

Minutes

Southport Forestry Committee

July 8, 2025; Indian Trail Meeting Hall

The meeting was convened at 5:05 p.m. by the Chair who welcomed the returning members and the new member of the Committee to the 2025-26 year.

Members in Attendance: Scott Len (Chair); Bif Bream; Fred Fiss; Marianne Huntley; Heather Kos; Ben Smith; Roxie Smith

Consulting Members: (none)

Administration Representatives & Guests: Carl Courter (Bartlett Tree Service); Maureen “Mo” Mehan (Planning Services Director); Karen Mostellar (Alderpersion liaison)

Old/Recurring Business

Minutes: The minutes of the June 10, 2025 meeting were approved with two corrections – Ben Smith as member-elect and noting that Michael took the ISA Certified Arborist Exam.

Ordinance/Permits/City Topics: Maureen reported that a number of tree permit applications had been received. This was viewed as a positive sign of the Committee’s efforts to promote awareness of the Tree Ordinance.

Member Comments/Questions; Open Forum Period:

Marianne reminded members to keep an eye out for prospective Tree Champions over the coming months.

Bif reported that there is a dead tree on City property on the corner of Leonard and Caswell. Tom Stanley is the person in City administration to alert to these findings.

New Business

Franklin Square Park: It was reported that the Friends of Franklin Square Park had announced on Facebook that the City was accepting donations for restoration of the Park.

Tree City: Scott has applied the “21 Year” stickers to the Tree City signs that are around town. There are two stickers remaining. It was suggested that an additional sign might be put at the far end of Leonard Street.

Looking Ahead: The Committee engaged in a brainstorming session intended to surface goals and ideas for 2025-26. The following ideas emerged during the discussion, some of which, it was agreed, could potentially be clustered:

- Move Arbor Day to the 4th Saturday of April, rather than that Friday, with the goal of bolstering attendance.
 - Since it is a low-impact event, there is no reason not to do it again in Franklin Square Park. The Committee will need to submit an application and site map to Heather to secure the date.
 - Need to think of ways to make it more of an “event.”
- Promote the Tree Walking Tour.
 - Hold several walking tours over the course of the year, e.g., September/October and March/April when adults are taking advantage of vacationing in the shoulder seasons.
 - Hold a scavenger hunt where participants collect “chips” at the various trees and prizes are awarded.
 - Attach QR codes to the trees which would allow the public to get more information about these trees.
- Measure the large oaks in the City rights-of-way for membership in the Live Oak Society
 - Reactivate the Committee’s relationship with the 4th grade at Southport Elementary School by having them name the trees.
- Offer a tree trimming/pruning seminar for the public.

- Promote the event via the Pilot, Facebook, etc.
- Create items for sale that feature Southport trees, e.g., tee shirts, note cards.
 - Partner with Brunswick Arts Council for designs. Alternately, hold a contest to choose the featured graphics.
 - Structure sales so that the Visitors Center, Chamber of Commerce, and local merchants could sell the items and retain the net profits.
- Invite the Brunswick Arts Council to sponsor a weekend's long artistic installation in Franklin Square Park, perhaps in conjunction with another event such as Arbor Day or the Spring or Winter Festival.
- Identify trees in the City's rights-of-way that need protection.
- Post items on the City of Southport's Facebook page.

Regular Business

Tree Removals/Loss: A City tree at 216 W. Nash had a limb drop and needs weight reduction. A permitted removal was done at 205 E. Leonard of a laurel oak that had been affected by storms.

Tree Care: Watering continues on the new trees as needed. Penderlea advised that the irrigation rate should be 5 gallons/day every day for new trees.

Consultations: Scott was asked to look at a tree in Smith Cemetery that has died. He also volunteered that the Committee would do a tree survey of the Cemetery. He thinks there might be enough tags remaining from the Smithville Cemetery and Franklin Square Park surveys to cover this one too.

Education/Publicity: Scott will do the August newsletter submission featuring his recent visit to the Angel Oak in South Carolina.

Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at ITMH.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.