

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

Call to Order

Chair Speas called the November meeting of the Fairfax County Tree Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. on October 6, 2022, via Electronic Meeting.

From the Chair:

First, to conduct this meeting wholly electronically and to effectuate both the emergency procedures authorized by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, in compliance with Virginia FOIA, the Fairfax County Tree Commission must make certain findings and determinations for the record. I ask you for your patience.

Audibility of Members' Voices:

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. To do that, I am going to do a roll call, and ask each commission member participating tonight 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.

Roll Call - PRESENT

Cindy Speas, Chair, At-Large Falls Church, VA

Jeanne Kadet, Braddock District Annandale, VA

Robert Vickers, Dranesville District Great Falls, VA

Jessica Bowser, Franconia District, from car in Alexandria, VA

Kevin Holland, Mason District, Falls Church VA

Elaine Kolish, Mount Vernon District Alexandria, VA

Cory Suter, Springfield District, Fairfax VA and by phone

Perry Rhodes, Sully District, Centreville VA

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

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 (late comer, but could be heard well in discussions)

Brenda Frank, VA Cooperative Extension, McLean VA

Roll Call - ABSENT

Jim McGlone, Vice-Chair, Franconia VA

Bret Leslie, Hunter Mill District, Vienna VA

Laura Beaty, Providence District, Fairfax VA

At this point, I will pass the virtual gavel to Commissioner Rick Healy so that I may be heard to make three requisite motions.

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

Commissioner Vickers seconded the motion, all in favor, no abstentions, motion carried.

Need for an Electronic Meeting:

Second, I move that the Fairfax County Tree Commission certify that the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic makes it unsafe for the Fairfax County Tree Commission and the public to physically attend this meeting in person, and the usual procedures cannot be implemented safely or practically. As a result, I further move that the Fairfax County Tree Commission conduct this meeting electronically through a dedicated video- and audio-conferencing line, and that the public may access this meeting by calling 888-270-9936 and entering access code 224765, or using the Zoom link posted to the Fairfax County Tree Commission website.

Commissioner Burke seconded the motion, all in favor, no abstentions, motion carried.

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

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

Finally, I move that the Fairfax County Tree Commission certify that the matters on its agenda today relate to the COVID-19 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's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

Commissioner Holland seconded the motion, all in favor, no abstentions, motion carried.

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

Todd Nelson, UFMD, Forest Conservation Branch Chief, Alexandria VA

Hugh Whitehead, Urban Forest Management Division, Lovettsville VA

Joan Allen, UFMD Forest Pest Branch Chief, Manassas VA

Adam Lipera, UFMD, Forest Conservation Branch Chief, Haymarket VA

Maria Harwood, UFMD, Alexandria VA

Public Comment Period:

No members of the public were present.

Presentation: John Burke, FCPA Natural Resources Division and FCPA appointed member to the Tree Commission

Attached is John's slide deck of his Annual Report. In summary, this included the tenets or underlying principles of his division, adding a new tenet or goal (the Landscape Legacy program) thanks to budget increases, assessing established programs to meet these goals, managing the threats of deer over-browsing, invasives and pests, and fostering stewardship of volunteers.

In the post-presentation discussion, questions and comments included: whether there is budget funding to continue the park land surveys after they are completed

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

in another nine years; TC will need to monitor budget requests to start the surveys again; comparison data from ongoing surveys will be critical in making management decisions; TC will await requests from FCPA to support various budget requests that might include items like staffing needs or asking for funds for a robust bamboo removal program etc. It was noted that Natural Resources does not have funds to acquire land—another FCPA group is responsible for that, but it does provide natural resource assessments on property that is targeted for possible acquisition. It was also noted that Dranesville has a significant bamboo problem in the parks, and FCPA has recently focused its bamboo survey in that district.

Approval of the September 1, 2022 Minutes

Commissioner Vickers moved to approve the September Minutes. Commissioner Kolish seconded, all in favor, no abstentions, motion carried.

Old Business:

Presentation of 2021-2022 Annual Report:

Chair Speas indicated that one Commissioner had several questions. Together they made two edits and crafted two questions to go to staff and another Commissioner. Nothing substantively changed the narrative. Chair Speas thanked all the contributors and editors who made the final product better.

Commissioner Peters moved to approve the Annual Report including the final edits and answers to the two outstanding questions to writers. Commissioner Vickers seconded, all in favor, no abstentions, motion carried.

Chair Speas thanked the whole Commission for its work and noted that the Report will soon go to Director Keightley, who has seen and read it in its draft form and said that it is in good ADA shape. Chair Speas indicated that when it is finally sent to the BOS, we will be talking about each district Commissioner taking it personally to their appointing Supervisor. She suggested that we work on talking points as tools everyone can use in those discussions. The Chair was asked whether staff might have printed a limited number of copies so that a hard copy could be handed directly to the Supervisor, and maybe two or three could be left in the

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

office for other visitors and each Commissioner could have a hard copy for reference. She agreed to inquire on the topic.

Community of Practice meeting update:

Commissioner Kolish reported on the fall meeting of the CoP held September 28 via zoom. There were 26 attendees and a contracted facilitator. Two of our own members, Jeanne Kadet and Brenda Frank, presented an update on the new Fairfax Tree Stewards program. The first training class will be in January 2023. This should be of great assistance to the TC's mission. It was noted that Brian's presentation was about new contracts on acquiring and assessing tree canopy data. Some of that work may begin in late 2023 but most will be done in 2023. One project will be an assessment of whether the 10-year tree canopy requirements for development are working. There are still some contracts in procurement. He also noted that he has posted to hire a tree planting coordinator. The Chair added comments on the effectiveness, energy and excitement in the breakout rooms. OEEC's director Kambiz Agazi announced in a breakout room a new Tree Canopy planting program as part of the CECAP implementation plan. The Chair recommended that Tree Stewards talk with Dir. Agazi about partnering in that program. Chair Speas also noted that this spring is the end of the first one-year term of serving on the CoP Steering Committee. There are currently two Tree Commissioners doing that work along with two county agency representatives and 2 non-profit organizations, and she encouraged all to consider taking a turn next year. Commissioners asked to be included in meeting notes that will go out soon.

Tree Commission Response to the Urban Design Guidelines presentation from September:

Dir. Brian Keightly (UFMD) and Ellen Alster, Department of Planning and Development, Urban Center Section, presented a plan to establish a pilot program for developers who wish to plant street trees and receive canopy credit similar to what is already in Chapter 122 and the Public Facilities Manual for non-street trees. The results of their workgroup's recommendations, if approved by the BOS, would also be reflected in changes to the Urban Design Guidelines established for use in Commercial Revitalization projects. After presenting at the September Tree

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

Commission, the workgroup presented next to EQAC. EQAC members asked the Tree Commission if we could write a joint memorandum, and the Chair agreed that would be a good idea. The draft has been presented to all of you to read. That includes a chart with incomplete data awaiting staff response, but is designed to show the differences between current guidelines, what is happening in the Tysons area, and what changes the workgroup is recommending. Dir. Keightley has sent that to DPD for a response. There was discussion about whether or not the pilot's suggested changes are in fact authorized by the Tree Conservation ordinance which informs the Public Facilities Manual. The response was that whether it was authorized or not is a county Attorney decision, not a Tree Commission/EQAC decision and that we should go forward with sharing our concerns. There was also discussion and a motion about whether the TC-EQAC memo should ask the workgroup to delay their presentation to the BOS until more meetings with stakeholders could occur. We have been told there is no place in the current process for any public input. The TC, EQAC and the Environmental Committee of the Planning Commission are the only non-staff opportunities to offer input on these suggested changes. It was suggested that is all the stakeholder input that is required to change the UDGs.

Commissioner Suter moved to approve the joint TC-EQAC draft letter including any non-substantive edits after the EQAC vote on Wednesday, October 12.

Commissioner Vickers seconded, all in favor, no abstentions, motion carried.

Commissioner Kolish moved to ask the workgroup to delay reporting to the BOS until more stakeholders and citizens groups could be included in the discussion.

Commissioner Kadet seconded. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

New Business:

- Chair Speas: Linear Project Exemption letter discussion included a vigorous chat about whether or not to include stream restorations as an example. It was decided we would either include a positive example of how trees can survive this kind of project (either from Dranesville District or one of our Friends of Trees Award winner's project in Hollin Hills), or if not eliminate reference to stream restorations. There was considerable discussion about

Fairfax County Tree Commission
Electronic Meeting Format Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Toll Free Call in 1 888-270-9936 Participant Access Code 224765

what the PFM requires of linear projects and trees other than the regular tree protection zones and sediment controls required to protect trees. Staff indicated that PFM 12-303.1A is the relevant clause on this subject. The topic to research for the next draft is whether the PFM and Chapter 122 require trees to be preserved or replanted for linear projects, and not just require then nearby trees to be protected after a plan has been proposed. The TC asked the Chair to work on a draft for further discussion.

Announcements:

- Elaine Kolish reminded all of the Oak Decline webinar October 19 at 7pm.
- Cindy Speas announced an upcoming webinar jointly sponsored by the Maryland Department of Planning and the Smart Growth network on October 17, 1-2:30 pm. She will email all TCs with information on both items.
- Chair Speas announced that OEEC and TC have agreed to try to work together to plan a joint presentation of our recent awardees before the Board of Supervisors. She asked Jeanne Kadet to join her in that planning. Everyone will be kept apprised.
- Commissioner Vickers asked when we would be able to meet in person. Chair Speas responded that would happen when the county's emergency order is lifted.

Adjournment: 8:55 pm.