

**MINUTES**  
CITY OF BEAUFORT  
**TREE BOARD**  
December 15, 2011 3:15 pm  
**Planning Conference Room, City Hall – 1911 Boundary Street**  
Beaufort, South Carolina

In accordance with South Carolina Code of laws, 1976, Section 30-480(d), as amended, local media were duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

**Members present**

Barb Farrior, Chairman  
Derrick Wells, Vice-Chairman  
Jim Arnett

**Members absent**

William Waskiewicz

**Staff present**

Eliza Hill, Planning Department

Chairman Farrior called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

**RESEARCH GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNDERGROUNDING PROJECTS**

Ms. Hill suggested the board divvy up the research and go to Google with “grant opportunities” + “undergrounding utilities.” Ms. Hill said Chairman Farrior could direct staff to look for grant opportunities. Mr. Wells said he would do some preliminary research over the weekend and would share what he finds with Ms. Hill.

Ms. Hill said she had spoken to Will Saleeby, and he is close to completing conduit plans on the pilot projects.

Chairman Farrior asked about the SCE&G franchise fee on the Boundary Street project, and Ms. Hill said she hopes it might be available for other projects as well.

**DISCUSSION: PARKS AND TREE BOARD FORMATION**

Ms. Hill said Googling “Muni Code” + “the name of a city” will make available the tree board ordinances of that city. She offered the Atlanta Tree Board ordinance to the board; she suggested there might be language in it that they could incorporate into a Parks and Tree Board ordinance. Ms. Hill said the Penalties section might be of interest. Chairman Farrior reviewed the composition of the board in the Atlanta ordinance. Ms. Hill said the listing of what the Atlanta board does could be a good resource for determining what a newly constituted Parks and Tree Board would do.

Ms. Hill suggested that when Chairman Farris meets with Scott Dadson, Chairman Farris should know how many people the board would like to have serve on a Parks and Tree Board and what they would want the board's duties to be. Ms. Hill said they would make plans and yearly recommendations for the parks, overseeing the parks in the City of Beaufort.

Ms. Hill said part of the confusion is that the Tree Board thinks of itself as *just* a Tree Board, when they were once a Parks and Tree Board. There was some discussion of possibly reinstating the Tree Fund, and Ms. Hill said they could adopt the language from another ordinance when they tell council that they want to establish a city tree-planting fund. They would suggest sources of funding for the fund as well, e.g., citizen contributions, punitive fines, etc.

Mr. Wells expressed concern that broadening the board to include parks might be "a bigger door than we think it will be." He said they should "recommend this many people in these professions," and determine "the scope of work of this board." Mr. Wells said in a previous meeting's discussion, they had recommended 6-7 members, including an urban planner and an engineer. Mr. Wells said he can volunteer 1.5 – 2 hours a month to the board. Ms. Hill said they can work in such a way that it won't take a lot of time, i.e., assign each board member a park and have them make recommendations that will then go back to staff.

Mr. Arnett suggested meeting fewer times a year for longer periods of time. Ms. Hill said this was done before, but they didn't accomplish much. Mr. Arnett and Mr. Wells suggested longer quarterly meetings, perhaps with shorter monthly meetings.

Chairman Farris said when the Tree Board tackles 7.3, those will be longer meetings. Ms. Hill said when they do that, they should "divide and conquer" by taking various sections individually to consider changes, so as not to waste time. Chairman Farris said she prefers to have the input of others on all the sections. Mr. Wells asked what had triggered the decision to make modifications. Ms. Hill said there "were some old standards in there." There are already a lot of strike-throughs from Libby Anderson, Ms. Hill said, but nothing has been done since then. Chairman Farris said the input and words of three arborists would be valuable.

### **UDO SECTION 7.3**

Ms. Hill and Mr. Wells related a story of a recent incident that indicated the need for the ordinance to enforce mandatory mitigation if trees are taken out. Mr. Wells said they also need follow-up and fines that could then go into the Tree Fund. The matters under discussion to be added were tree planting / mitigation, penalties, and follow-up, it was agreed.

Mr. Wells said, overall, he finds the section to be "streamlined," but in regard to tree removal, in the five categories, there's no mention of making changes in accordance with "the industry standard." Ms. Hill clarified that he was suggesting that they add language saying that they will adhere to industry standards, and Mr. Wells agreed.

Ms. Hill suggested removing the word “topped” in a section on pruning, and there was general agreement. It was then agreed that they should add that “All pruning should adhere to ANSI standards.” Mr. Arnett said the punitive measures need to be scattered throughout the section “so that they keep seeing it.” Mr. Wells said if pruning is outside the standard for ANY reason, even in an emergency, there must be an impact fee. Doing so might get those doing the pruning to change their standards as well, he suggested. Mr. Wells also suggested that pruning permit fees could go into the tree-planting fund.

The board looked at page 2, “Existing Development” to decide whether to keep it or make recommendations. Ms. Hill commented that the word “avoid” should be changed to “prevent” in 3B.

Chairman Farris suggested inserting a phrase at 7.3 A pertaining to industry standards. Ms. Hill suggested that under 7.3, they “should add a blanket statement for the whole section.” Mr. Wells offered, “In accordance with the ANSI standard” should be added: “All direction provided herein in regard to tree care, shall be done in accordance with the ANSI standard.” Mr. Arnett said it should include “any tree issue,” not just “tree care.” It was decided to substitute “arboricultural practices” for “tree care,” so that it reads, “All direction provided herein regarding arboricultural practice, shall be done in accordance with the ANSI Z133 standards.”

Ms. Hill said on number 4, Tree Removal / Existing Development, it should say “A certified arborist must review any tree requested for removal.”

A discussion ensued about the diameter of trees that are to be preserved mandatorily. It should be reduced to 18” from 24”, it was agreed, wherever it’s referenced in the document.

Mitigation should be plugged in whenever there’s a breach of the agreement, Mr. Wells said. Ms. Hill said any violation should be referenced in one section for “Penalties.” The section and penalties will be decided on at a later point.

In the section titled Tree Removal / Waiver for Emergencies, “topped” was removed. Ms. Hill suggested another reference to making it “approved in writing by a certified arborist and the administrator.” Chairman Farris pointed out another place in this section where this should be reiterated.

Chairman Farris suggested revising a section on extreme hazard trees / waivers for emergencies. There was some discussion about trying to understand the intent of the section. Ms. Hill said its intent was unclear. Mr. Wells said it appeared to be a loophole. Mr. Arnett said they would have to add in “a certified arborist,” not have it just be “an administrator.” Ms. Hill said “administrator” probably should be totally taken out. Chairman Farris said they could say that “the requirements may be waived.” Mr. Arnett said they could say that the administrator could make the decision *in consultation with the certified arborist*, and Mr. Wells said it sounds like it’s intended to be in regard to an emergency situation in which they don’t have time to get an administrator or a certified arborist to the site.

It was agreed to delete the phrase “shall issue written findings” as it’s self-evident. In regard to intentional harm, the word will be changed to “will” from “may.” Landscaping was changed to “overall tree coverage of the site.” It was decided to change the lettered sub-heads to numbers.

In regard to “Criteria for reviewing applications for tree removal,” Ms. Hill said, the current text says “administrator” again, and for now, she said, she would include “a certified arborist” to ensure that it has more impact than “administrator,” which implies a government official who might not know any more than the party who wants the tree removed.

### **REVIEW MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 17, 2011 MEETING**

**Mr. Wells made a motion, second by Mr. Arnett, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Farris said for the next meeting, the board should review the language of the Atlanta ordinance. Mr. Arnett said he envisioned creating a 3-page document that could be handed to someone. “Keeping it simple to me is just the best thing,” he said. Chairman Farris and Ms. Hill agreed that it would be easier for people to understand the boundaries and penalties, and some people might not even apply for a permit when they see the consequences.

Ms. Hill suggested that to simplify it, they could have as categories “tree removal,” “pruning,” “transplanting,” and “planting” (with subheads “commercial,” “private,” and “parking lots”). Some species could be recommended for transplanting instead of just removal if it’s the right time of year and at the dictate of the administrator and certified arborist. Mr. Arnett said they can also remove the tree if they mitigate.

Ms. Hill offered an update on the removal of the hazard tree discussed at the last meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.