

Town of James Island
Minutes of the Tree Council
January 14, 2025

Present: David Tomblin, Julie Hallman, Jenny Welch, Paul Cantrell, Natalie Rumph & Robin Hardin

Absent Members: Gary Milliken

Minutes: Minutes of the November 12, 2024, meeting were approved.

Nominations for Tree Award & Presentation of 11/24/24 Tree Award: A date/time needs to be set with owners of 923 Stiles Blvd. to present them with November's Tree of Distinction Award. David will set this up.

For future nominations of Tree Award recipients, Jenny asked if there were good species of winter trees that we should be looking for. David said that Redbuds would begin to bloom in February followed by Dogwoods, Tulip Magnolias and Poplars. She suggested that TOJI TAC create a calendar of tree species to look for and nominate throughout the year.

There was discussion of whether a nominated tree must be in the Town. It was decided that, while this is best, it shouldn't be a criterion.

David asked each Committee member to bring (3) Tree Award nominations with them to our next meeting.

Christmas Market Tree Giveaway Review & Options for a Spring Tree Giveaway:

Response to the December Tree Giveaway was excellent. All trees were given away and Tree Council pleased that folks "trusted the twig". Thanks to Keith LaDeaux and the Americorp volunteers for their big help with potting the seedlings. And thanks to Natalie Rumph and David Tomblin for bringing everything together for the giveaway and an attractive informative booth. It was noted that Market attendees needed to be encouraged to come to the booth and receive a free tree. Perhaps this won't be as necessary in the future as people become more familiar with the TOJI Tree Council's efforts.

Options for a spring tree giveaway were discussed. All agreed that tree giveaways need to be held in conjunction with a Town Market or a school's Earth Day Celebration. Town Markets will be held on April 4 and May 2 and the merits of both dates were considered. Natalie and David will again coordinate the sourcing of the giveaway trees. Members like

the idea of offering “edible” species and possibly offering the next size up from a seedling, which would be potted saplings.

David recommended that trees given away in the future be tagged with a hash tag/QR code so that recipients can learn more about their trees and track their growth.

Members expressed interest in planting bigger trees. Julie will talk to a friend with the public schools to see if we could possibly plant a large tree on school grounds. She will also contact Gary Milliken for his input on schools he’d found in the past to be “tree friendly”.

To make practical plans for the future, TOJI TAC needs an update from the Mayor on our budget/financial status. David will make this request.

For the Good of the Order: Jenny suggested that we again develop a calendar of meetings for the year based on what needs to be done, saving meeting unnecessarily.

Jenny also asked that we begin reviewing the Town’s Tree Ordinance, as we had planned to do in 2024. This could be done in 15 minute time periods at each meeting. David will work with Kristen Cane on getting this process started.

The next meeting of the TOJI Tree Council will be Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 5pm.