

Minutes
City of Griffin Tree Board
Monday, July 10, 2006
5:30 p.m.
City Hall, 231 E. Solomon Street, Griffin, GA 30224

The July meeting of the Griffin Tree Board came to order at 5:40 p.m. with Chairman John Hemphill presiding. Members in attendance were James Willis, John Miller, Michelle Cannon, Kreg Jenkins, Jerry Walker, Milton McCarthney, Doug Hollberg, Diane Boles and Hannah Day. Beryl Budd of the Georgia Forestry Commission was also present. Minutes from the June meeting were approved.

Cannon asked if the trees from previous tree list had been taken care of as voted. McCarthney stated that once the board votes, the specified action is done.

Under old business, Cannon reported on the input she had received from board members. She said there is a huge disparity in knowledge. The overall consensus was the need for education and a need to get everyone on the board on common ground. She suggested that someone be in charge of training the board about trees and about budgets. Hemphill stated that he and Jerry Walker could spend time at each meeting explaining trees and McCarthney and Jenkins could explain city government. Hollberg could educate members about the politics involved. McCarthney said he would rank the tree list according to priority for action by the next meeting. It was decided that the mission statement in the tree ordinance would suffice for a board statement.

Under new business, the tree list was discussed. A large oak at South 6th Street and College is dead and needs to be removed. Jenkins said the city has a picture of gas line crew working around the tree, but there is no proof that they actually killed it. The board voted to remove the tree and approved the entire tree list.

A discussion centered on why trees are tagged for removal – end of life or aesthetics from improper pruning. McCarthney said if a tree is deemed a hazard, it is removed no matter what the cost. Removal of trees based on aesthetics is secondary, according to the funds available.

After a lengthy discussion, the group decided on a multi-step process to keep citizens informed when trees in their neighborhood are marked for removal. The plan will begin with the Maple Drive corridor from Milner Drive to Pine Valley Drive, but will be used as a blueprint for the entire city.

- Mark trees.
- Notify residents with small orange flags and small laminated flyers by the marked trees, indicating that the trees will be removed, then replaced. List the city website on the flyer.

- Place an article in the local paper explaining the plan of action
- Citizens can contact the board via the new website and e-mail address

The orange flags and flyers will be set out on Maple Drive within two weeks. By the August Tree Board meeting, the trees on Maple Drive will be marked, a plan of action finalized by the sub-committee consisting of Hemphill, Willis, Boles and Hollberg, and the new website will be in operation. Hannah Day will write the article for the newspaper following the August meeting. The board voted to remove all seven trees on Maple Drive, according to the list.

The Maple Drive trees will be removed by September and replanting will begin in October. The replacement budget for the entire city is between \$10,000 and \$12,000. Up to one third of the budget will be used for Maple Drive replacement. Because most of the existing trees are only 70 to 80 years old, the sub-committee will look at what types of replacement trees will have a longer life expectancy, but still grow to a pleasing canopy. Local nurseries will be used as much as possible.

Beryl Budd of the Georgia Forestry Commission spoke about the benefits of an urban forest for control of air pollution and water run-off. He said the city needs more money in the budget for tree care, as well as a five to 10 year urban forest management plan. He suggested board members go to the Forestry Commission website for more information. The site is www.gufc.org. As a long term plan, the board will place a high priority on obtaining grant money, hopefully by next year's city budget discussions.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by Hannah Day
Griffin Tree Board Secretary