

# **Minutes**

## **Southport Forestry Committee**

August 12, 2025; Indian Trail Meeting Hall

The meeting was convened at 5:04 p.m. by the Chair who noted that, in the absence of a quorum, it would not be possible to conduct a formal meeting. Those in attendance, however, thought that it could be beneficial to run through the agenda and have a preliminary, non-binding discussion of the brainstorming ideas from July 8<sup>th</sup>.

Members in Attendance: Scott Len (Chair); Ben Smith; Roxie Smith

Consulting Members: Michael McGhee

Administration Representatives & Guests: Maureen “Mo” Meehan (Planning Services Director); Karen Mostellar (Aldersperson liaison)

### **Old/Recurring Business**

**Minutes:** Approval of the July minutes was deferred until the September meeting.

**Ordinance/Permits/City Topics:** In response to a question, Maureen indicated that tree permits do not have an expiration date. She shared that there was nothing else of note to report.

#### **Member Comments/Questions; Open Forum Period:**

Scott announced that on August 19<sup>th</sup> he and Karen would be participating in an online seminar sponsored by Audubon North Carolina on the topic of how Southport developed its tree ordinance and the steps that were taken to get it adopted.

He also reported that the farm manager for Seven Meadows, a long-time supplier of trees for Southport, had been struck by lightning off Wrightsville Beach.

### **New Business**

**Election of Officers:** In the absence of a quorum, the election was deferred until the September meeting.

**John N. Smith Cemetery:** Scott reported that Never Stumped had donated its time and equipment to fell a dead tree at the cemetery. Mark, Ben and he loaded and removed the debris. Scott reported that he had agreed that the Forestry Committee would measure and assess the condition of the 38 remaining trees on the cemetery property and provide the Cemetery Committee with the results of the survey. Scott has already tagged the trees and the survey will be conducted in early fall when the weather is cooler.

**Brainstorming Plans for Upcoming Period:** There was continued interest around the concept of April’s being “Arbor Month” (Items 1-5 on summary list). A question was raised about whether Franklin Square Gallery would display entries in any arts contests that might be held and this will be explored. Roxie agreed to contact the Brunswick Arts Council to solicit its involvement.

There was also continued support for developing items (e.g., tee shirts, note cards, etc.) for sale at the planned gift shop at the Fort, as well as at the Chamber of Commerce and perhaps at area shops, with their being able to benefit from any net revenues.

Measuring the City’s big live oaks for membership in the Live Oak Society remains a priority. Conducting a survey of the trees in the City’s rights-of-way may need to be accomplished on an iterative basis since federal grant monies for the U.S. Forest Service for such endeavors is no long available.

Scheduling walking tours to see the trees on the tree tour remains of interest.

A pruning seminar and/or video for the web page garnered enthusiasm, with the idea that Never Stumped might be willing to help with this.

The idea of working with Penderlea to sell trees at cost to private individuals was cited as a continuing interest.

A new idea was raised of having the City's public relations office post something once a month about trees. There may already be a form that can be submitted that would generate such a post.

### **Regular Business**

**Tree Removals/Loss:** The tree that was removed from the John N. Smith Cemetery was a dead laurel oak.

**Tree Care:** Watering continues on the new trees as needed. Michael indicates that he now has the capacity to feed the Garrison Oak and the Indian Trail Tree. The bald cypress that had been planted near the Post Office is dropped leaves, perhaps from having gotten too much water. It will be watched to assess how it is recovering.

**Tree Pruning:** The City has done weight reduction on the laurel oak at 516 W. Nash, and Scott cleaned up the face of the tear on the trunk caused by the limb drop.

**Consultations:** Scott was asked to look at the dead laurel oak at the Indigo Clubhouse at 6191 Cottage Creek, as well as several others located around town.

**Education/Publicity:** The webpage has been updated with the names of the new Committee members and their terms of office.

A new "Tree City" sign has been installed on E. Leonard at the City Limit sign. There is one additional sign that could be placed somewhere in the community.

Scott will do the September newsletter submission once again discussing trees and hurricane season.

**Next Regular Meeting:** Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at ITMH.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.