

Urban Forestry Board (UFB)
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 12, 2024
Final – Approved 3/11/24

Board Members Present:

Patrick Burke, Chair
Therese Kollerer
Avery McChristian
Cheryl Pellerin

City Council Representative Present:

Susan Cobb, Councilor

Staff Present:

Paul Bertagna, Public Works Director
Dan Galecki, City Forester
Jackson Dumanch, Public Works Project Coordinator

Absent:

Gary Ross, Councilor

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Burke called the Monday, February 12, 2024, regular meeting to order at approximately 3:00 PM. Staff confirmed a quorum was present.

2. New Board Member Introductions

Board Members and staff introduced and provided a brief background about themselves.

3. Determination of Vice Chair

Board Member Pellerin asked about the duties of the Vice Chair. Chair Burke stated that the Vice Chair would run a meeting in the absence of the Chair, adding that they occasionally cannot attend a meeting. Chair Burke nominated Board Member Kollerer for the position. Pellerin seconded the nomination. Nomination passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Chair Burke directed the Board to the December 11, 2023, draft meeting minutes. Vice Chair Kollerer made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Board Member Pellerin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Visitor Communications

Chair Burke and staff noted there was no visitor communication.

6. Board Business

A. Consideration of recommendation to remove storm damaged Ponderosa Pine at East Portal.

Chair Burke read the agenda item into the record. City Forester Galecki provided a summary of the report. Galecki described the condition of the tree after the failure of one of the two forked tops and expressed concern over the amount of rot present in the fork that fell. Director Bertagna informed the Board that the remaining fork has since fallen. Galecki stated that the tree was not suitable as a wildlife tree and recommended removal. Board Member Pellerin asked for clarification of a wildlife tree. Galecki stated that it is uncommon, but the dead bole would be left for use by wildlife and noted an example in Creekside Campground. Galecki added that a wildlife tree requires regular monitoring for hazards and recommends they only be in low-use areas. Councilor Cobb asked if the tree would not be well suited as a wildlife tree because it is in a high-traffic area. Galecki confirmed. Cobb asked for more information about the rot observed. Galecki stated that it is hard to know how deep the rot has spread. Chair Burke asked for further comment. Board Member McChristian asked if a replacement tree would be planted. Galecki recommended waiting on planting due to future work planned for the site. Chair Burke asked for a motion from the Board. Pellerin made a motion to remove the tree. McChristian seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Consideration of recommendation to remove two dead Ponderosa Pines at East Portal.

City Forester Galecki provided a summary of their report. Adding that keeping the trees as wildlife trees would not be suitable considering future construction on site could create a hazard and proximity to current and future public use. Chair Burke asked for causes of death. Galecki suspected insects. Councilor Cobb asked what happens to the tree after removal, Galecki stated that it depends, Director Bertagna stated that the bole is used as firewood for the campground. Vice Chair Kollerer made a motion to remove the two trees. Board Member McChristian seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Other Business

A. 325 S Ash St Leaning and Decayed Cottonwood (emergency removal).

City Forester Galecki summarized their report and noted that this tree experienced damage during the most recent winter storm revealing deep rot at the base affecting the root structure accompanied by a severe lean. Galecki added that this tree had already been removed as an emergency removal.

B. 385 E Jefferson Ave, Ponderosa Pine Fork, Lean, and Decline.

City Forester Galecki summarized their report and noted that the area around these trees has experienced decline and death in trees over the past 8 or 9 years due to insects. Galecki began with this first tree which is leaning and forked, recommending monitoring for future decline. Galecki noted that the fork was 'U' shaped and doesn't collect debris like a 'V' shaped fork would and could survive for many more years. Galecki then described the second tree in the report noting decline. Galecki described the informal condition known as "lions tail" noting that it is indicative of decline but not necessarily immediate death.

Galecki proposed using a drone to observe the fork in the tree. Galecki finished by stating that observation was recommended for both trees. Councilor Cobb asked Galecki if removing limbs from a leaning tree could help the tree survive, Galecki stated that it could potentially help but did not recommend at this time.

C. Leaning Ponderosa Pine near 275 N Cedar St.

City Forester Galecki described the tree and the conditions on site noting rotting stumps at the base of the tree. Galecki added that residents frequently call about concerns over the tree but no noticeable decline has been observed in the years since observation on this tree has begun. Galecki stated that the tree could survive another 10-15 years but a very strong storm could cause the tree to fall. Councilor Cobb stated that if the tree fell it could hit a car, Galecki stated it would take a catastrophic storm to cause the tree to fall.

D. Dead Ponderosa Pine near 1001 E Cascade Ave.

City Forester Galecki described the tree adding that the tree was completely dead. Galecki pointed out that there was a pitch tube at the base of the tree indicative of bark beetle infestation. Galecki compared the tree to those nearby noting the orange color in the needles and thin appearance estimating the tree to have been dead for a few months. Board Member Pellerin asked if the tree was in the process of being removed. Galecki stated it was not. Chair Burke asked Director Bertagna if removal had been scheduled. Bertagna stated that it had not been removed yet. Board Member McChristian asked when the nearby sidewalk was installed. Bertagna estimated 10-15 years ago. Councilor Cobb asked if a motion was required for removal, Bertagna stated this was just for making the Board aware. Chair Burke added that a tree with strong potential for damage to person or property no vote is required.

E. Leaning Ponderosa Pines at 325 and 540 S Pine St.

8. Board Member Comments

Vice Chair Kollerer spoke about Heritage Trees and the annual City Arbor Day celebration. Kollerer stated that to their knowledge there were no officially declared heritage trees though there is a process for declaring one and provided the Board with a list of some example candidates proposing that some be proposed to City Council for Heritage Tree status. Board Member Pellerin asked for clarification of the significance of Heritage Tree status. Councilor Cobb stated that it was to protect the tree. Kollerer stated that it was for public education about tree protection. Board Member McChristian asked if there were existing standards for declaration of Heritage Tree status. Kollerer confirmed there was. McChristian asked if there were any currently on the list. Kollerer stated there were not, but many could qualify. Project Coordinator Dumanch read the code language relating to requirements for Ponderosa Pines being declared as Heritage Trees: being approximately 200 years old or more and the size of the tree should be approximately 30 inches DBH or greater and or more than 85 feet tall. Pellerin asked if a Heritage Tree would get signage. Kollerer stated that they didn't believe that had been determined. Kollerer added that public and private trees could be declared as Heritage Trees stating that a very large private Cottonwood at the Cottonwood Café would be an example. McChristian stated the Oregon Travel Information Council (OTIC) has a statewide list

of heritage trees and someone could nominate a tree for that list and they would provide signage and enter it into their database. McChristian stated that Brittany Oxford with the Oregon Department of Forestry works on the project. Cobb stated that Heritage Trees could be a good tourist attraction. McChristian offered their assistance in work relating to Heritage Trees.

Pellerin asked who spearheads the Arbor Day event. Kollerer stated that Emme Shoup with the City organizes the event. Kollerer added that former Board Member Rebecca Green helped with the event and that Director Bertagna helps with procuring and organizing the planting of trees. Pellerin voiced interest in attending the event. Cobb asked about a leaning tree outside of City Hall and if it was a concern. Galecki stated that many trees in town are leaning and is aware of the tree. Pellerin asked about the property within city limits owned by Oregon State Parks and asked for confirmation that it was under State jurisdiction, Bertagna confirmed that to be true. Pellerin followed up by stating that there are significant dead standing trees and was concerned about the safety of individuals. Bertagna stated that the City is not the property owner, and the liability runs with the property owner but stated that the property owner could be notified about the trees.

McChristian asked how trees are brought to the attention of the Board. Galecki stated that observations from the public, City Staff, and himself are the main means.

Galecki stated that they missed an item under "Other Business" and added that the trees are healthy and not of concern but nearby residents occasionally express concerns about the trees on S Pine St as many lean. Galecki stated that important factors concerning leaning trees are heaving soil around the base during high wind events, splitting forks, excessing debris, and/or leaning more when under load of snow and ice are all concerning scenarios.

9. Adjourn

Chair Burke adjourned the meeting at 3:45 PM.