

MINUTES
KNOXVILLE TREE BOARD
February 5, 2009

The regular meeting of the Knoxville Tree Board was called to order at Ijams Nature Center at 8:30 a.m. on February 5, 2009, with Kim Davis presiding. Elected members present were Terry Faulkner, Tom Wolf, Ed Yost, Emily Woodle, David Vandergriff, Steve Noe, Sara Hedstrom, and Rocky Smith.

Ex-Officio members present were Tom Simpson, TN Forestry Division; Jeff McCarter, City Arborist; David McGinley, City Engineering; Anne Wallace, Policy and Communication; David Brace, and Kathy Hall, Recording Secretary.

Jim Cortese, former Chair of the Knoxville Tree Board, was our special guest speaker.

MINUTES: Minutes from previous meetings were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Tree Irrigation: Jim Cortese gave a presentation on improving tree irrigation by using a product that has mycorrhizal fungi and a water management gel added. This product has a number of beneficial nutrients for trees that will help improve tree survival, rooting, and water absorption. Adding this product with mycorrhizal at about \$5 per 2" caliper tree is more cost effective than using a Tree Gater at about \$25 per 2" caliper tree. He talked about the success at Dollywood with trees planted using this product.

Members asked the following questions.

1. Will small plantings around trees be adversely affected?
2. Can too much of the product be added to the soil?
3. Can both the mycorrhizal product and a tree gater be used?
4. How long will this product help a tree retain water?

Jim assured the members that because this is an all natural material, that it would not hurt the tree, or any plantings around it. There are specific directions for use to ensure that the correct amount is used. He stated that if this product is used, that there would be no need for a tree gater or any other type of slow drip watering device. He isn't sure how long the product will retain the proper amount of water need for the plant, but will find out if there is any research data available. He will also check to see if there is any comparative data on this method of water retention versus using a tree gater. He does feel that the best results can be seen when incorporating the product into the soil when planting the tree.

Other concerns were that if this product is used instead of gaters, or any other slow drip process that the plantings will not get the deep root soaking that they need. There is nothing that can be substituted for water. There was also a concern about using an incorrect mix of the product, since mycorrhizal is specific to the host species.

Terry suggested that we do a small test area using the mycorrhizal product on some, and gaters on others, and determine for ourselves which method is more effective.

David Brace suggested the we form a committee to look at the research on this product; planting specifications; and various soil amendments. Kim Davis, Sara Hedstrom, David Brace, Jeff McCarter, David Vandergriff, and Tom Simpson will serve on this committee.

David Vandergriff told the group that UT will have someone available on February 17th to demonstrate a similar product, and has invited the board members to attend. He will email more information to those interested in attending.

Legacy Tree Foundation Plantings - David Brace announced that the tree wells downtown will be filled. Five demonstration trees, Trident Maples, will be planted on Union Avenue. Two tree wells will be expanded, and a total of twenty-five trees, using tree gaters will be planted. There will be a tree cutting ceremony with Mayor Haslam. Board members are asked to attend.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sara Hedstrom raised a concern about the quality of trees that are available for our TAEP Grant plantings. There seems to be better quality from other states, and would like to see Tennessee growers improve on quality. After some discussion, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the TN Nursery Association that expresses our concerns. The letter will include established standards, and tree specs.

Terry suggested that we update our tree planting list.

Tom Simpson said that he has been in touch with a struggling tree board, and would like to send them a copy of our by-laws. The board agreed.

It was proposed to make name Dessa Blair, tree board emeritus. Mrs. Blair has been an active member of the Tree Board since it was founded, but has recently been unable to devote the time that she once did to the Board.

Anne Wallace talked about an issue with shade trees on Cumberland Avenue that addresses Form Base Codes. Structures should be at property line, and this causes a conflict between the bed and the trees. Items that need to be addressed are the set back variance, and the limited types of trees. Sara recommended waterproofing the building, or put a board against the foundation to deter root growth.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Kathy Hall, Recording Secretary