

MINUTES

CITY OF BEAUFORT

TREE BOARD

Thursday, August 25, 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

Derrick Wells, Vice-Chairman

Jim Arnett

William Waskiewicz

Staff present

Eliza Hill, Planning Department

Members absent

Barbara Farris

Mr. Wells called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Wells, second by Mr. Waskiewicz, made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 26 and July 6, 2011 Tree Board meetings as submitted. The motion to pass the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.

Mr. Wells, second by Mr. Waskiewicz, made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 28, 2011 Tree Board meeting. Mr. Wells noted that the minutes mistakenly said Mr. Wells would be asked to resign based on attendance; it should have been Darryl Snyder, not Mr. Wells. The motion to pass the minutes as amended passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: UTILITY UNDERGROUNDING

Ms. Hill showed an overview of maps to Mr. Wells and Mr. Waskiewicz, discussed the areas delineated in each, and reviewed the legend that showed costs, linear footage, number of trees and houses affected, etc.

She asked the board for input on Century Link, which has not responded to multiple requests for linear footage costs. Mr. Wells said they are “putting (the Tree Board) in a spot.” Ms. Hill said Hargray is \$30 per linear foot and Charter is \$12-\$13. Mr. Waskiewicz said they could do an average of the costs as an estimate for Century Link. Mr. Wells suggested taking the Hargray costs as “a worst case scenario” and include a notation in the cover letter that they are using

the highest quote in lieu of an actual quote from Century Link, knowing the cost will certainly be less.

The Tree Board will write the letter, and Ms. Hill said she has applicable dates to provide them with for that purpose. She reviewed the tree scouting information, which is handwritten, and suggested typing it up as an addendum to the packet for city council. Mr. Wells said he felt it would be worthwhile to do so.

In regard to streetlights, Ms. Hill said **Will Saleeby** recommended a figure of \$1000 per connection to homes. This would be the responsibility of the homeowner. It's not listed in the columns on the tables, but the number of homes is. Ms. Hill asked if she should note in the letter that there is that approximate cost to the homeowner, and Mr. Wells agreed that it would be appropriate to do so, as would any other information to help city council make its decision.

Ms. Hill said that at a meeting earlier in the week, Mayor Keyserling had asked the Forestry Commission representative about grant opportunities for undergrounding power lines for tree preservation. Though there were none available at this time from the commission, Ms. Hill said she is taking a preliminary look at other grant opportunities. Mr. Wells said that in order to proceed, the Tree Board needs to know that there is money in the coffers. Mr. Arnett said the Tree Board has done what it was assigned to do.

Ms. Hill said **Scott Dadson** had preliminarily reviewed a draft of the undergrounding package, which he approved of, and he told Ms. Hill to ensure that the Office of Civic Investment gets it to incorporate the information into the upcoming Sector Two and Three charettes.

Street lights from SCE&G are "free" but limited in style, and then the lease charge is \$27 per month per fixture in perpetuity, Ms. Hill said. If the light, pole, and base are purchased for \$2000, it's then \$10 a month for power, which, Ms. Hill said **Libby Anderson** had calculated, will pay for itself in three years. Mr. Wells said some areas may decided to keep poles and others wouldn't. The Point might pay the upfront costs for the poles. There was a general discussion of lights in various neighborhoods. Mr. Waskiewicz said *all* the potential costs should be on the same sheet, including the city's costs on street lights. Ms. Hill feels that if a neighborhood association says they want *everything* underground, the city should be able to dictate the light, so the city doesn't have to pay for it forever. Mr. Wells said The Point should pick its own poles, and that could be the style for the other neighborhoods that replace streetlights.

Ms. Hill asked the board's thoughts on the contents of the cover letter to council. She asked them to send her e-mails with suggestions. Mr. Waskiewicz said he could use a refresher about how the issue arose and city council's request that the Tree Board recommend which areas would be most important for undergrounding.

Size, condition, and quantity of trees in each area, Mr. Wells recommended, will determine which areas achieve higher priority. The Point, Ms. Hill said, is obvious, but they haven't

determined the order for other neighborhoods. Mr. Arnett said any neighborhood will be improved, regardless of which order they do them in. Mr. Wells said they can give city council the numbers of specimen trees in each area and let city council prioritize.

Mr. Arnett said when this happens, the positive feedback city officials will get will make them more likely to keep doing it. Mr. Wells said those in areas that aren't identified yet will want to know why their neighborhood wasn't included. Ms. Hill suggested that a city tree fund – separate from the General Fund – should be re-started to improve trees in the city of Beaufort.

Ms. Hill asked for suggestions in regard to how to get the answers she seeks from the cable companies; Mr. Arnett suggested that she find out who is high enough up to give her the answers and then ask Mayor Keyserling to ask for them.

PLAN NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 22, 2011

The Point property owners' association, Mr. Saleeby, Ms. Anderson, and possibly others will be in attendance, and Ms. Hill said the undergrounding packet will be completed by that time.

Mr. Wells requested that the meetings start at 3:00 p.m. instead of 3:15, and then there was discussion of changing the day of the week to Wednesday. LH said she would mail the board options for when the Planning conference room is available. .

Mr. Dadson stopped in for general discussion of the topic of undergrounding. Mr. Arnett said that there might be a different area of the city that is higher-profile than The Point in which to initiate the undergrounding program.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:36 pm.