

MINUTES OF CITY OF GRIFFIN TREE BOARD

Monday, March 12, 2007

5:30 P.M.

City Hall Court room, 231 E. Solomon St.

Those present were: Tree Board Chairman and arborist– John Hemphill; Landscape Architect – Mr. James Willis; Plant the Future Representative - Margie King; District 1 – Ms. Ann Larson; District 5 – Mr. Jim Martin; City Commissioner Doug Hollberg, Public Works and Utilities Director Brant Keller, Secretary and Stormwater Deputy Director Milton McCarthney, Environmental Technician Kreg Jenkins, Environmental Technician Sheila Daniel, City Arborist Jerry Walker, Spalding County Extension Agent Wade Hutcheson, Electric Assistant Director Tom Ridgway, Georgia Forestry Commission Beryl Budd, City Manager Kenny Smith.

Those absent were: District 3 – Mr. John Miller; District 6 – Ms. Michelle Cannon; District 4 – Ms. Hannah Day; District 7 –Ms. Diane Dunaway Bowles.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hemphill.

Old Business:

1. Motion for approval of the Minutes of the Feb. 5 meeting was made and approved.
2. Major discussions about adopting the Tree Line USA standard and how it would affect City ordinances and budget were started by Hollberg. He stated meetings in the previous week had been held with himself, Hugo Hodge of Electric, Brant Keller of Public Works, City Manager Kenny Smith and City Attorney Drew Whalen. Hollberg reported the Tree Line USA requirement of an arborist with the pruning crews and tunneling within the drip line of the trees would make the program cost prohibitive to implement. Walker spoke of the Tree Line USA program as a step in the right direction toward utility line pruning. Budd thought it was a positive direction for the pruning in the City and believed only Florida or Tennessee had a Tree Line USA utility in the Southeast. Ridgway stated the tree pruning contracts with MEAG would have to be reopened and would likely increase their price. Keller concurred with Public Works contracts. Ridgway said ANSI A300-part 1 pruning standards would not let stubs remain and an additional cost of pruning to the trunk, if 5ft or less, would have to be added to current contract amounts. Keller said electric crews are funded by electric and their budget is for the utility line type of trimming by power line crews, with public works crews doing more visual and dead wood pruning and both would require cost increases. Ridgway said the companies need some pruning specifications to bid on if they are to be included in a contract. Smith said Keller, Walker and Hugo could get specs together for pricing and bid out by contractor. Willis made a motion to table the discussion until bid specifications were developed for City pruning contracts.

New Business:

1. Beryl Budd described free trees available from a tree farm in Madison Ga. They would be available for pick up next week. Keller informed members he would take 10, 4 inch diameter nuttall oaks for planting at City Park, and suggested obtaining some 2 inch for street planting. Budd said he would get back to Jenkins with size and availability.
2. Hollberg relayed that a meeting was held at City Hall for property owners about planting at Maple Dr. intersections with 2 families showing up and approving the plan. Scheduled planting is for 39 trees on maple Dr, 1 at Grove intersection, 3 crape myrtles and several maples. Also available would be the median on Hill St. at Bunn's Laundry where a

cryptomeria previously died. Remaining planting sites on E College, Tinley would be on hold until next year.

3. Budd told the board of a tree grant to cities through www.ga.trees.org, the Georgia forestry website, for an arborist and training. Budd said the grant would be seed money for an arborist position starting at \$20,000 year 1, then \$10,000 year 2, then finishing with \$5,000 year 3; and that an arborist position would be possible here in Griffin. Hollberg said the 2007-2008 budget process is progressing and presently there is no full time arborist, since Dr Walker is consulted as needed. Smith wondered if an arborist was needed or justified. Walker said he supported an arborist and that there was plenty of work now, and especially when a landscape ordinance develops for work on private property. King said the position sounded like a positive step for the City.
4. Walker brought the National Arbor Day Foundation Conference brochure, "Storms over the urban forest," and mentioned that the City may want to send a representative to attend the conference in Atlanta on May 21-22,2007.
5. McCarthney called attention to a letter sent to the City of Griffin by Plant the Future, applauding the City for investigating becoming a Tree Line USA city. Walker said the members of Plant the Future unanimously endorsed the Tree Line USA program at their Feb 2007 meeting and distributed the letter to the Board.
6. Jenkins presented the monthly Tree Action List and discussion from the board followed. Jenkins and Walker went to site of 20 inch pine at 610 Terrace that was removed by homeowner. Keller recommended a letter be sent by Jenkins with options for homeowner: 1) \$450 required for payment for the public tree removed and 2) replant appropriately from our tree species list or be taken to court for destruction of public property. Keller commented that the tree in front of the new city offices was hit by a driver and replanted by insurance for \$450 by Public works crews, so the amount is reasonable. Also, the removal of a dogwood at 720 Maple Dr at Mr. Hubert Flanagan's residence was approved. A magnolia at 1103 Maple Dr which was blocking sight at the driveway was added to the list as a sight pruning. The entire tree action list was then voted on and approved for action as suggested.
7. Keller suggested we apply for a design and planting grant for a Taylor St: from 6th to 8th streetscape project and that the Tree board update its tree management plan with a 5 year planting plan on a map showing value of plantings.
8. Walker told of the results of a survey project by Georgia Urban Forest Council about Georgia's Tree Ordinances with the project summary distributed. A publication called "Shade", which helps communities weather the storms and manage the challenges of the urban forest, was available to the Board.

There being no further discussion or comment, the meeting was adjourned.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Milton McCarthney, Acting Secretary

ATTEST:

John Hemphill, Chairman