



Tree Committee Minutes

March 25, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo

Tree Committee Members Present: Member Alan Bate, Member Henry Bonifas, Member Brian Pineda, Member Emily Rosten, Vice Chair Ben Parker

Tree Committee Members Absent: Member Daniel Canella, Chair Elizabeth Lucas

City Staff Present: Urban Forest Supervisor / City Arborist Anthony Whipple, Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault, Deputy Director of Maintenance Greg Cruce, Deputy Clerk Megan Wilbanks

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the San Luis Obispo Tree Committee was called to order on March 25, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, by Vice Chair Parker.

Urban Forest Supervisor / City Arborist Anthony Whipple introduced the new Urban Forestry Program Coordinator / City Arborist, Walter Gault, who will take over as the staff liaison for the Tree Committee.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public Comment:

Fitzgerald Kelly

--End of Public Comment--

3. CONSENT

3.a CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES - FEBRUARY 12, 2024 TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Motion By Member Bate

Second By Member Pineda

To approve the Tree Committee Special Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2024.

Ayes (4): Member Bate, Member Bonifas, Member Pineda, and Vice Chair Parker

Abstained* (1): Member Rosten

**per Tree Committee Bylaws, abstentions without a conflict of interest count as a "Yes" vote*

Absent (2): Member Canella, and Chair Lucas

CARRIED (5 to 0)

4. TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

4.a 1065 HIGUERA STREET TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

Urban Forest Supervisor / City Arborist Anthony Whipple presented the staff report and responded to Committee inquiries.

The applicant, Tom Brown, and property owner, Ernie Kim, provided an overview of the Tree Removal Application and responded to questions raised.

Vice Chair Parker opened Public Comment

Public Comment:

Fitzgerald Kelly

--End of Public Comment--

Motion By Member Bate

Second By Member Rosten

Recommend the Community Development Director approve the Tree Removal Application to remove four (4) Mexican Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) trees, located at 1065 Higuera Street, with the following recommendations:

- Replacement shall occur at a 1:1 ratio with four (4) 24-inch box trees planted in-ground on the site.
- Require that tree varieties be selected from the City's Master Tree List.
- The applicant is encouraged to provide protection around the young trees, such as stakes or a cage, to discourage vandalism and prevent damage to the trees.

Ayes (5): Member Bate, Member Bonifas, Member Pineda, Member Rosten, and Vice Chair Parker

Absent (2): Member Canella, and Chair Lucas

CARRIED (5 to 0)

5. COMMENT AND DISCUSSION

5.a ARBORIST REPORT

Urban Forest Supervisor / City Arborist Anthony Whipple provided the following update of upcoming projects and activities in the Tree Division:

- Onboarding Walter Gault, the new Urban Forestry Program Coordinator / City Arborist. Tree Removal Applications and Appeals will now filter through Mr. Gault's office in Community Development
- Update on San Luis Ranch tree removals
- Update on trees removals along Monterey Street and at the intersection of Monterey Street and Toro Street

Senior Planner Rachel Cohen provided more details on the San Luis Ranch tree removal request.

Deputy Director of Maintenance Operations Greg Cruce informed the Committee that staff from Public Works will provide quarterly maintenance updates at future Tree Committee meetings.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m. The next Regular Meeting of the Tree Committee is scheduled for April 22, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo.

APPROVED BY TREE COMMITTEE: XX/XX/2024