



## Minutes

### Wilmington Tree Commission Regular Meeting

9:30 – 11:00 AM, June 18, 2025

#### Attendance:

Thomas Boland, Chair, *in-person*  
Bridget Callahan, Vice Chair, *virtual*  
Catherine Cardamone, *in-person*  
Matthew Moore, *virtual*  
Alana Seaman, *in-person*  
Cathey Luna, *in-person*

Terri Parham, *in-person*  
Jeanne Fisher, *in-person*  
*Ex-Officio:*  
Sally Thigpen – Parks and Recreation  
Haley Hopkins – Secretary, Staff Liaison, Long Range Planner

1. Call to order 9:35 A.M.; Note presence of quorum (7/9).
2. Review and approve minutes from April 16, 2025 (VOTE)  
*Motion to approve the minutes by Cathey Luna, Second by Terri Parham. No discussion. All in favor, 7/9.*
3. Commission Strategic Planning Workshop
  - a. In three groups, create an action plan for each action area.
    - i. Actions areas: (1) Community Education to the Public about Trees, (2) Tree Ordinance and Enforcement by the City, (3) Develop Partnerships with Other Organizations Associated with Trees
  - b. Report out and discuss action items.
  - c. Identify a SMART Goal for each action area.

**SMART Goals:**

Action Area 1: Community Education to the Public About Trees  
*Give presentations to three professional organizations that influence new community members on the value of trees and maintaining the tree canopy in Wilmington within 1-2 years.*

Action Area 2: Tree Ordinance and Enforcement by the City  
*Analyze the current tree ordinance and recommend an amendment to the land development code to increase tree retention in all new development within 2 years.*

Action Area 3: Develop Partnerships with Other Organizations Associated with Trees  
*Create a spreadsheet/score card with statistics regarding number of volunteers, volunteer hours, trees distributed and use to provide updates to the public, determine the impact of work completed, and evaluate current practices within 1-2 years.*

*Motion to adopt the three action area goals as part of the Wilmington Tree Commission's Strategic Plan by Alana Seaman, Second by Cate Cardamone, No discussion, All in Favor, 7/9.*
4. **Heritage Tree Awards – Update**
  - a. One application to be reviewed. *Correction: Two applications to be reviewed. 2024-25 Heritage Tree Awards were presented at City Council on June 17<sup>th</sup> by the Chair, Tom Boland. Emails have been sent to the two outstanding applicants to schedule measurements.*
5. Strategic Planning committee updates. – Focus areas are currently being redeveloped through the strategic planning process and is expected to be completed by August of 2025.

6. Isabelle Shepherd - Update on activities of the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees
  - *Funding – Received funding from the NHC Endowment for operational support and a tree giveaway at the Greenfield Lake 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event on November 8<sup>th</sup>; several grant applications are pending for street tree plantings.*
  - *MOU with the City of Wilmington – Still in Progress*
  - *Advocacy – Advocating against NC SB205, a revamping of a House Bill that was killed in committee that intends to strip away municipalities critical land-use authority.*
7. New Business
  - Heritage Tree Awards Presentation at City Council Recap (June 17, 2025)  
*All applicants were in attendance to accept their awards. City Council member Kevin Spears inquired about determining the age of the trees. While the only way to accurately define a trees age is coring, there is interest in making estimates for future Heritage Trees.*
  - National Arbor Day Celebration at the MLK Center Recap (April 25, 2025)  
*Cate Cardamone and Tom Boland led a tree education workshop with the MLK Center's afterschool program. This program was successful, students were interested, inquisitive, and excited to learn more about the environment around them. There is interest in making this an annual event.*
  - Earth Day Festival Recap (April 26, 2025)  
*The WTC shared a table with the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees (ACFT) and is grateful for their partnership. The Commission is interested in a separate table next year, next to the ACFT, to have more space for resources and activities.*
  - Native Plant Festival – September 17-20, 2025  
*Cate Cardamone is reaching out to the organizer on this year's event format.*
  - NHC Tree Canopy Report  
*The report recently became available and should be of interest to Commissioners.*
  - *Additional upcoming events:*
    - *Fire in the Pines – October*
    - *Tree Fest – January*
  - *The Camelia Club has reached out with an interest in a presentation on oaks and keystone species.*

Next Meeting is August 20, 2025, at 9:30 A.M., 929 N. Front St, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 269.

a) Adjourn – 11:03 A.M.