lafayette Park tree planting plan is to develop a digital base map showing park boundaries and the locations of walkways and the gazebo. Mr. Winterringer will contact former City planner Cindy Clark to find out whether she knows of any digital maps that were created at her time of employment. Mr. Davis will contact the Franklin County Property Appraiser's Office and find out whether it has digital maps of the park in its Geographic Information System and whether the Committee can access and use the data in them.

After creating the base map, the next step will be the preparation of a map layer showing the locations of existing trees by species and diameter at breast height.

7. New Code Enforcement Officer.

A new Code Enforcement Officer starts on January 30.

One of his duties is to issue tree removal permits.

Mr. Winterringer will invite him to the next Tree Committee meeting.

8. Encroachment ordinance.

The City Commission is reportedly going to prepare an ordinance that prohibits certain activities, including tree plantings, in the city-owned rights of ways along streets. When public meetings are held, Tree Committee members should attend and comment.

9. Tree cutting at Chestnut Street Cemetery.

In June 2016, a preservation plan for the City-owned Chestnut Street Cemetery was prepared. In conjunction with that plan, a certified arborist in March 2017 prepared a report on the health of each of the 171 trees within the cemetery, the likelihood that they would fall, and, if they did, what they would damage (monuments, fences, people, and utilities). The arborist recommended that 29 trees be removed because they were rated extreme or high risks to cause damage.

As requested by the Apalachicola Area Historical Society (AAHS), the City in August 2022 hired a tree contractor that removed six extreme- and high-risk trees and two sabal palms apparently killed by lethal bronzing disease.

In a tree removal application, AAHS now asks the City to remove seven more high-risk trees and to trim dead limbs from two additional high-risk trees. If the trimming reveals that these two trees are hollow or structurally unstable, AAHS asks that they also be removed. These nine trees are marked with two ribbons wrapped around their trunks.

10. Next meeting.

February 21, 2023, 3 p.m., at the Battery Park Community Center.