

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2025 PAGE 1**

CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Trent Grantham and Boardmembers, Alex Chacon, Brodrick Coval, Brent Chapman, Michael Jackson, Tanya Nozawa, and Jim Sedore.

Staff: Sustainability Manager Alyssa Jones Wood.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

TREE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS: There were no reports.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Manager Jones Wood reported on the submission of 15 applications for the Urban Forestry position. Because of recent action by the federal government to freeze grant funds, the City does not have access to the federal funds and the City was advised to pause all grant activity. Consequently, the City cannot interview the applicants or proceed with the grant until the City receives notification to proceed as stipulated by a memorandum from the federal Office of the Budget. The City continues to accept applications and not schedule interviews until receiving instructions from the granter. Applicants are aware of the situation through email communication from the City.

The Climate Element sparked nearly 200 individual comments. Staff continues to incorporate the comments. The Climate Policy Advisory Team serves as an ad hoc advisory group for the Climate Element. Staff is meeting with the group to review all feedback and begin prioritizing some of the 201 action items within in the Climate Element. Manager Jones Wood reported she is briefing the Planning Commission on the Resilience Sub-Element focused on climate adaptations for dealing with the effects of climate change as a community.

No update on the status of the urban forestry ordinance amendments is available at this time.

The City currently has 50 Davis Meeker oak saplings. Staff members are seeking suitable places for planting the trees. Some parks in the City are well suited for oak trees, such as Sapp Road Park, Palermo Neighborhood Park, and upland areas in the City. Because of specific planting requirements for the saplings, Manager Jones Wood recommended not including them as part of the tree giveaway during the Arbor Day celebration. Planting of the saplings in City parks is limited because of the specific requirements for managing Oregon white oak.

The Board suggested contacting a commercial nursery to sell the saplings or contacting the tribes to ascertain interest in the saplings. Manager Jones Wood advised that the City prefers not selling them. Staff is meeting with Parks staff

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2025 PAGE 2**

to discuss the future status for planting the saplings. Boardmember Sedore suggested exploring the location of the new park near the Tumwater Middle School, which contains some Garry oak trees. Boardmember Coval referred to the Cascadia Oak Prairie Partnership and the possibility of soliciting some assistance from the group. Manager Jones Wood advised of staff's ongoing meetings to discuss possible planting sites because of the specific maintenance required for the trees.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.

ARBOR DAY DISCUSSION: The Board discussed tree species and number of plants to order for the Arbor Day plant giveaway. Last year, the supply of 100 plants was distributed with the event running out of seedlings before the end of the event. Members discussed whether to increase the number of plants as the population of the City has increased. It was noted that in prior years, the event offered approximately 250 bare root plants. Boardmember Sedore recommended following up with Thurston Conservation District and the Washington Native Plants Society South Sound Chapter to identify plants the two organizations are selling during March and April.

The Board agreed to order the same type and quantity of plants that were ordered for the 2024 Arbor Day event. Members agreed to provide packets of seeds similar to the 2024 event.

The Board suggested some minor corrections to the draft proclamation.

Manager Jones Wood advised on the availability of some posters and other giveaway items. She offered to follow-up on obtaining additional posters. The event is scheduled on April 9, 2025 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Staging for the event begins at 9 a.m. Boardmember Sedore offered to compile a list of books on planting and pruning that are available at the Tumwater Library. Chair Grantham acknowledged his attendance to the Tumwater City Council on April 15, 2025 to accept the Arbor Day proclamation.

**DRAFT STREET
TREE LIST:**

Manager Jones Wood advised that she received many questions as to why some tree species were either removed or added to the draft street tree list. Efforts to develop the list have been underway for some time with a stakeholder meeting held in February 2023 followed by several other meetings to review the street tree code and street tree list. In June, the process was paused on the tree code amendments including the street tree code, landscape code, and TMC 16.08 amendments to focus on advocacy for changes to the state's Wildland-Urban Interface Code. The City challenged a legislative bill last year, which has been re-presented by the Legislature. The City is continuing advocacy efforts against the new bill.

In November 2024, a City intern assessed the last version of the street tree list received from the consultants. The intern cross-referenced the list with the

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2025 PAGE 3**

study on climate change vulnerability and urban trees for the Puget Sound region on the long-term vulnerability of different tree species located within the region. Over the last year, the list has been edited to reflect which trees would thrive and survive based on climate change research. Field and operations staff requested involvement in the process to ensure good decisions are rendered on the selection of trees in the future. Another version of the list was produced based on feedback from field and operations staff. Many of the trees were recommended for removal based on experience by staff. In May 2024, Manager Jones Wood contacted DNR staff for feedback on the proposed list. Suggestions included some removals and some conflicts with some of the suggested removals by staff, such as the removal of all maple tree species from the list. Information provided to the Board includes comments from the various review sources that are often in conflict. Prior to removal of any trees, the consultants (arborists and landscape architects) drafted a list based on trees included on other street tree lists located throughout the Puget Sound area. As staff capacity is limited, the intent is to move forward eventually with a list as recommended by the Tree Board.

As Washington House Bill 1254 reintroduces provisions staff spent time and resources opposing last year, staff resources have been rededicated to oppose the new bill.

Boardmember Sedore suggested it would be helpful if staff could document the identity of entities that reviewed the document, such as a footnote at the end of the document stating the entity and date of review. He noted that the only recommendations he offered to the list were small tree recommendations from the University of Washington and Chair Grantham. In several cases, the draft received by the Board included a species that had been crossed off. However, either the University or Chair Grantham recommended retaining the species.

Discussion ensued on several species recommended for removal by staff based on maintenance issues or climate change concerns. Boardmember Sedore recommended the Board review the desired street tree characteristics and use that as the basis for criteria for including a species on the list.

Members commented on the issue of adding a species that is difficult to locate or is not commercially available. Additionally, specifying a particular variety may not guarantee availability of the species in any given year. Some of the species are trademarked and difficult to obtain. Chair Grantham commented on a practice by some jurisdictions to require all tree substitutions to be approved by the City. Boardmember Sedore commented that the City of Olympia indicated that the City changed its standards for tree root space and sidewalk specifications. He questioned whether the City should consider those options as well. Manager Jones Wood advised that those considerations would fall under the review of the street tree code, which will be initiated next year.

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2025 PAGE 4**

Discussion followed on different types of tree root conflicts affecting streets, sidewalks, and stormwater facility areas. Based on potential conflicts identified by staff for street trees and operations and maintenance for stormwater and water utilities, many tree species were crossed off the list. The Board recommended adding the deleted trees at the end of the file to reflect that the trees had been considered but were subsequently removed for a variety of reasons.

Members discussed the sources of availability of trees on the list. Chair Grantham offered to follow-up on the availability of different tree species.

Manager Jones Wood explained that the draft tree list was initially created by the consultants guided by reviews of other tree lists and reviewed and edited by City staff, the City's intern assigned to the project, and DNR staff. Many species of maple trees were removed as the City has too many maples and lacks appropriate diversity.

Boardmember Sedore commented on desired elements of a street tree based on a Google search using artificial intelligence (AI). Factors include soil compaction, air pollution, limited root space, pruning tolerance, disease and pest resistance, mechanical damage, and heat stress.

The Board and staff shared information on desired characteristics of street trees. Members discussed different species of desired trees that would be appropriate for planting in buffer or green space areas rather than as a street tree because of size or root damage to infrastructure. Manager Jones Wood noted that when the review is resumed for potential amendments to the landscaping code and the street tree code, the intent is to include a recommended list of trees for other types of plantings in non-right-of-way areas, as well as combination plantings.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Janine Linsey** urged consideration of strengthening either incentives or the code requiring developers to preserve groupings of existing trees, such as the area north of the Tumwater Costco. The groupings not only include a number of mature trees, but also important habitat supporting both wildlife and insects. She encouraged incentivizing options or through code regulations by not allowing developers to replant trees because there is no comparison between old trees with carbon mitigating qualities with small trees that will require decades for the tree to grow and mature. Trees are important for stormwater mitigation, rain saturation, combating air pollution, and shade.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled on March 10, 2025.

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2025 PAGE 5**

ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Chair Grantham adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
Puget Sound Meeting Services, psmsoly@earthlink.net