Town of James Island

Minutes of the Tree Advisory Council

September 8, 2026 – 5 p.m.

Present: Chair - Robin Hardin, Bridget Lussier, Council Liaison – Mayor Brook Lyon, Susan Milliken, Lynda Glover, Jenny Welch, Town Staff liaison - Parker Richardson. Absent: Val Henshaw, David Tomblin and Paul Cantrell.

May 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes: Motion was made to approve the minutes by Susan Milliken, seconded by Bridget Lussier. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Grant Funding & Application Status: The application for the SC Forestry Commission grant by the TAC/TOJI was not funded, in part because educational efforts (tree plantings at a public school) did not fit into the specific grant description. Bridget Lussier was thanked for all her efforts to complete and submit the application along with the TOJI staff, Mayor Lyon and other TAC members. TAC had discussion regarding other upcoming grant opportunities including through "Palmetto Pride" and/or a grant to plant fruit trees/an orchard at a Town park. Decision was made not to apply for the Palmetto Pride grant for trees as trees must be picked up in Columbia, SC. Bridget L. is setting up a TAC gmail account for the purpose of applying for grants in the future. This gmail address will be: jitreecouncil@gmail.com.

Adopt-A-Tree Program and sign: Mayor Lyon brought to the TAC the issue of the TOJI's Adopt-A-Tree program and needed repair to the sign at Pinckney Park. Cost of sign repair/new sign is $200 which includes the cost of new name plates for donors. The cost of the name plates is minimal. TAC agreed to take on these costs out of the TAC budget. Motion made by Chair Hardin, 2nd by Mayor Lyon. Motion unanimously passed. Parker Richardson was thanked for her work to repair the sign and order and obtain new donor name plates. The Town has revitalized the Adopt-A-Tree program and will provide flyers about it at Pinckney Park. This program was discussed and will be supported moving forward.

Future Tree Plantings in Pinckney Park: Discussion that there are so many trees in Pinckney Park presently needing care that other locations in the Town should be looked at for new tree plantings.

TAC Annual Budget: The TAC's annual budget is $15,000. The TAC will take on the cost/s associated with the Adopt-A-Tree program, which will be minimal. A summary of budget and expenses was provided: $3,000 remained from last budget year - paid to Hyam's for fruit trees for Fruit Tree Giveaway/Nov. 2026. Hyam's will order 200 fruit trees total and deliver to the Town. TAC has paid for most of the trees, will pay for the rest closer to November upon delivery. Approx. total cost for fruit trees will be $4,000-$4,400. Hyam's will

be paid an additional $1,400 for the fruit trees. **Fruit Trees Giveaway will be at the Friday, November 6, 2026 Town Market.

The TAC discussed using TAC funds to care for, remove vines and prune some of the older, well-known grand live oaks on the island. Trees discussed that are needing care and pruning - live oak near the new compact roundabout at 1182 Fort Johnson Rd, live oak at 765 Folly Rd. (Cuda Co. Seafood), live oak at 1233 Camp Rd. (landscaping/mulch business). Mayor Lyon will investigate the possibility of this, speak with the Town's arborist and report back. Grand live oak trees were cared for and pruned by Natural Directions on Camp Road in 2023 with TOJI funding.

Tree/s Mitigation - Camp Road/Fort Johnson Road County intersection project – Mayor Lyon will look into the details and timing of the BZA trees mitigation portion of this project and report back to the TAC.

Tree Awards: Presentations and Nominations: The TAC will present Holy Cross Cemetery the Canopy Tree Award for their live oaks this fall. Mayor Lyon announced October 13, 2026, 3:30 p.m. as a possible date and time for this award. Date and time will be confirmed later. All TAC members are urged to attend.

Guest Speaker – October meeting of the TAC: Susan Milliken brought to the TAC the suggestion to invite David Quick, retired Post and Courier reporter and member of the Town of Mt Pleasant Tree Task Force to attend our October meeting. David would speak to the TAC about Mt Pleasant's 2026 Tree Task Force Report and Tree Inventory. It was agreed that David Quick would be invited to attend and speak, October 13, 2026 meeting of the TAC.

Change in October meeting time: It was agreed that the next meeting of the TAC would begin at 4:30 p.m. instead of 5 p.m. due to the possibility of the Holy Cross Cemetery Canopy Tree Award event.

Tree Giveaway(s), Spring Educational Tree Planting: Friday, November 6th Fall Town Market – Fruit trees giveaway, more details to be discussed at the October meeting. The TAC will decide later regarding fruit tree planting instructions to hand out to those taking trees for Nov. 6th. Chair Hardin will reach out to Camp Road Middle School regarding a Spring 2027 tree planting with teachers and students and will report back with more information when she has it.

Arbor Day 2026 – First Friday in December: TAC will discuss at October meeting.

For the Good of the Order: Mayor Lyon announced a Charleston Horticultural Society event at Town Hall on Friday, October 16, 7:30 a.m. and invited all TAC members to attend. Event details at this link - https://www.chashortsoc.org/event-details/mayors-resiliency-roundtable

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned. ****The next meeting of TOJI TAC will be Tuesday, October 13, 2026, 4:30 p.m.**