

**KNOXVILLE TREE BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 5, 2023**

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The meeting was called to order by Dan Steinhoff at 8:32 am. Other board members present were Bob Graves, Gordon Coker, Charles Batey, Jessica Rodocker, Kelsey Jones, Kayla Stuart, Sylvia McLaurin, and Elaine Reed.

Ex-Officio members present were Kasey Krouse, Lee Rumble, Sophie Carter, Diane Warwick, Tim Hester and Melanie Overall.

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**Action Items for January**

- Bob Graves motioned to approve December minutes, Second by Jessica Rodocker. Approved, none opposed.

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**City Update with Kasey Krouse**

- Kasey introduced the City's new Urban Wilderness Coordinator, Wes Soward. He updated everyone on what was going on at Baker Creek.
- Everyone introduced themselves to the new board members present, Sylvia and Elaine.
- The launch party on December 14<sup>th</sup> was a success, with about 80 attendees.
- The first steering committee meeting is next week. Advisory group will be formed. Kasey would like to see the Tree Board heavily involved, along with 60-80 community members. There will be 3 advisory divisions: trees, people and community connections. The steering committee will solicit input from 40-50 groups, ex. Tim/City Greenways, Wes/Appalachian Bike Club, Gordon/neighborhood meetings. We also want to make sure we include underserved and minority communities as well. Homebuilders Association was at the launch party. They may have broad and very specific wants in different areas.
- Knoxville-treeplan.org is the website. Kayla asked if we would advertise via social media. This will need to be discussed at steering committee meeting. Kelsey stated the Sierra Club also attended the launch party.
- We are wrapping up the launch phase and the data phase is starting to collect information until May. End of April is target for community meetings, etc.
- Kayla asked about enforcing ordinances. Kasey stated that developers will put up bond to keep landscaping alive for certain period of time. We would like to ask for funding and enforcement.
- There was question about enforcement on private property. Will these areas be discussed with advisory board? Easements vary here. Dan feels like there will be a lot of pushback. The consultant's job is to help funnel down. We will learn over the next few months what people want. Diane stated the main focus will be on public areas and to try to educate private owners, which will be better than trying to regulate.

- Charles Batey asked about debris left on side of street from commercial tree companies. Kasey said the City did implement a couple of times this year for them to clean it up. Tim stated that we don't have the funds to enforce the ordinance, we can only ask the violator. 311 calls come in for cleanup, but we don't know the source without catching someone in action. For the bonding process, there was damage at 1509 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The bond will allow recuperation for the damage to the trees.
- Moving forward with planting season and are about 15% complete. Upcoming plantings: 1/21 Northwest Greenway, 2/11 planting and 2/25 on N. Peters Road.
- The volunteer forestry course is going on, with the first week being conducted last night. There were 30 attendees. Nick from Cortese will be at the next one. Charles Batey volunteered to help with future ones.
- Kayla will take on Education Chair position, with the help of Gordon. Charles stated he has been communicating with Debbie Sharp about Trees Knoxville. He also felt this position should be treated as outreach. Would like to see communication on a monthly basis. We could have questions geared towards Kasey or Tree Board answered in Debbie's newsletter. Publishing the questions and answers would be better than just emailing the answer. Charles had not started this yet. Kayla suggested Google forms for the questions. Gordon suggested a "Did you Know?" section as well. Gordon and Kayla will get together for ideas. Can the City create an email for questions? There are emails for greenways, etc. That way, when someone else takes over, the email is generic. Kasey will check on getting an email set up.
- Canopies for Campuses: Kasey hit the highlights on it. There are 4 campuses per year targeted for plantings. Trees Knoxville creates the plan and submits to the school. The mayor wants the schools more involved in the plan. The superintendent reached out to Kasey yesterday. We will need to work around cameras and underground utilities. Jessica asked if the school board members could offer more input. Schools are not public spaces like parks. Sylvia is a town Hall East member and they are pursuing playground renovations. Schools have to raise their own funds for new equipment and mulch. Larson Jay has address the school board twice to get adequate equipment. We need to do anything we can to assist the school board. Kids need to be outside and need good equipment. Diane said to encourage schools to apply for the TAEP grant. It is a 50/50 match for equipment. The school would be responsible for maintaining where the grant money is spent.
- Bob – knoxvilletreeplant.org – there is an online tab "get involved" for anyone to fill out. Feedback from the launch party was very encouraging.

#### **Ex-Officio Reports and Others**

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- Tim Hester stated there was tree vandalism at Baker Creek. Staking and bagging were removed and some trees broken.

- Elaine Reed said KUB is working in Chilhowee and Rocky Hill areas. Colonial Hills is next.
- Kayla said Sam Adams called her about UT Arbor Day on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Does not have time or location. She will send out information when she receives.
- Diane Warwick said the state has grant money to help with invasives. Hannah Hollowell is over that grant.
- Dan stated to look at plant zones when buying plants. Some of our plantings aren't ideal for this zone and the weather has killed them.
- Jessie Hillman emailed at meeting time Amy Brooks is the new Knox County Planning Director

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 am.

### Upcoming Events

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- February 2<sup>nd</sup> - Tree Board Meeting at the Public Works Service Center at 8:30am
- March 3<sup>rd</sup> – UT Arbor Day, time/location TBD
- March 11<sup>th</sup> - Weed Wrangle at Citizen's Cemetery and TBD Knox County Park sites - 9:30-12:30