

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 21, 2021
Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936
Participant Access Code 224765

Call to Order

Chairwoman Ledec called the monthly meeting of the Fairfax County Tree Commission to order at 7:04 p.m. on October 21, 2021, via Electronic Meeting.

From the Chairman:

To conduct this meeting wholly electronically and to effectuate both the emergency procedures authorized by FOIA, the Fairfax County Tree Commission to make certain findings and determinations for the record. It's a bit cumbersome, so I ask you in advance for your patience.

Audibility of Members' Voices

First, because each member of the Fairfax County Tree Commission is participating in this meeting from a separate location, we must verify that a quorum of members is participating, and that each member's voice is clear, audible, and at an appropriate volume for all the other members. Accordingly, I am going to conduct a roll call, and ask each the Fairfax County Tree Commission member participating in this meeting to state your name and the location from which you are participating. I ask that each of you pay close attention to ensure that you can hear each of your colleagues. Following this roll call, we will vote to establish that every member can hear every other member.

See Roll Call Below

At this point, I will pass the virtual gavel to Commissioner Healy in the absence of the Vice-Chairman, so that I may be heard to make the requisite motion.

I move that each member's voice may be adequately heard by each other member of this the Fairfax County Tree Commission.

Commissioner Ledec, Commissioner Suter seconds, no opposition, motion carries.

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Need for an Electronic Meeting

Second, having established that each member's voice may be heard by every other member, we must next establish the nature of the emergency that compels these emergency procedures, the fact that we are meeting electronically, what type of electronic communication is being used, and how we have arranged for public access to this meeting.

Therefore, I move that the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic makes it unsafe for the Fairfax County Tree Commission to physically assemble and unsafe for the public to physically attend any such meeting, and that as such, FOIA's usual procedures, which require the physical assembly of the Fairfax County Tree Commission and the physical presence of the public, cannot be implemented safely or practically. I further move that this the Fairfax County Tree Commission may conduct this meeting electronically through a dedicated audio-conferencing line, and that the public may access this meeting by calling 1-888-270-9936 Conference Code: 224765. It is so moved.

Commissioner Ledec, Commissioner Beaty seconds, no opposition, motion carries.

Need to dispense with FOIA's Usual Procedures to Assure Continuity in Government/Continue Operations

Finally, it is next required that all the matters addressed on today's agenda must address the Emergency itself, are necessary for continuity in Fairfax County government, and/or are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and the discharge of the Fairfax County Tree Commission] lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. It is so moved.

Commissioner Ledec, Commissioner Speas seconds, no opposition, motion carries.

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PRESENT:

Catherine Ledec, Chair Mt. Vernon District – Alexandria, VA
Jim McGlone, Vice-Chair, VA Dept. of Forestry-Franconia, VA
Cindy Speas, At-Large, Falls Church VA
Jeanne Kadet, Braddock District- Annandale, VA
Robert Vickers, Dranesville District - Great Falls, VA
Bret Leslie, Hunter Mill District, Vienna, VA
Laura Beaty, Providence District, Fairfax, VA
Cory Suter, Springfield District, Fairfax Station, VA
Rick Healy, Environmental Quality Advisory Council, Annandale, VA
John Burke, Fairfax County Park Authority, Arlington, VA
Jerry Peters, NV Soil & Water Conservation District, Great Falls, VA
Brenda Frank, VA Cooperative Extension, Mclean, VA

ABSENT:

Jessica Bowser, Lee District
Karen Campblin, Sully District
Kevin Holland, Mason District

STAFF:

Brian Keightley, Urban Forest Management Division – Fairfax Station, VA
Tiffany Thrasher, Urban Forest Management Division -Culpeper, VA
Hugh Whitehead, Urban Forest Management Division

GUESTS:

Phil Church-Wildlife Rescue League-Citizen in Providence District
Phillip Latasa-Friends of Accotink Creek
Avril Garland, Member of Friends of Accotink

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Public Comment:

- Phil Church:
Question: What is the source to determine what tree cover is in the County?
Brian Keightley Answers with discussion: Ariel Imagery and iTree were used to collect information regarding the tree cover in the County. Seeking out another opportunity to acquire new imagery but having trouble with contract language.
- Phillip Latasa:
Presentation: Cinder Bed Road Bikeway Proposal.
- Avril Garland:
Comments made in the chat due to connectivity issues “On December 7th, Plant NOVA Natives launches its Tree Rescuers Program, a campaign to save some 6 million trees from being smothered by invasive vines by 2025.’

Approval of September Minutes

Discussion regarding September meeting minutes. September meeting minutes will be reviewed and approved at next meeting pending corrections put forth by Commissioners.

Commissioner McGlone, Commissioner Speas seconds, no opposition, motion carries

Tree Preservation & Planting Awards-What to do?

Discussion on any other approaches to take that will change how people see this award and perhaps change behaviors of developers when it comes to preservation and planting. Are the awards beneficial and making a difference in development behaviors in planning? If the program isn't influencing behaviors, is it worth the cost and Staff time? We need to see a tangible benefit to the community to continue to give this award on behalf of the taxpayer. Suggestion to have the Friends for Trees awards combined with Tree Preservation & Planting Awards.

Ideas:

Target HOA's to help change planting behaviors in communities

Semi Annual training course offering for developers to learn to properly plant and care for trees.

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CECAP Recommendations-Chair Ledec

Community Energy & Climate Action Plan

Lays out a multi sector greenhouse gas reduction strategies and identifies roles and responsibilities for State and Federal stakeholders. The final draft of the plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 14, 2021.

Trees are the only natural way to keep greenhouse gas emissions low. CECAP plan is 200+ pages. Supporting preservation, restoration and expansion of natural systems green spaces and soil quality. Chair Ledec feels that it is very important for the Tree Commission to support the Board of Supervisors' actions to approve the CECAP Plan to ensure that the implementation plan which is now being drafted by Staff and a consulting group prioritizes trees. This strategy can protect us from some of the adverse impacts of climate change. Chair Ledec points out that Strategy 12 of the plan is specific to trees-conserving and expanding canopy. Strategy 8 supporting sustainable land use however there is-no discussion of sustainable land use in the strategy.

The Tree Commission to prepare a letter for the Board of Supervisors in support for the CECAP Plan especially with the respect to the tree canopy items referenced in Strategy 12.

Active Fairfax Transportation Plan-Chair Ledec

New plan being out together by the Department of Transportation. The plan includes philosophies and goals related to health and active residence in the community as well as transportation. Chair Ledec encourages everyone to go online to view the plan and previous presentations of the plan.

Chair Ledec calls for a commissioner to volunteer to assist her to come up with a list of criteria and procedures that could be followed that are consistent with the best practices and environmental stewardship and define it. Commissioner Burke volunteered to assist with this effort.

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UFMD Directors Report-Brian Keightley

Working on Trees as a BMP in a Stakeholder group in Richmond. Asked to look at ways that Land Use can use trees as BMP and can categories be updated to reflect urban tree canopy.

Recommendations made to the General Assembly were:

- The runoff coefficients and the runoff production methods should include a fourth land use category called ‘Urban Canopy’ or something to that effect.
- Tree preservation could not be used as BMP because it would be double counting. Those trees are already factored into the runoff coefficient on the front end of the equation. However, the group felt that new trees can be used as a BMP for the reduction of total phosphorus.

UFMD current staffing issues. Brian presented a staff org chart to show vacancies in the office. Suspension on non-programmatic outreach (i.e., civic associations & HOA’s). Recommendations were made for UFMD for additional positions in each branch. Commissioner McGlone asks if the Tree Commission can help with a recommendation of support for UFMD for additional resources (positions).

Commissioner McGlone moves for the commission to write a letter in support of the annual budget requests for UFMD, Commissioner Speas seconds, all in favor, none opposed. Motion carries.

No Spotted Lantern Fly located in Fairfax County as of meeting.

Commissioner Activities

Commissioner Speas-BOS passed a matter to support the Plant NOVA tress project for the planting of trees in the northern Virginia area and specifically directed the office of Public Affairs to work with the organizations to get the message out to encourage tree plantings.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

0910pm

Tree Commission Meeting Minutes

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