



MINUTES
CITY OF LAKE WORTH BEACH
TREE AND LANDSCAPE BOARD REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025 -- 6:05 PM

ROLL CALL AND RECORDING OF ABSENCES Present: Ginny Powell, Diane Brown; Priscilla Hallowell. **Absent:** Donna Kerner
Also present: Scott Rodriguez, Asst. Dir. for Planning & Preservation; Annie Greening, Principal Planner; Mina Tawadros, Asst. Dir. for Public Works.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/REORDERING AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA Arbor Day proclamation

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (3-MINUTE LIMIT)

- Ann Von Lossberg comments on protection of trees, such as the banyan at 523 South M Street, any Champion Trees and specimen trees originating from Asia as well as markers for those trees.
- Greg Richter – 1202 South Palmway - Thanks everyone for the recently planted Bryant Park trees. Mentions a tree near 17th Street east of Lakeside that has been pruned to have a beautiful canopy. Continued discussion about the City Right-of-Ways, how they should remain and maintained as abandoned R-O-W's with public access. **Staff Response-** Any Right-of-Way discussions are City Commission decisions and not within the purview or scope of work of this advisory board. This is something that individuals could bring to the attention of the City Commission.
- Giovanna Dominguez Timor – 301 8th Ave N – Suggests the Home Tour include specimen/champion trees and be renamed to the Home Garden Tour. No trees have been protected. Board member response: the trees may be on private property.

REPORTS: ADVISOR, CHAIR, COMMITTEE(S), AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

- A. Advisor Reports and Updates:
a. Lake/Lucerne Trees

Mina Tawadros, Asst. Director for Public Works: Provides status update for downtown trees (Lake and Lucerne report). Previous discussions included recommendations from consultant arborists (Chen Moore & Associates') about what types of trees would perform well within the constricted growing spaces downtown. This report encompassed a closer look at where the problems occurred with existing trees as far as location and what can be replaced.

Recommendations included several species that do not have a large root system and won't affect the sidewalks and streets. Public Works reviewed the consultant

recommendations/options and recommends the Japanese Blueberry as the best option. A root barrier would be needed and should be included in the cost. Previously there were 5 oaks, the rest were palms. Those palms were removed due to disease and accidents. After considering proximity to buildings, other shade trees, proximity to road signs, and canopy trimming for clearance if located on the sidewalk, the solution would be five (5) Japanese blueberries instead of the five missing oaks and put back six (6) palms. Some areas cannot have any trees due to space limitations, signs or existing commercial canopies.

As discussed in a previous meeting with the Director of Public Works, since all the funds for Bryant Park were not utilized, some of those monies could probably be used towards this planting. Staff previously mentioned the Board's role in recommendations for the use of the Tree Canopy Restoration fund which would include projects like this.

Board members thought FDOT paid for the trees. **Staff response:** No, FDOT removed them and stated if the City wanted trees back in place, the funding would be provided by the City. **Board:** FDOT can remove and do as they want? **Staff response:** Yes, it is their right-of-way. **Board:** So, they dig the hole? **Staff response:** No, they (FDOT) will not dig the hole; The City would have to install and maintain the trees. **Board:** Many of the oaks still exist. The hope was for 17 trees, now there are eleven. This is to replace only those removed due to disease, not planted correctly or involved in an accident. Is this being contracted out? **Staff response:** yes. Discussion ensued regarding the use of excess Bryant Park tree purchases monies. This should be a separate project with separate funds. **Staff:** Previously the account discussed was the Tree Canopy Restoration Fund, with approximately \$42,000.00.

Staff- M. Tawadros- Public Works would get quotes from vendors and will go with the lowest price. **Staff noted** that once quotes are received, a request for a specific amount of funding from the Tree Canopy Restoration Fund could be put onto the agenda for a vote.

Public Question: Giovanna Timor Will staff be planting the trees? **Response:** Yes. The oaks that were planted, were they planted by staff? **Response:** No. Some locations, not girdled by string lights, have grown well.

- b. McGrew memorial update – Staff and Donna Kerner have begun research on a bronze plaque (@ \$300 -\$400) in remembrance of David McGrew.
- c. Arbor Day Proclamation- scheduled for April 15, 2025 at the City Commission meeting. The Arbor Day observance does not mean to be on the exact day, but it is required to maintain a Tree City USA status.

Public Comment: Monica Bilotti -915 N. Palmway- Reviewed the list of trees for the Bryant Park tree planting and was disappointed and upset to discover a tree not on the list was installed without the knowledge of the public. Purchased with city funds, not gifted. Enquires as to who proposed and approved the list and the switch. Too much monoculture.

Staff and Board both concur that there were meetings and proposals prior to the selection. Consulted with Smarty Plants for the best trees with regard to salt and wind tolerance.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Bryant Park shade tree plantings:
 - a. Updates about planting from March 17th

Nest- most recent tree planting – March 17 four (4) trees south of lift station; 4 more south of that for a total of 27 trees have been planted along the wellness walk from exercise area to water treatment plant (green buttonwood 25 gallon and 65 gallon.) Scott Ropp and others made new rain barrels. In the fall, planting will begin again south of the bridge to increase shade canopy across the city.

B. Sustainable Yard Series:

- a. Updates: Plant giveaway purchases, final preparations

May 7 is the next scheduled presentation in the series. Several tree board members and general public have already signed up. Hoping for 20-25 attendees. Will provide several native plants for giveaways.

C. Let's Plant Trees Brochure:

- a. Review of revised brochure content

Board had some suggestions for the brochure with regard to the photos. **Staff** suggests a table format rather than a list for the tree types to include growth rate. Board members agree the table is better than a list. Hat-racking, permits, pruning were all topics suggested to be in the brochure and that code violations should be reported to city staff.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of tree designations and potential public outreach/education

Staff: Adding tree designations and promote education. Currently there is information for tree protection needed during construction. In terms of process for designation and criteria in code, it is rather weak at this time. The nomination would come to the Board, owner notified then the Board recommendation would proceed to the City Commission. The criteria for what makes a specimen tree or champion tree is vague.

ADJOURNMENT