

**Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas**

**Tuesday, October 7, 2008 4:00 pm
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN
Dallas City Hall**

Attendees:

Stan Aten, Sara Beckelman, Dick Coupe, Philip Erwin, Michael Fitzgerald, Susan Grabar, Lora Hinchcliff; Steve Houser; Kurt Kretsinger, Eric Larner, Gretchen Luedtke; Cassandra McLaughlin; Jeff Quinters, Karen Woodard.

UFAC Chair, Mr. Steve Houser, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed all Committee members as well as guests.

The Chair requested that the Committee give a warm welcome to the city's new Urban Forester, Ms. Karen Woodard. Mr. Houser was also pleased to announce we now have a team devoted specifically to fundraising. However, he would prefer to wait until the new team leader is present before announcing her name. Hopefully she will be able to attend the November monthly meeting.

Mr. Houser asked the Committee members if there were any corrections or additions to the September meeting minutes. With none noted, the minutes were approved unanimously (Motion to accept – Ms. Lora Hinchcliff, Second – Mr. Eric Larner).

The Chair was informed that the second briefing for the Quality of Life Committee to cover the subject of how a department or office of urban forestry fits into governmental structure around the country has been rescheduled for late November. Additionally, our new regional TFS Forester should be on board soon. His name is Mica Pace, and he has a Masters degree in Forestry from the University of Maine and a Bachelors degree in Natural Resource Management from Ohio State University. He was previously with the Florida Department of Forestry where he worked as an environmental specialist.

Mr. Mike Hellmann could not attend the meeting, but the Chair did ask him about the potential for gas drilling in our parks. Mr. Hellmann stated that he doubts any drilling will occur in the parks and that any line will be bored deep in the soil or well below the root system of any trees. On a separate note, we were able to complete the image acquisition for our tree survey research project and hope to receive the data in the next few weeks. Also, we are over our budget for this project and any assistance that can be provided in opening doors to potential donors would be greatly appreciated.

Discussions continue with Steve Worden, District Manager for Region 3, Mike Hellmann and more recently, Karen Woodard regarding the reestablishment of a training program for park department forestry crews. We hope to get these back on track in the next few months. Mr. Walter Passmore, Steve Worden and Mr. Houser had most of the training started but it was dropped when Mr. Passmore left. The Chair recently provided a list of basic training CD's and videos and spoke about the importance of a safety program for city forestry crews. The ISA released some new videos on basic subjects that will also be very helpful.

**Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas**

**Tuesday, October 7, 2008 4:00 pm
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN
Dallas City Hall**

Renovations to the hardscapes in Dealy Plaza begin this month and Mr. Houser provided a few recommendations to minimize any potential impact to the trees. Dealy Plaza trees are probably the most historical in downtown Dallas, and Mr. Houser noted that Mike Hellmann has been involved in the past to provide advice as well.

Mr. Phil Erwin, Chief Arborist for the City, reported on the beginning of the city's tree planting season. Fifteen orders are set up and Mr. Erwin is trying to put together planting projects for late October/first of November through the winter, once the trees become available. Mr. Erwin and city arborists are organizing a new purchasing program in the future. Mr. Erwin should know more about the Skillman project by the end of the week. Additionally, he will be meeting with Mrs. Crystal Lee, MOWmentum Program Manager, followed by a meeting with Ms. Karen Woodard, followed by a roundtable. Topics such as proper pruning process, safety, and tree protection will try to be first addressed from mid-management level. Ms. Woodard may be able to do more in her position regarding the Mockingbird median issue and will discuss this with Mr. Erwin. Mr. Houser previously offered to develop planting diagrams for various sizes of medians and hopes to meet with the Street Department to address proper maintenance on and around trees.

The Chair reported on behalf of Mr. Bill Seaman, Land Planning, Development and City Codes Team Leader. The team continues to work diligently on ordinance changes and hope to have more meetings to reach a consensus with other groups and departments.

Mr. Mike Fitzgerald, Public Relations and Media Team Leader reported that he continues to work with webmaster, Mr. Doug Pierson, who is developing some prototypes. Our website should be viewed as our primary advertising (and recruiting) tool. Therefore, different web links and more content are being considered. Additionally, Mr. Fitzgerald distributed a draft copy of media protocol to provide guidance to committee members regarding public relations and the media. Since we cannot project all potential issues that may arise, with a protocol in place, we will increase the odds of our success. The current Chairperson of UFAC will serve as the primary spokesperson for all outside communication with the media, as well as city officials. Any situations not specifically covered in the protocol should be referred to the Chair and the Team Leader for Public Relations.

Mr. Kurt Kretsinger, Tree Planting and Transplanting Team Leader, reminded the committee of the forthcoming Audubon Center opening October 18-19. He also reported the Street Department has approved the showcase tree planting project. It was suggested that trees be delivered and installed On November 22nd. Tree rings and mulch could be placed during the event. Phil Erwin will order the trees and suggested making it a two day event. It's estimated 14 trees will be installed in Median #1 and 13 trees in Median #2.

**Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas**

**Tuesday, October 7, 2008 4:00 pm
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN
Dallas City Hall**

A discussion ensued about the over-pruning of the Mockingbird trees. A project Mr. Kretsinger started in 1999. While the situation could be used as an example for prevention and education, no decision was made at the time, as any action depends on the contract between the city and the vendor. Also, input from the street department.

Mr. Eric Larner, Citizen Forester Team Leader, reported that the fifth 2008 Citizen Forester training session is tomorrow. It is anticipated the program will have 34 graduates this year. A discussion ensued about the financing of vests to be provided for the graduates. Mr. Larner informed the committee that 35 people are also in line to take the 2009 class, and he is still investigating weekend or evening class offerings.

The Pecan Grove Park project in Rowlett in which our Citizen Foresters identified trees for the Rowlett Park Board was very successful. A follow up visit to the Park is being planned. Additionally, the City of Irving's September BioBlitz along Campion Trail was a success. The committee had a display booth at the event, and Citizen Foresters participated by leading groups of children through the forest to identify trees, plants, animals, amphibians and insects.

Mr. Dick Coupe. Liaison for the North Texas Master Naturalist program reported they are preparing to start another class. Application deadline is January 23, 2009.

Mr. Stan Aten reported the Oak Cliff Earth Day registration begins December 15, 2008.

The Chair requested additional comments or questions. With no other items introduced, the UFAC Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Hinchcliff
Committee Secretary