

Town of James Island
Minutes of the Tree Advisory Council
November 10, 2025, 5 p.m.

Present: Chair Robin Hardin, Susan Milliken, Paul Cantrell, Valerie Henshaw, Bridget Lussier, Vice Chair Julie Hallman, Natalie Rumph, Council Liaison - Mayor Brook Lyon. Absent: Jenny Welch, David Tomblin, Lynda Glover.

Welcome: Chair Hardin called the meeting to order.

October 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes—Natalie R. made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Susan Milliken. Members unanimously approved minutes.

Tree Awards: Award Presentations Made; Status of Proposed Nominations—Correction: Tree Canopy Award was previously presented to Mr. John Woodfield at 923 Stiles Dr on Oct. 13, 2025 (name correction). The TAC presented a Tree Canopy Award to the Andino family 1422 Fort Lamar Rd on Sat, Nov 1, 2025, along with the Tree Steward Award posthumously recognizing Mr. George Altine. The event went well and was well-attended. Photos were posted to social media.

Mayor Lyon has delivered a new Tree Steward Award sign to Hyam's. Appreciation expressed to Natalie R. for the new tree award sign design and new tree award certificate design.

First Baptist Church Tree Steward Award --Julie H. reported back on possible dates for awarding a Tree Steward Award to First Baptist Church-Camp Road for their beautiful, historic live oaks. She will check with Pastor Murray re. the possible date of Wednesday, Dec. 17th at 4 or 4:30 p.m. for the award ceremony. Chair Hardin will email TAC members with the date once finalized. David T. and Julie H. will examine the oaks on site and find one for the medallion to be placed on, working with the church on this.

Permanent Tree Award Medallions: The new tree award medallions were ordered and have arrived. Chair Hardin brought the medallions in to show to the TAC. These will be affixed to award-winning canopy trees. Previous tree award winners will receive a medallion for their tree as well. Chair Hardin will purchase nails for the medallions out of TAC budget funds.

Tree Awards on Town's Website – Past and present tree canopy award winners and tree steward award winners will be put on the Town's website, denoted by name of resident/property owner, street location (not exact address) and species of tree. Chair Hardin will work with the TOJI on this. TAC member list and minutes are up on the Town's website now.

Discussion of Future Tree Award Winners – TAC members discussed possible species and trees for future tree canopy awards and tree steward awards. Tree species discussed for awards include redbud, dogwood, tulip magnolia, poplar, eucalyptus, old cedars and sycamores. McLeod Plantation/CCPRC was identified as a possibility for the Tree Steward Award.

November 7, 2025 – Tree Giveaway--Report – Town Market. This event was successful. (100) 3-gallon trees were distributed by the TAC and the Charleston Parks Conservancy (CPC) at the November Town Market. Tree species included poplar, persimmon, tupelo and Dahoon holly. All trees were gone by 8 p.m. Cards with planting instructions and information on the tree species also distributed. The TAC expressed gratitude to the Town, town staff and town volunteers for helping with the trees and setting and taking down the tent and table. Special thanks to Chair Hardin and the TAC members who attended the market and assisted with the tree giveaway. Photos were posted to social media.

Drive-Through Tree Giveaway in February 2026 (Saturday, 2/7/26). This will be sponsored by both the TAC and the CPC. Hours of event likely to be 9 a.m.-12 pm., or until all trees are gone. (1) tree per household. Drive-through will be from Dills Bluff Rd. Trees may be signed up for in advance likely via the CPC (Charleston Parks Conservancy) or may be simply distributed. Chair Hardin will work with the CPC on the details. More details coming in January 2026.

SC Arbor Day Celebration – Friday, December 5, 2025- Pinckney Park, 11 a.m. – Update on plans for Arbor Day with Riverland Terrace Garden Club -Susan M. Coffee, cider and cookies will be served in the park pavilion after the ceremony. Attendees who need chairs will bring portable chairs. Town staff will assist with set up. Trees will be planted in advance by town staff. Program will include the Mayor, Chair Hardin and a rep from Riverland Terrace Garden Club. All TAC members are invited to attend. Notice of the event will be posted on social media earlier in the week, Natalie R. will help with a graphic for event. Trees to plant will be (2) red maples and 2-3 poplars. Tree locations to be determined on 11/12 at the park. Reminder that Dec. 5, 2025 is also the Town's Holiday Market and Tree Lighting from 6-9 p.m.

Arbor Day Proclamation- The Town will pass a “Proclamation for Arbor Day” as done in past years at their Nov. 20, 2025 town council meeting.

Spring 2026 - Educational Tree Planting with an Island School – Possibly in April – Julie Hallman will head this up and contact schools. More info to come in early 2026.

Status of Island Right of Way Tree Conservation—TAC members discussed locating the TOJI Tree Inventory of right-of-way trees on the main roadways on the island done in the early 2020's by CofC interns & TAC. This study's purpose was to establish the condition of large trees along main roads in the TOJI. The inventory will be located and reviewed.

For the Good of the Order-TAC members agreed to cancel the December meeting of the TAC due to SC Arbor Day and other events. Mayor Lyon invited all members to the Town's Christmas party in December.

The next TAC meeting will be Tuesday, January 13, 2025, 5 p.m. Town Hall Conference Room.

(January 2026 TAC meeting date was later changed to January 6, 2026 due to TOJI swearing-in conflict)**

Meeting was adjourned.