

MINUTES OF CITY OF GRIFFIN TREE BOARD

Monday, August 6, 2007

5:30 P.M.

Municipal Court Conference Room

100 South Hill St.

The Griffin Tree Board met in the Municipal Court Conference Room at 5:30 P.M. on August 6, 2007. Those present were John Hemphill, John Miller, Anne Larson, Doug Hollberg, James Willis, Margie King, Hannah Day, Jerry Walker, Hugo Hodge, Kreg Jenkins, Milton McCarthney, Jim Martin, Brant Keller, and two representatives from Trees Unlimited.

Absent were Michelle Cannon and Diane Boles.

Tree Trimming and Utility Lines:

Hugo Hodge, Director of the Electric Department for the City of Griffin, and the representatives from Trees Unlimited were asked to discuss the methods of pruning for utility lines. They indicated that other cities share our concern with trees, but the cost of pruning differently is too expensive for Griffin to bid separately from the 33 cities in our region. With only one tree crew, it is extremely difficult to keep up with the needs of the city. While Griffin needs to have three tree crews, there are not sufficient funds to employ them since the cost of an additional crew would be approximately \$160,000 annually. Both Hugo and Brant Keller expressed their concern for the poor condition of the city's electric lines, water lines, and sewer lines, and both feel that these issues are more pressing than our tree situation.

Tree Board members raised the concern that trees area being topped and stubs left (e.g. the tree cutting on PineHill recently) and asked that Trees Unlimited inform someone as to where they will be working to expedite emergency situations.

Doug Hollberg asked that a class be offered for the City Commissioners on tree trimming and the difficulties being encountered because he feels that the Commissioners do not understand the dilemma. In addition, it was suggested that the Tree Board meet with the Commissioners in December (possibly at the regular Tree Board meeting) to convince them of the financial needs of the tree program and the need for two more tree crews.

Tree Action:

1. Bill Dunn's pine tree 13th St.: Because of the fusiform canker which could cause the tree to fail in severe conditions, the Board recommended that the tree be removed.
2. Trees in the old cemetery: It was proposed that the Tree Board do a planting project in conjunction with Plant the Future to replace some trees there.
3. Trees removed without Tree Board approval: Trees which had been inspected by J. Walker on both Brookwood Terrace and Woodside Drive were removed without being

brought up to the Tree Board. Hollberg offered to speak with Kenny Smith about the need to go to the Tree Board before removing trees which were not considered hazardous by an arborist.

4. Two trees will be removed, one because of public safety and the other because a truck hit it.

Tree Ordinance:

Both James Willis and Doug Hollberg suggested that the Director of Public Works and the Tree Board should determine fines for not complying with the tree ordinance jointly. Because the Board is a volunteer board, they cannot impose fines. The Tree Board can, however, make recommendations regarding fines.

Planting Schedule:

Tree planting should begin in January. John Hemphill and James Willis will look at sites on North and South Hill and on Lyndon Avenue.

A concern was raised regarding concrete between the sidewalk and the street on a lot at the intersection of W. Solomon and 14th Street. This will affect an oak tree. Approval should have been sought prior to the paving. Hollberg will try to find out how a variance was given.

Workshops:

The trees and utilities workshop in Gwinnett County will be held on August 9th. Five people from the Tree Board plan to attend.

Georgia Urban Forest Council will meet October 31st and November 1st in Rome, Georgia.

The next meeting of the Tree Board will be September 10th in the Municipal Court Conference Room at 5:30 P.M.

Margie King, Secretary

ATTEST:

John Hemphill, Chairman