



THE CITY OF
OXFORD

City of Oxford
Tree Board
Meeting
Thursday, August 6, 2026 at 11:00 AM
City Hall Courtroom

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Be it known that the City of Oxford Tree Board did meet in regular session on Thursday, August 6th, 2026, in person with video conference available and was called to order by Commissioner Cowan Hunter at 11:05 A.M., with the following present:

Tree Board:

Cowan Hunter, Chairman
Mary Hartwell Howorth
Ed Croom
Hume Bryant
Nick Matthews*, Director, Landscape Services
**ex officio, non-voting*

City of Oxford:

James Hirsch, Development Services - Planning
Mark Levy, Director, Special Projects
Garrett Black, Special Projects
Allison Ferris, Development Services - Engineering

Other:

Tymple Harrison, Mississippi Forestry Commission

2. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Cowan Hunter motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Mary Hartwell Howorth seconded; all aye.

3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

3.a. Request to approve the minutes of the July 2026 Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Hunter moved to approve. Commissioner Howorth seconded; all aye.

4. Department Issues and Reports

4.a. Landscape Services

i. Public Inquiries, Incidents, or Assistance Requests Regarding City Trees

Nick Matthews, Director of Landscape Services, reported that the main calls for Landscape Services were about tree growth onto sidewalks, as well as some necessary tree removals, for example, on South 16th Street. There was discussion.

ii. Update on Summer Projects and Preparation for Fall

There were no updates on this item.

4.b. Planning

i. Gary Subdivision - Pending Arborist Report Information

James Hirsch, Development Services - Planning, noted the applicant had a conflict and could not be present at this meeting. James reported the family was okay with the arborist report discussion at this meeting, but noted if there were concerns that might impact approval, they requested that the matter be postponed to a future meeting.

James summarized the champion tree issue affected by the potential Gary Subdivision and said that the plans do not currently show work within the drip line. James noted the arborist report would be included in staff meeting files when this matter goes to the Board of Aldermen and discussed possible conditions of approval being recommended to the Board of Aldermen, i.e., monitoring of the site, but that the Board of Aldermen may or may not uphold the conditions. There was discussion. James highlighted the planning and building process that helps ensure protocols are followed during construction.

Commissioner Hunter indicated the vote would take place at the next meeting in September. Commissioner Hunter summarized his discussion with the arborist, David Fulham, and continued to review the arborist report.

James said there were also trees on Lincoln Avenue that may be on the City Right-of-Way that might have to be removed in relation to this project due to stormwater detention. James indicated the Tree Board would need to discuss this matter. There was discussion. Commissioner Hunter said he would like the Tree Board to assess this area.

ii. Current or Upcoming Development Tree Issues, Mitigation, etc.

James discussed the Planning Commission Agenda for August 2026. James said there were a few cases that involve tree mitigation. James highlighted issues involving tree mitigation, i.e., Baptist Hospital Campus, Jeff Davis Drive.

iii. Update Regarding Parks and Trails Master Plan Design/Next Steps

James highlighted aspects of the plan proposal, such as connectivity/trails, bridges, etc. James said this plan would be a 20-year plan and would be

expensive. There was discussion about priorities and phasing being presented to the Board of Aldermen.

4.c. Special Projects

i. Update Regarding Tree Inventory and Data Projects Progress

Mark Levy, Director of Special Projects, reported that Green Grove's tree inventory assessment was ongoing and over halfway completed. There was discussion.

ii. Projects and Funding Updates Regarding Current Fiscal Year and Fiscal Year 2027 Needs

Development Services Annex Building – Mark reported the building is being renovated for meetings, and there is a landscape plan for this building. Mark discussed that there would be irrigation and tree planting plans for both the annex building and the main Development Services building. Per Mark, this would be a current fiscal year project.

Pickleball Courts — Mark reported the Board of Aldermen approved advertising for bids for the pickleball courts. Mark said the site will require tree mitigation. He indicated he is currently working on the landscape plan for this project. There was discussion about the site of this project. Per Mark, this would be in the future fiscal year.

There was discussion regarding the tree escrow fund and tree planting within roundabouts that would be within the upcoming fiscal year 2026-2027.

5. Business

5.a. Consider Initial Steps, Plans, and Potential Work Groups Regarding Reviews/Reassessment Regarding Parking Lot Trees, Street Trees, etc., per Previous Discussion.

Commissioner Hunter summarized the previous meeting discussion regarding parking lot tree concerns. Commissioner Hunter proposed ideas for attempting to address concerns, i.e., work session meetings to discuss a possible process. James discussed the limited ability of the city related to concerns about private property. There was further discussion regarding possible areas of improvement. Mark discussed how the city can only enforce what is in the ordinance.

5.b. Mississippi Forestry Commission Update (If Available)

Tymple Harrison, Mississippi Forestry Commission, reported that grant applications should open by the end of August. There was discussion regarding funding sources. Tymple indicated an email would be coming in the near future.

6. Adjourn

Commissioner Hunter moved to adjourn. Commissioner Hume Bryant seconded; all aye. The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 A.M.