



TREE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

6101 Johnson Creek Blvd

01.15.2025

Hybrid / In-Person and Zoom Video Conference Meeting

Board Members Present:

Ley Garnett
Camden Mckone
Olivia Padilla
Jon Brown
Alexis Barton

Board Members Absent:

Kathleen Hunter-Brenner

Guests:

Dr. Vivek Shandas, Professor, Portland State University

Staff Present:

Courtney Wilson, Urban Forester
Katie Gavares, Climate and Natural Resources Manager

MEETING NOTES

Katie Gavares reviewed the Tree Board's draft priorities identified in the November meeting. Those priorities are:

1. Support community outreach and education
2. Expand Tree Code (Commercial Tree Code)
3. Coordinate Emerald Ash Borer treatment
4. Develop a Heritage Tree Program
5. Develop a tree planting and maintenance program
6. Grow the Urban Forestry team and supporting resources
7. Evaluate success of existing Tree Code
8. Consistent communication from UF to community on why it matters and current updates.

Katie said Milwaukie had received a 100-thousand dollar grant from the Oregon Department of Forestry to create an equity plan within the City's Urban Forestry unit. The grant will also be used to update the City's canopy map and stimulate community engagement.

Katie introduced guest speaker, Dr. Vivek Shandas, Urban Studies and Planning Professor from PSU.

Dr. Shandas outlined a strategy to deal with the new Trump Administration especially regarding \$1.5 billion left from the Federal Inflation Reduction Act that might still be available to cities. Dr. Shandas, who is on the National Community Advisory Board, recommended that cities propose funding for programs, like the Tree Board, rather than projects. He said the State is doing a good job of hiring contract officers to help apply for the federal funds to help organizations like the Tree Board. He recommended the Board to strengthen ties to State agencies like Oregon Community Forestry and set clear priorities.

Dr. Shandas said when it comes to counting trees and it's important to tie tree inventories to projects, that high-resolution aerial photographs may be cheaper and more accurate than on ground inventories. He said research continues into climate resistant trees and that it's important to properly frame the fire vs. trees debate, like stressing that trees keep moisture in the soil.

Turning to the trees vs. housing debate, Dr. Shandas said it's critical to have policy in place with clear Code because tree removal is the cheapest option for developers. He recommended a strong heritage tree program.

The Tree Board meeting concluded after Katie and Courtney discussed Urban Forest staff priorities and priorities shared with the Board.

Urban Forest Staff Priorities

- Informed by the community, develop an UFMP Equity Implementation Plan
- Develop sustainable programs to implement the UFMP Equity Plan. Including but not limited to an updated Branch Out Milwaukie map, planting and maintenance program, low-income tree nursery program, workforce development.
- Ongoing community outreach (i.e. Climate and Urban Forestry Newsletter)
- Coordinate EAB treatment with NCPRD and surrounding jurisdictions
- Consolidate and update Milwaukie tree lists

Staff and Tree Board shared priorities to advance in 2025

- Urban Forest Engagement & Communication Framework
- UFMP Equity Plan
- Sustainable programs, policies, and funding to implement UFMP and equity plan
- Strategies for improved tree preservation to meet 40% canopy goal
 - Evaluate success of existing Tree Code and fee schedule
 - Explore commercial tree code
 - Identify locations and incentives for additional plantings
- Advise on:
 - EAB treatment coordination
 - New consolidated Milwaukie Tree List

The Tree Board meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.