

Jacksonville Tree Commission

Amended Minutes

Wednesday March 20, 2024, - 9:30 AM

Via Zoom Platform & In Person

[Recording of Meeting can be obtained by sending request to
Charles Hayes kennethh@coj.net]

For approval May 15, 2024

Commissioners:

Chris Miller, Council Liaison
Nina Sickler, Director of Public Works
Curtis Hart, Chair (Council Appointee; 2012-0033-A)
Susan Fraser (Council Appointee; 2022-0063-A)
John Moscarillo (Mayor Appointee; 2023-0696-A)
William Burke (Mayor Appointee; 2023-0695-A)
[vacant] (Council Appointee; 2021-0027-A)

Advisors:

Jonathan Colburn - Urban Forestry Manager
Justin Gearhart - City Arborist
Susan Grandin - Office of General Counsel
Jose Regueiro - Accounting

Staff: Charles Hayes

1. Call to Order

Conducted by Chair

2. Roll Call and Verification of Quorum

Conducted by Chair

Members present:

Curtis Hart, Chair (Council Appointee; 2012-0033-A)
Chris Miller, Council Liaison
Nina Sickler, Director of Public Works
Susan Fraser, Member
John Moscarillo, Member
William Burke, Member

Quorum present (4, in person): yes

3. Call for Public Speakers (online & card):

John Nooney submitted card.

Agenda Action Items:

1. (Agenda Item taken out of order): Financial Report for Ordinance Tree Fund, Charter Tree Fund, and BJP

Jose Regueiro - Accounting: Briefed February 2024 Financial Highlights [Financial Highlights can be found at [Jacksonville.gov - Tree Commission](https://www.jacksonville.gov), March 20, 2024 Meeting]

There were no questions, no motion.

2. Prior Meeting Minutes

Issue: approval of prior meeting(s) minutes:

February 21, 2024 (requires motion & vote),
January 17, 2024 (prior motion, but not vote).

Motion: to "defer" issue of January and February meetings minutes [in substance, a *motion to postpone to certain time*] to next meeting, to allow correction of Scrivener's errors in February Minutes and to provide copy of January minutes at next meeting.

Moved by: Nina Sickler

Second: Curtis Hart

Vote: approve, unanimous

3. RiversEdge Level 3 Project

Issue: The District Community Development District requested additional funding from the Tree Commission to plant over 400 trees with additional soil volume improvement strategies that include structural soils and Silva Cells. RiversEdge is projected to be a riverfront destination with public spaces owned by the City of Jacksonville, to include parks, Riverwalk, multi-use paths, and streetscape.

Highlights of the ensuing discussion include:

Mike Mullis - District Community Development: distributed packets explaining the cost and options with the requested amount of funding needed for each [available at [Jacksonville.gov - Tree Commission](https://www.jacksonville.gov), March 20, 2024 Meeting]

The initial proposed request is for \$998,000.

Lori Boyer - COJ Downtown Investment Authority: explained role of DIA and the Parks department because it is a hybrid application.

- There are currently City owned parks and certain roads that provide access to the parks developed by a developer on request using city dollars. The tax increment is funding the construction and improvements in those parks and funding the construction of those roads, this would typically be Type 2.
- City has contract with the developer for them to execute on the city's behalf it is in the application as a Type 3.
- Difference between CRA roads and parks and CDD roads. CDD roads a developer develops roads and dedicate to the public. CRA roads and parks designed, and all improvements approved by city.
- COJ Downtown Investment Authority has been involved, reviewed the plans, approves the elements that are permitted within the parks. The CRA roads and park spaces are public improvements on public spaces.

Mullis: stated that they have been working with the parks since 2019 and been involved with the four parks development. Confirmed that all roads and roadways will maintain areas indefinitely by the CDD. A physical model was utilized to explain the layout of the approximately 30-acre plan.

Hannah Mircale - District Community Development: briefed the base bid budget, each option, and additional add-ons (as depicted on a chart in the distributed packet).

Boyer: stated on the CRA roads and CRA parks: \$23M as well as \$4M on the current overage.

Mullins: clarified that for hardscape, landscape, irrigation, and associate (park benches, etc.) are currently bid at approximately \$17million.

Boyer: explained that \$23 million is a fixed budget for the parks as a whole (separate from roads) and that amount includes, for example, a slide for the playground. So, without Tree Fund funds, the required trees would be paid for instead of a slide in the playground (as the budget is fixed). Further, Boyer reiterated that without Tree Fund funds other amenities must be cut, or less trees and less amenities. As to CDD roads, the developer has an obligation to plant a minimum threshold of

trees. Such is the reason for separating the CRA ask from the CDD ask.

Members concluded that they are being asked to decide to what extent, if any, they wish to authorize funding to support the DIA plan for the included City Parks elevated tree canopy (including instead of shade sails), through the additional funds specific for trees (allowing other funds to be used for elevated amenities). As well, to what extent City wants to elevate the planting of trees on the right of ways. **Fraser:** clarified that Tree Fund funding is to support DIA vision for the City owned portions of the project designed to emulate a suburban streetscape in an urban context (an augmented design).

Hart: suggested using an approach based on a particular park ("pick a park") and focus on the particular park with enhancements aided by the Tree Fund funding, i.e., use Silva Cells in a particular park.

Boyer: clarified that the base bid, \$998,000 is to place trees in the parks, but that the Commission needs to decide if they wish to fund a pilot program for enhanced soils and/or Silva Cells, and to prioritize what the Commission wants to have included in the project for Tree Fund funds.

Hannah Mircale: that Bid Alternative 9 included the enhanced soils, cost share for irrigation and upsizing to 6-inch trees, with Central Park trees at 8-inch trees.

Fraser: raised the question of the use of larger caliper trees planted.

Members discussed and agreed that they would require 4-inch trees (instead of 6-inch) because of adaptability and cost saving. The Commission also asked and received the approximate cost per tree, structural soil, and Silva Cells and for an amended request specifying the funding parks. The Commission concluded that they are committed to fund walk, the trail and the parks, and "test locations" for the use of Silva Cells and the use of enhanced soils with Tree Fund funds.

Motion: to fund the RiverEdge Project at \$1,212,000, which includes base condition (\$998,000) for trees for parks, plus Silva Cells on park side of RiversEdge, structural soil on the opposite/south side of road; conditioned upon the build of Alternate 2 and maintenance of Crepe Myrtles in approved method.

Moved by: William Burke

Second: Nina Sickler

Discussion: none further.

Vote: Approved, unanimous.

Of note: Members discussed that future large planning projects should include Tree Commission participation early in the project.

4. Fund Status

Justin Gearhart: solicited questions on the fund status. (none)

5. Level 2 Project Update

Justin Gearhart: briefed Twin Lakes project was off warranty, Sheffield Park was installed, and District 7 & 10, and Hodges Blvd were complete. There were no questions, no motion.

6. New Business

Susan Grandin: Informed everyone the Urban Forest Planning Committee would meet in two weeks if anyone would like to attend. Stated that Council President Salem sponsored \$300,000 and another \$200,000 currently coming from the Resilience CIP fund. Grandin explained that the impending Urban Forestry Management Plan includes more than resiliency and the Resiliency is \$10million /year for 5 years (leaving approximately \$27million). Grandin pointed out that planting trees is "green infrastructure."

7. Public Comment

John Nooney: Looking for sponsor for \$100,000,000 Jury Settlement Trial and Pottsburg Creek Tree Commission Park.

END OF MEETING