



TUALATIN CITY COUNCIL

OFFICIAL WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 09, 2024

PRESENT: Mayor Frank Bubenik, Council President Valerie Pratt, Councilor Bridget Brooks, Councilor Maria Reyes, Councilor Cyndy Hillier, Councilor Octavio Gonzalez

ABSENT: Councilor Christen Sacco

Mayor Bubenik called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

1. Overview & Discussion of Tualatin Street Trees and Sidewalks.

Parks and Recreation Director Ross Hoover and Public Works Director Rachel Sykes presented a discussion on the street trees and sidewalks program. Director Sykes began by stating that the Council had requested a review of the program and a presentation of policy options as part of their current priorities.

Director Hoover provided an overview of the current code regarding responsibility and liability for street trees. He explained that street trees are initially planted during development and can be replaced later by property owners.

Councilor Brooks asked when the table of approved street trees was enacted. Director Hoover stated that it was updated in the last several years.

Director Hoover discussed the tree replacement process, including the necessary permitting and fees, noting that the city replaces over a hundred trees annually. He noted there are four city-run street tree programs: planting, removal, trimming, and reverse frontage trees. Director Hoover identified challenges within the program, such as enforcement issues, the city's strict code, trimming work, sidewalk coordination, and the overall workload.

Director Sykes presented the code regarding sidewalks, emphasizing that maintenance and liability rest with the adjacent property owners. She outlined the replacement process, including permitting and fees, and noted that the average cost of sidewalk replacement is \$1,700. When factoring in street tree replacement, the total cost can rise to around \$2,600. Director Sykes explained that the sidewalk maintenance program, established in 2001, aims to address tripping hazards caused by street trees. She stated the program is funded, \$150,000 annually, from the Road Utility Fund. Director Sykes spoke to the growing challenges of the program, particularly due to rising repair costs and increasing resident dissatisfaction as the program falls further behind each year.

Director Sykes stated the city is currently conducting a city-wide sidewalk assessment and researching alternative approaches to the administration of the sidewalk program. She stated that she would return in the winter with additional alternatives for the Council to consider. Director Hoover added that his team will complete a city-wide street tree assessment and develop an

updated list of approved street trees, along with alternative approaches to the program, for Council consideration.

Councilor Brooks asked how the street tree program aligns with Tualatin's designation as a Tree City and inquired about how sidewalk materials interact with street trees. She suggested conducting a needs assessment for the sidewalk program and establishing a replacement plan accordingly. She also asked whether a cost-sharing approach between the city and homeowners could be considered for sidewalk replacement. Additionally, she mentioned that some cities collaborate with local nurseries for street tree replacement and suggested exploring similar partnerships.

Councilor Brooks inquired about the fines associated with street trees. Director Hoover explained the fine tiers, noting that the highest penalty could reach \$1,000 per day, but clarified that the city is not currently fining homeowners for street tree issues.

Councilor Gonzalez expressed his preference for the city not to be responsible for tree and sidewalk replacement, emphasizing that the city code should be enforced as this is ultimately the homeowner's responsibility.

Councilor Reyes raised concerns about renters and the enforcement of sidewalk repairs with non-owner-occupied properties. Director Sykes acknowledged the difficulty in enforcing repairs in such cases.

Councilor Reyes asked whether more complaints come from sidewalk or street tree issues. Director Sykes stated that the complaints are evenly split between both.

Councilor Hillier requested that call-for-service data be included in future reports to the Council and suggested presenting the data in various levels of need, similar to how the parks assessment was done.

Council President Pratt asked how non-owner-occupied residences are notified about necessary work. Director Sykes explained that door hangers are used, but the city does not currently mail documents or track whether a property is renter-occupied.

Council President Pratt wants to be considering future housing developments when evaluating the programs and suggested incorporating more climate-friendly tree species and sidewalk materials into the plan.

Mayor Bubenik noted that most residents assume the city is responsible for the replacement of street trees and sidewalks and stated that he is looking forward to the forthcoming analysis of the programs.

2. Allocation of Funds to Outside Agencies.

The Council deliberated and allocated funding for recipients. A resolution with final grant awards will be back at the next council meeting for approval.

3. Council Meeting Agenda Review, Communications & Roundtable.

Councilor Brooks shared that she attended the Stafford-Hamlet Fair and the Chamber's Key Leaders Breakfast. She also announced that updated COVID vaccinations are now available and encouraged residents to consider getting vaccinated.

Council President Pratt shared that she attended the C4 meeting, the Chamber's Key Leaders Breakfast, the CERT Fair, and the Stafford-Hamlet Fair.

Mayor Bubenik mentioned that he had a meeting with Metro concerning the Regional Waste Committee and participated in the Transportation Roundtable.

Adjournment

Mayor Bubenik adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager

_____ / Nicole Morris, Recording Secretary

_____ / Frank Bubenik, Mayor