

**GRANTS PASS URBAN TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Minutes – October 11, 2021, 6:30 PM**  
**City Council Chambers**

**Committee Members:**

Doug Tripp, Chair  
Dan McBerty, Vice Chair - Absent  
Michael Holzinger - Virtual  
James Love  
Chris Rudd - Absent  
Nicole Kieffer - Virtual  
Barbra Villona  
David Renton

**City/Staff/Council Liaisons:**

Joel King (City Councilor)  
Tony Mecum (Urban Forester, Parks)

**Guests:**

Meredith Harris - Virtual

**AGENDA:**

**1. Roll Call:**

- a. Chair Tripp started the meeting at 6:30pm.

**2. Action Items**

- a. Heritage Tree Nomination Review & Recommendation
  - 1. Chair Tripp moved this action item to the beginning of the meeting to respect Meredith Harris's time. There were no objections.
  - 2. Urban forester reviewed the Heritage Tree program for the committee and then presented his staff report on the California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) that was nominated by its owner, Meredith Harris.
    - i. The tree met the Heritage Tree qualification process: it is of significant age, size, species, horticultural quality, and historical value.
    - ii. The tree's canopy is approximately 95 feet wide, and its age was estimated to be 250 years by a forest pathologist who visited the tree with the urban forester. The tree had very few health or structural issues and was determined to be in excellent condition. The tree is of species that is native to southwest Oregon.
- b. Meredith Harris addressed the committee, along with her husband Roy. Meredith stated that they purchased the property in 2003 and a neighbor suggested she remove the tree. An arborist was hired to consult Meredith and Roy. The arborist said the tree was not a hazard. The arborist worked with Meredith and Roy to get the tree honored as a Significant Tree in 2004 by the Urban Tree Advisory Committee.
- c. Chair Tripp thanked Meredith and stated his support for the tree's designation.

**MOTION/VOTE**

**Member Renton moved and Member Holzinger seconded the motion to recommend the California black oak at 1238 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Street as a Heritage Tree. The vote resulted as follows: "AYES": Chair Tripp, Members Love, Holzinger, Kieffer, Villona, and Renton. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Vice Chair McBerty and Member Rudd.**

**3. Introductions:**

- a. Member Kieffer introduced herself to the Committee, stating that she has lived in Grants Pass most of her life, and discussed her desire to be more active in addressing climate change.

- b. Member Renton introduced himself to the Committee and explained his history growing up in Grants Pass and stated his interest in natural resources, trees, and giving back to the community.
  - c. Member Villona introduced herself to the Committee and her desire to serve, including her interest in addressing climate change and promoting the numerous benefits of trees.
  - d. Member Love introduced himself to the Committee.
  - e. Chair Tripp introduced himself to the Committee and stated that he joined the Committee to give back to the community and to promote proper tree care.
  - f. Councilor King introduced himself to the Committee as the Council Liaison, along with his professional experience with the U.S. Forest Service.
  - g. Member Holzinger introduced himself to the Committee and stated that he has been on the Committee since approximately 2000.
  - h. Urban forester introduced himself to the Committee.
- 4. Items from Public:**
- a. None
- 5. Approval of Minutes:**
- a. Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2021.

#### **MOTION/VOTE**

**Member Love moved and Member Holzinger seconded the motion to approve the minutes as submitted. The vote resulted as follows: “AYES”: Chair Tripp, Members Love, Holzinger, Kieffer, Villona, and Renton. “NAYS”: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Vice Chair McBerty and Member Rudd.**

- 6. Action Items:**
- a. Heritage Tree Nomination Review & Recommendation – addressed near beginning of meeting (see 2a., above).
  - b. Planting Budget & Community Outreach
    - i. Councilor King reviewed current L.B. capital investment budgets and line items related to tree plantings. He also mentioned that tubestock trees have been offered through donation to the City for planting.
    - ii. Member Love recommended that the tubestock trees be planted in open areas, including the Salmon Parking Lot’s central landscape island, currently void of any trees. He stated that a Bigleaf Maple, which are native to Grants Pass, would work well.
    - iii. Chair Tripp proposed that City Council set aside money for a new planting project.
    - iv. Councilor King recommended this be part of the Strategic Planning process and therefore part of the Committee’s goals sent to Council.
    - v. Member Renton asked if the L.B. budgets are set up to carry over from one fiscal year to the next or if the funds go away (“use it or lose it”) at the end of the fiscal year. Councilor King stated that they carry over.
    - vi. Chair Tripp asked if the current L.B. capital project funds of \$26,000 are added each year or if this is a one-time amount that will run out. Councilor King recommended that the Committee address this with their Strategic Planning goals for Council to review. He stated that the L.B. funds are a one-time investment.
    - vii. Chair Tripp recommended that the Committee not recommend allocating the entire L.B. funds towards the new planting project because some of the L.B. funds are dedicated to the current Tree Canopy Program.

- viii. Urban forester was asked for his comments. He stated support for the project, but explained that his time is currently maxed/overstretched with current responsibilities and that a new planting program would require additional staff support.
  - ix. Councilor King discussed community outreach materials already created by the Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon State University that could be used/promoted by the Committee and City. These resources were shared by Member Rudd.
  - x. Urban forester informed the Committee that the City Administration stated that they wished Committees would share more information to be posted on social media. Committee members can send information and/or photos to the urban forester, who will then send to the City Recorder for posting.
  - xi. Committee discussed a possible outreach project involving tree tags that explain the benefits of trees. City Hall trees were discussed as a possible location for the project.
  - xii. Committee discussed preparing a spring tree walk for community outreach.
- c. Tree Preservation Policies
- i. Chair Tripp discussed the Tree Deposit of Article 11 of the Development Code and the need to increase the deposit to match current planting costs.
  - ii. Member Renton stated his support for the review of the deposit and a potential increase. Member Love shared similar support and explained how the deposit was originally set up. A member of the Committee at the time was influential in the lower-than-actual-cost deposit amount. Member Love explained how the current deposit compares to current planting prices. Current prices are approximately double the deposit amount. Irrigation costs would need to be assessed in the context that developments already require certain irrigation. The cost per tree would be approximately \$600 with irrigation already provided through the requirements of the Development Code.
  - iii. Councilor King and Member Villona summarized the consensus that the Tree Deposit should be based on actual planting costs. The intent of the deposit is not to punish developers but to ensure that trees are planted. Therefore, the deposit should reflect the costs of planting trees.
  - iv. Member Holzinger asked what the delivery costs were for trees. Urban forester said he would be able to report back in December after the next nursery delivery.
  - v. Chair Tripp stated support for doubling the current Tree Deposits for each zoning.
  - vi. Councilor King recommended that the Committee promote the education of tree benefits through the tree tags on trees in City Hall before making a motion to increase the Tree Deposit so that more people are aware of the benefits of trees ahead of new code language. Member Villona agreed with this strategy.
  - vii. Chair Tripp recommended that the tree tags be discussed at the next meeting under "Action Items."
- d. Stormwater Management Manual Review
- i. Urban forester stated that he shared the online link to the manual with the Committee. He said that the manual is a draft and Council has not yet reviewed or approved it. The draft is online for anyone to read.

- ii. Chair Tripp stated that the manual contains best management practices (BMPs) that relate to tree planting, preservation, and other tree-related activities.
- iii. Chair Tripp then asked for a progress report on the amendments to Articles 23 and 25. Urban forester gave a quick update that the Planning Division is currently working on the language and will send it to the Committee as soon as possible.

**7. Matters from Committee Members and Staff:**

- a. Councilor King praised the Committee on its work.
- b. Urban forester handed out copies of the Arbor Day Foundation Tree Board Handbook to the new members.
- c. Urban forester shared that the first Heritage Trees of Grants Pass will be celebrated on October 29. The event will involve the unveiling of the Heritage Tree plaque, along with remarks from the Mayor, Arden McConnell, Bernie Martin-Beck, and various community members.
- d. Member Love noted how much better Rogue River Highway is now that it is lined with street trees. This improvement was particularly noteworthy due to the highway's entrance into the city and how it promotes the beauty and character of Grants Pass for visitors.

**8. Future Agenda Building for Next Meeting**

- a. Planting Budget and Outreach
- b. Tree Preservation (Tree Deposit of Article 11)
- c. Tree Appraisal/Benefit Tags for City Hall
- d. Article 23 and 25 Text Amendment Update

**9. Adjournment**

- e. Chair Tripp moved and Member Renton seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:10pm.

**Next Meeting: November 8, 2021 at 6:30 PM**

*Minutes prepared by Tony Mecum, Urban Forester, Community Development & Public Works*