

City of Apalachicola Tree Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 19, 2018, 3:00 PM
Battery Park Community Center

1. Attendees:

Holly Brown, Committee Member

Anita Grove, City Commissioner

Greg Harris, Superintendent of Public Works

Pam Richardson, Committee Member and note-taker for this meeting

Dennis Winterringer, Committee Chairperson

Absent: Wilbur Bellew, Code Enforcement Officer

Robert Seaborn, Committee Member

2. Discussion with Greg Harris, Superintendent of Public Works, regarding the current practice of trimming the City's palm trees. Mr. Winterringer explained that the current method of trimming the palms so that they look like the tops of pineapples does not promote good tree health or resistance to hurricane damage. Mr. Winterringer said that the correct way to prune palms is to leave six to eight (rather than two to four) fronds in the 9-to-3 position rather than 10-to-2 position. Mr. Harris agreed to relay this information to his crews, saying also that they will trim a few palms according to these new directions and then phone a tree committee member for approval before continuing their palm pruning. Mr. Winterringer also brought up the issue of weed-whacking at the base of palm trees which is damaging the trees. Mr. Harris informed the committee that he is aware of the problem and that the inmate crews have been told to cease and desist from this practice.

3. The Committee adopted the draft summary for the Committee's May 29, 2018 meeting (prepared by Ms. Brown).

4. Draft, revised Tree Ordinance.

Before jumping into specifics, Mr. Winterringer asked Ms. Grove if she spoke with Sam, the arborist, about tree trimming along the highway's right of ways. Ms. Grove did not recall getting any concrete information about this from Sam. Regarding trimming done by Duke Energy, Ms. Grove thinks that we can easily set up a meeting with Danny Collins, Duke's community liaison person whose office is in Monticello; establishing a relationship with Mr. Collins will help us to reach an agreement regarding tree trimming procedures.

Regarding a bit of old business, Mr. Winterringer got the name of the Senior Forester at the FL Forest Service in Crawfordville: Ryan Hensel. Mr. Hensel is now aware that we'd like to get sapling trees for our Arbor Day celebration next year. Dennis will contact Mr. Hensel again once Mr. Hensel has his budget for next year (sometime in July).

The Committee then went over the proposed land development code revisions concerning tree protection starting at "B" on page 3 where we left off at the last meeting. All changes were agreed upon by the committee members through page 8. Regarding Utility Easement Training (bottom of page 6-top of page 8), Mr. Winterringer explained that items 1 through 6 were pulled from state law and that items 7 through 12 are already, basically, in the city's ordinance. (Item #2 underscores the need for us to set up a meeting with Danny Collins [see above]).

The Committee then moved on to a discussion of proposed penalties for tree protection violations. Ms. Grove said that we should be sure to use language in our tree removal permit application that explains the purpose of the City's tree ordinance.

The Committee agreed that we should develop some penalty options prior to a tree ordinance workshop. A flat rate was discussed as one option; we also resurrected Ms. Grove's earlier idea of a \$25 fee for removal of one to five trees, a \$50 fee for removal of five to ten trees, etc. Ms. Grove also suggested the possibility of a "tree mitigation plan" using the money collected from removal fees – perhaps even hiring a landscape architect to come up with such a plan. She reminded us of Tallahassee's urban canopy plan, suggesting that the same idea could work for Apalachicola.

The Committee also agreed that an after-the-fact tree removal permit should levy a twice-the-fee amount on the applicant.

Mr. Winterringer said he would try to set up July 9 as a date for the tree ordinance workshop before the Planning and Zoning Board meeting. The Committee's next regular meeting is scheduled for July 17, 2018 at 3PM.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM.