

Fairfax County Tree Commission  
Electronic Meeting Format Minutes  
Thursday, January 5, 2023  
Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936  
Participant Access Code 224765

Call to Order:

Chair Speas called the January 5, 2023 meeting of the Fairfax County Tree Commission (Tree Commission) to order at 7:01 p.m. via Electronic Meeting.

Chair Speas read the electronic meeting requirements to determine the following: a quorum is present, that all members' voices are audible to each other, that there is a need to conduct Tree Commission business electronically because of the county emergency orders for Covid-19, that the public has been notified of how to access the meeting, and that matters on the agenda are necessary to the discharge of the Fairfax County Tree Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. All motions required by the Tree Commission Policy for All-Virtual Public Meetings were made and passed unanimously.

Roll Call:

Present:	Cindy Speas, Chair	At-Large
	Elaine Kolish, Vice-Chair	Mt. Vernon District
	Jeanne Kadet	Braddock District
	Bob Vickers	Dranesville District
	Jessica Bowser	Franconia District
	Bret Leslie	Hunter Mill District
	Cory Suter	Springfield District (joined late/audio could not be verified)
	Perry Rhodes	Sully District
	Kevin Holland	Mason District
	Rick Healy	EQAC
	Jerry Peters	NVSWCD
	Brenda Frank	VA Cooperative Extension
	Jim McGlone	VA Department of Forestry
Absent:	John Burke	FCPA
Vacant:		Providence District

Chair Speas called a quorum and began the meeting by recognizing **attending staff:**

Brian Keightley, Director Urban Forest Management Division (UFMD); Fairfax, VA  
Patrick O'Brien, UFMD Forest Pest division; Burke, VA  
Joan Allen, UFMD Forest Pest Management; Manassas, VA  
Hugh Whitehead, UFMD; Lovettsville, VA  
Maria Harwood, UFMD; Great Falls, VA

Chair Speas, following the publicly posted agenda, deferred without objection the business

portion of the meeting until after the Friends of Trees Awards presentation.

**Friends of Trees Awards:**

Chair Speas introduced Supervisor Dan Storck, Mount Vernon District and Chair of the Environmental Committee of the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Storck expressed his appreciation to the Tree Commission for inviting him to speak, as he himself is a tree champion, and because he was delighted that four of the awards were going to projects and individuals in the Mount Vernon District. He mentioned that the awardees for the Mount Vernon District were Cathy Ledec (former Tree Commission Chairman and tree warrior), Megan McCullough and Dan Malone for the Hollin Hall stream restoration project, Fort Hunt Elementary School and Walt Whitman Middle School. He was grateful to all the winners for the multitude of hours they put in to preserve, protect and plant trees.

Chair Speas then explained the criteria for the awards and shared a presentation about each of the winners and their outstanding work (See PDF attachment to Minutes). Following the presentation, each awardee was invited to give short remarks. Each did so, expressing their appreciation for the award.

**Business Meeting commenced at 8:04 pm:**

**Public Comment Period:**

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

**Approval of the November 3, 2022 and December 1, 2022 Minutes:**

At the December meeting, in the interest of time, the chair asked commissioners with suggested revisions to the November meeting minutes to send them to her. The draft December minutes were circulated before the meeting in Word so that commissioners could suggest edits in advance. Pursuant to Robert's Rules of Order, the chair went over each change in each month's minutes. Mr. Keightley shared each of the documents with edits on his screen. Additional changes were made on the spot.

*Commissioner Suter then moved the adoption of the November 3, 2022 minutes as revised. Commissioner McGlone seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor, no abstentions.*

*Commissioner Vickers then moved the adoption of the December 1, 2022 minutes as revised. Commissioner Peters seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor, no abstentions.*

**UFMD Director's Update — Director Brian Keightley:**

- He provided a status report on his five unfilled positions.
- "Street Tree Canopy Credit and Alternative Planting Standard" update will be presented at the Feb. 7 BOS meeting.
- He noted the new bamboo ordinance went into effect on January 1, 2023. The Department of Code Compliance is charged with enforcing the new ordinance, on a complaint basis. A new Director of Code Compliance is coming on shortly.
- He advised the Tree Commission that his department will help on matters to the extent

possible, using FOIA time lines as a guide, but does not have time to research information that is readily available through a google search.

- The new permitting system, PLUS, came out in November and has had some problems in transition.
- He reminded the Tree Commission that meeting minutes may be streamlined, per Robert's Rule of Order and that streamlined minutes are more readily prepared and reviewed. Some commissioners supported streamlined, rather than transcript like minutes, while the Chair and others noted that detailed minutes more effectively inform members who were not able to attend a meeting about what transpired. Also, detailed minutes may allow for better follow up and accountability. The discussion was tabled and will be taken up again at the February meeting.
- He advised us that the Tree Commission's memorandum to the Board of Supervisors on Linear Exemptions led to a letter from the Environmental Quality Advisory Council supporting the Tree Commission's recommendations.

### **Commissioner Announcements:**

- Commissioner Kolish reported on a presentation she had made to the Mount Vernon Council of Citizen's Association's Environment and Recreation Committee the night before. The committee was interested in how they could advocate for changes that would preserve more trees. Her presentation focused on the regulatory background that permits exemptions to tree preservation standards to allow developers to use the land as permitted by zoning ordinances.
- Commissioner McGlone stated that the Virginia Department of Forestry will be applying for new grant money that has been provided for in the recent Inflation Reduction Act bill passed by Congress, and he hopes it will be awarded so there is more money for community forestry efforts.
- Commissioner Vickers commented on the toll lanes expansion project in McLean near the George Washington Parkway where Virginia Department of Transportation has removed 100s of trees on the Virginia side of the American Legion Bridge.
- Commissioner Peters commented that there is interest in writing a history of highlights of the Tree Commission's accomplishments for its 50th Anniversary in 2023.

**Chair Speas adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.**