



Minutes

Wilmington Tree Commission Regular Meeting

9:30 – 11:00 AM, October 15, 2025

Attendance:

Bridget Callahan, Vice Chair – *in-person*

Terri Parham – *in-person*

Jeanne Fisher – *in-person*

Rhonda Waterhouse – *in-person*

Catherine Cardamone – *in-person*

Alana Seaman – *virtual*

Cathey Luna – *virtual*

Ex-Officio:

Sally Thigpen – Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation

Travis Henley – Staff Liaison substitute, Planning and Development

1. Call to order at 9:34 AM. Note presence of quorum, 5/9.
2. Review and approve minutes from September 17, 2025 (VOTE)
Motion to approve by Jeanne Fisher, second by Rhonda Waterhouse. No discussion. All in favor, 5/9.
3. Presentation from the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees, “Code and Canopy”
4. **Heritage Tree Awards – Update**
 - a. No new applications
5. Strategic Plan Updates
 - a. **Community Education to the Public**
Goal: 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.
Bridget Callahan connected with two nurseries for pre-liminary discussions and will continue identifying organizations and reaching out.
Follow-Up Items: Investigate local nurseries to be included in the pursuit of this goal.
 - b. **Tree Ordinance and Enforcement**
Goal: Analyze current tree ordinance and recommend an amendment to the Land Development Code to increase tree retention in all new development within 2 years.
Follow-Up Items: Received presentation from the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees on their Code and Canopy recommendations.
 - c. **Partnerships and Collaboration**
Goal: Create a spreadsheet and 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 2 years.
Follow-Up Items: Rhonda Waterhouse following up with Haley Hopkins for a list of all commissioners and contact information to confirm volunteer hours.
6. Isabelle Shepherd - Update on activities of the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees
 - *Tree Stewards – Two classes completed with a focus on team building.*

- *Tree Plantings – Planting one tree at D.C. Virgo Preparatory Academy to celebrate Legacy Day on Oct. 24, with a larger planting planned for Feb. 22 sponsored by Audi Cape Fear. Planting 25 trees at Olsen Park on Nov. 7 sponsored by Pathfinder Wealth Consulting. Holding a Northside street tree planting on Jan. 10 sponsored by the Residents of Old Wilmington (ROW) and the NC Urban Forest Council, and they are looking for volunteers. Planting at GLOW and Sparks Academy funded by the Cape Fear Garden Club on Jan. 30.*
- *Tree Distributions – Four distributions planned, the first will be at the Leland Cultural Arts Center. There are over 4,300 trees to be given away, sponsored by Verizon and the Arbor Day Foundation. Wilmington distributions include Legion Stadium on Dec. 5 sponsored by Enterprise Mobility Foundation and Arbor Day Foundation and D.C. Virgo Preparatory Academy on Feb. 14 sponsored by the NHC Endowment and Landfall Foundation.*

7. New Business

- 2026 Regular Meeting Calendar (VOTE)
No vote conducted. Commissioner discussion regarding changing meeting day and time for more accessible attendance.
- Upcoming Events:
 - Tree Fest – January
 - NC Arbor Day – March
 - National Arbor Day – April
 - Earth Day Festival – April
 - Additional events of interest to the Commission

Next Meeting is November 19, 2025, at 9:30 A.M., 929 N. Front St, 2nd Floor, Room 269.

- a) Adjourn – 10:40 AM

Wilmington Tree Commission
DRAFT 2026 Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the City of Wilmington, 929 N. Front St.

Month	Date	Time
January	1/21	9:30 – 11:00 AM
February	2/18	9:30 – 11:00 AM
March	3/18	9:30 – 11:00 AM
April	4/15	9:30 – 11:00 AM
May	5/20	9:30 – 11:00 AM
June	6/17	9:30 – 11:00 AM
July	No Meeting	
August	8/19	9:30 – 11:00 AM
September	9/16	9:30 – 11:00 AM
October	10/21	9:30 – 11:00 AM
November*	11/18	9:30 – 11:00 AM
December	No Meeting	

*Elections are to be held at the November meeting.