



**URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2023

9:30am – 11:30am

Hybrid Meeting: Online and in person at The Portland Building

**Commission Members present:** Co-Chairs Adrienne Feldstein and Roberta Jortner, Derily Bechthold, Bruce Nelson, J.R. Lilly, Leah Plack, Megan Van de Mark, Melinda McMillan, Casey Clapp, Justin Misner

**Commission Members absent:** Ivory Iheanacho

**Urban Forestry staff present:** Jenn Cairo (City Forester), Brian Landoe (Strategy & Planning Manager), Casey Jogerst (Permitting & Regulations Manager).

**City staff present:** Kathy Sharp (Human Resources Business Partner)

**Public Comments**

1. No public comments were made.

**Minutes Approval**

1. The May 2023 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

**Forester’s Report – Jenn Cairo, City Forester**

1. Ashley Reese has accepted a new position within Urban Forestry on the Tree Planting team. She will no longer be supporting the Urban Forestry Commission.
2. Since the last UFC meeting, City Council delisted Heritage Tree #26 as recommended by the UFC and adopted the FY24 Title 11 Fee Schedule
3. HB 3414 which is currently under consideration at the state legislature, has been amended to no longer exempt housing development from local tree and natural resource protections.
4. As background information for the HR 2.02 training later in the agenda, City Forester Cairo stated that the goal for the Urban Forestry Commission is to be a representative advisory body for all Portlanders which operates with inclusivity and respect. The Community Agreement currently under development is a positive step towards this goal. Since 2012, the UFC’s composition has changed from 9% of Commissioners identifying as people of color to 27%, and from 27% woman to 63%. Training opportunities have been made available in the past and will be into the future.
5. The Parks Local Option Levy has enabled Urban Forestry to add additional staff and improve services including routine proactive park tree maintenance, following up on tree permit requirements and code compliance cases, and significant increases in tree planting in priority neighborhoods. In order to accommodate this increase in staffing, the Permitting & Regulation work group’s non-development team will move from East Delta Park to the 1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. building. This will consolidate the full Permitting & Regulation team into a single location and free up office space at East Delta Park. In addition, the Street Tree Inventory team has moved from East Delta Park to the Portland Building.
6. The City of Portland has been a partner in the National Vanguard Cities coalition which promotes urban trees as central to urban heat reduction and community development. This initiative now includes an Urban Nature Based Solutions Accelerator program which focuses on better integrating trees into urban settings. The participants from Portland include representatives from Portland State University, the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and Portland Opportunity and Industry Center. The network has also provided support in applying for Inflation Reduction Act grant funding.

**Urban Forestry Commission**

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7. PP&R Urban Forestry is a contributing partner on a collaborative \$17 million grant application led by Friends of Trees for Inflation Reduction Act funding. The five-year proposal prioritizes education, outreach, tree planting, and maintenance in East Portland and Gresham and includes numerous local non-profit and governmental partners.
8. There has been recent media coverage of tree removal associated with the Oregon Department of Transportation's Outer Powell project. Powell Ave. is state property managed by ODOT which is exempt from Title 11. As a result, Urban Forestry has limited authority to regulate tree removal in this situation. Urban Forestry has been involved in this project and has been working with ODOT to identify opportunities to preserve trees wherever feasible. While 572 trees are slated for removal, 457 are planned to be retained, 120 will be planted, and ODOT will pay \$180,000 into the Tree Planting & Preservation Fund.
  - a. Commissioner Clapp asked if the plans could be shared with the UFC. Brian Landoe will send these to the UFC after the meeting.
  - b. Commissioner Nelson recommended holding a Yard Tree Giveaway event and focusing the Free Street Tree program in the area to help replace trees which have been removed.
  - c. Commissioner Jortner asked whether trees were considered early in the design process.
    - i. Casey Jogerst, Permitting & Regulation Manager, responded that Urban Forestry has been involved since 2014. However, because ODOT is not required to comply with Title 11 they have significant latitude in making design decisions.
  - d. Commissioner Lilly recommended engaging with the East Portland Parks Coalition and East Portland Land Use and Transportation Committee. He also noted that PBOT's project on SE Division planted far fewer trees than were promised in initial designs.

#### **HR 2.02 - Workplace Harassment, Discrimination, Racism, and Retaliation Prevention Training – Kathy Sharp, Human Resources Business Partner**

1. Kathy Sharp provided a training on Human Resources Administrative Rule 2.02 which addresses harassment, discrimination, racism, and retaliation.
2. It is the City's policy to prohibit workplace harassment, discrimination, racism and retaliation based on protected status. There are multiple protected classes identified in HR 2.02 including age, ethnicity, race, gender, gender identity and others.
3. HR 2.02 covers elected officials, employees, interns, volunteers, applicants for employment, and contractors.
4. Harassment, discrimination, racism, and retaliation are prohibited in all workplace settings which includes office buildings, vehicles owned by the City, City events, and teleworking.
5. The training included examples of prohibited conduct and information for responding to and reporting conduct which violates HR 2.02.
6. Prompted by a question from Commissioner McMillan, Kathy clarified that retaliation involves action taken against an individual who brings forward a complain.
  - a. Commissioner Bechthold added that being excluded from communications or proceedings can be a form of retaliation.
7. Commissioner Plack added that interrupting speech which is harmful, or offensive should not be viewed as inappropriate behavior.

#### **Urban Forest Plan Update & UFC Involvement – Belinda Judelman, Planning & Policy Analyst**

1. The Urban Forest Plan will include robust community and stakeholder engagement including a Community Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee in addition to direct outreach to underserved communities.
2. The Urban Forestry Commission will have a significant role as the City's primary advisory body for forestry issues.
3. Belinda asked the Commission to consider how they would like to participate in the Urban Forest Plan project.
  - a. Receive periodic updates during regular UFC meetings
  - b. Identify a UFC member to join the Community Advisory Committee
  - c. Create a committee to lead the Commission's involvement.
4. After discussion, the Commission preferred moving forward with all three options.

#### **UFC Community Agreements Update**

*Audio recordings of Urban Forestry Commission meetings are available upon request.*

1. Commissioners Bechthold, Lilly, and Jortner are working on the first draft of the community agreements. That draft will be provided ahead of the July meeting.
2. Time will be reserved on the July agenda to discuss that draft. Commissioners are invited to send comments over email as well.

#### **Future UFC Agenda Items Discussion**

1. The Commission briefly discussed potential agenda items for future meetings.
2. Commissioner Misner asked for a discussion of the rules of procedures for video recordings of UFC meetings.
  - a. Brian Landoe clarified that Oregon law require documentation of all public meetings which the UFC fulfills by taking and approving meeting minutes. Audio or video recordings are not required and are uncommon for most public advisory bodies. Urban Forestry retains audio recordings of all meetings as a backup and posts videos to Youtube to improve transparency and increase community access. The recordings are only intended to record the public proceedings of the Urban Forestry Commission.
3. Casey Clapp requested a discussion of the Heritage Tree program.
4. Commissioner Van de Mark requested presentations from staff on the different programs within Urban Forestry.
5. Commissioner Misner requested information on the North Portland Aquatic Center currently under development by PP&R.
6. Commissioner Plack requested a discussion of how to accommodate both urban canopy and increased housing density.
7. Commissioner McMillan requested information on the activities and role of other City bureaus related to trees.
8. Commissioner Nelson recommended the UFC meet more frequently with City Commissioners. This was more common in the past.
9. Commissioner Lilly invited the UFC to attend the annual Delta Park Powwow on June 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Meeting adjourned.**