

Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas
Tuesday, February 6, 2007 4:00pm
Park and Recreation Department Conference Room
Dallas City Hall

Attendees:

Michael Anderson, Peter Blanchette, Dick Coupe, Philip Erwin, Michael FitzGerald, Matt Grubisich, Steve Houser, Bryan Kilburn, Kurt Kretsinger, Eric Larner, David Marquis, Walter Passmore, Jeff Quinters, Luis Salcedo, Bill Seaman

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Steve Houser, at 4:04pm. The Chair noted there were name-plaques placed on the table at the room's entrance and for those individuals attending to please feel free to move from the overflow seating to a place at the table. Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed and the sign-in sheet was circulated. Mr. Houser asked those who were attending their first meeting to please introduce themselves. Eric Larner introduced himself to the committee. Mr. Larner is a member of the Dallas County Master Gardeners. Mr. Houser welcomed Mr. Larner and expressed his appreciation for his interest in the committee.

Mr. Houser apologized to any committee member who might be receiving multiple copies of emails. He stated that he thought the problem had been resolved, but had recently been informed some committee members were continuing to receive multiple email copies. The Chair noted that the minutes from the January meeting had been emailed to the committee attendees and were now available on the committee's website. Mr. Houser asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the January meeting. Being none, he asked for a motion to approve and a second. The motion to approve was made by Luis Salcedo and Michael Anderson made the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Chair recognized City Urban Forester, Walter Passmore, and requested a committee update on his activities. Mr. Passmore announced that the website, www.dallastrees.org, was now available to committee members and others interested in the committee's activities. He also stated that a volunteer might be needed to update the site. Mr. Passmore announced that Arbor Day 2007 was scheduled for April 19, at Reverchon Park, and in conjunction with the Mayor's Challenge. The focuses of this year's event emphasize the aspect of proper tree care. Invitations and the official proclamation were being prepared. Along with the climbing event, there would be a press conference for the media to interview the competitors and an opportunity to discuss the Urban Forest Advisory Committee. Harold Spiegel is working with Mr. Passmore to develop a theme for the Arbor Day event along with members of the Park and Recreation staff. The National Arbor Day Foundation has offered 100 trees to be planted as part of the event.

The Arbor Day discussions lead to the mention of the removal and planting of a number of trees along KATY Trail. Phil Erwin noted that the removal plans had not been reviewed by the city Arborist Staff. It was noted that the trees being removed were in the TXU easement and did not fall under the city's tree ordinance. Mr. Seaman requested that plans for KATY Trail be provided to Mr. Erwin, so that the city Arborist Staff could review the plans and have an opportunity to be fully informed on the project before they started receiving calls from the public. Dick Coupe noted that this would be a great opportunity to teach the public about the importance of planting the right tree in the right place.

The Chair then asked for Team Leader Reports. Mr. Kretsinger announced that he expected printed copies of the planting guide to be presented to the committee at the March meeting. He stated that after numerous, unexpected delays, the guide was ready for printing and that would be completed by the end of February.

Mr. Seaman asked that David Marquis update the committee regarding the Sustainable Development task force. Mr. Marquis stated that the committee was well represented on the

Sustainable Development task force, with five members of Urban Forest Advisory Committee attending the most recent meeting. The task force was still in the development stage and short-term goals and long-range goals were being discussed. Mr. Marquis stated that items that might affect the future of the urban forest would come from the task force to the team and to the full Urban Forest Advisory Committee for review.

The Chair announced that Chief Arborist for the City of Dallas, Michael Sultan, had resigned to take a position in the private business sector and that City Arborist, Philip Erwin, has been appointed Acting Chief Arborist. Mr. Houser congratulated Mr. Erwin plus welcomed him to serve on the committee. Attending the meeting with Mr. Erwin was City Arborist, Peter Blanchette.

Mr. Houser announced that he was working with Walter Passmore, Luis Salcedo, and Misty Smith on a grant proposal to present to the Simmons Foundation. The Chair also made note that Misty Smith had recently joined his company's staff and would be assisting him with UFAC business. He added that Ms. Smith might be contacting committee members on his behalf in the future.

Mr. Houser noted that the Simmons Foundation request was for the entire amount required to complete a survey, inventory, and analysis was estimated at \$720,000. However, there is mention in the request that a portion of the project can be completed by citizen foresters and Park and Recreation staff. Serena Simmons Connelly is reviewing the grant application before final submittal to the foundation. Ms. Connelly has a history of being an advisor and financial contributor for numerous tree related projects. In recent conversations with the Chair, Ms. Connelly has expressed a strong interest. Mr. Houser added that the draft document is over 20 pages. He hopes to have it posted on the committee website for committee review. Two copies of the draft were circulated during the meeting.

Mr. Houser noted that he hoped to have all official documents, such as the recent "Thank You" letter to Wes Harder and to Jack and Cassie MacDowell posted on the website. Additionally, minutes of past meetings will be posted.

The Chair noted that although an annual report to the Mayor and City Council detailing the accomplishments and the value of the committee's donation of time was never requested or required, a report has been prepared. The report will be delivered as soon as proper protocol is clear. The Chair also recognized the committee for the work and accomplishments made during the group's first year and stated that all of those who have helped should be proud in recognizing how far the Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee had come.

Mr. Houser presented an overview of the status of Earth Day Jam 2007. Contracts were currently under review by the City Attorney's office. The possible projected income for the committee has increased to over 4 million dollars due to increased projections of CD and DVD sales.

The Chair announced that the donation of \$25,000 from Shirley and Stuart Crow had been deposited in the Urban Forest Advisory Committee's sub-account in the Dallas Park Foundation. Trammel Crow has donated \$10,000, and the Chair challenged the committee to match the gift. Other fiscal items included the mention that a petty cash fund needs to be established and an online donation page needs to be added to the website.

The annual Reverchon Park clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, March 17, 2007 at 8:30am. A free lunch and a group photo are scheduled for 11:30am. In conjunction with the clean-up, Mr. Passmore is preparing a proposal for a park tree-planting plan and a training session for Citizen Foresters, which will include inventorying 20% to 30% of the park's tree.

Mr. Houser challenged each committee member or supporter to enlist the support of at least one volunteer to join our efforts.

The Chair noted that there might be a real need to create an additional Team to handle Public Relations and the Media. Mr. Houser stated that Ms. Pat Melton might be a possible candidate as Team Leader, but current commitments might preclude her from the task. He also noted that

committee member, Michael Anderson, had a good working relationship with the downtown business community, which was demonstrated at a recent media event that included Councilmember Medrano. Mr. Houser noted that he had received some excellent media ideas from Mike FitzGerald.

Mr. Houser briefed the committee on the "Mayor's Challenge". The event would take place in the spring and would have Mayor Miller challenging other Texas Mayors to compete against her using their tree climbing skills. Details were still being formulated. The Chair added that there was an opportunity to film the climbing event for a documentary or Public Service Announcement.

David Marquis informed the committee that Judd Piner, at DFW International Airport, had notified him, that approximately 800 trees were available for transplanting. Mr. Marquis stated that if the trees are not transplanted they will be destroyed. He hoped that the news of their availability would be relayed to appropriate people so as many trees as possible could be saved.

Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 5:22pm

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Seaman,
Committee Member