



**CITY OF FAIRHOPE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA**

**Monday, May 13, 2024 - 4:30 PM
City Council Chamber**

Council Members

Kevin G. Boone
Jack Burrell
Jimmy Conyers
Corey Martin
Jay Robinson

1. Presentation by Justin Hammers on Knoll Park Restoration Plan
2. Discussion of City of Fairhope Employee Personnel Handbook Revision 2024
3. Discussion of Schedule of Fees for Construction and Building Permits
4. FY2023 Audit Review by Warren Averett
5. 6 - Month Financial Review
6. Committee Updates
7. Department Head Updates

Next Regular Meeting - Tuesday, May 28, 2024 - Same Time Same Place



CITY OF FAIRHOPE
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item ID: 2024-70

FROM:	Justin Hammers, PARK RANGER/URBAN FORESTER
SUBJECT:	Knoll Park Restoration Plan
AGENDA DATE:	May 13, 2024

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Justin Hammers, Park Ranger/Urban Forester to give presentation to Council on the Knoll Park Restoration Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BUDGET IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE:

GRANT:

LEGAL IMPACT:

FOLLOW UP IMPLEMENTATION:



Knoll Park, Circa 1920

Knoll Park Restoration Project

Justin Hammers

Park Ranger/Urban Forest Manager

Background

- Knoll Park was once a remnant of the Sandhill Longleaf Pine Forest and was given to the city to remain just that
- A study done in the late 2000's showed there was over 140 different species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers in the park
- Burning has been conducted throughout the years but no long-lasting efforts have been made
- There once was 0 pine trees under 50 years old, now they are slowly coming back



Native grasses and flowering plants at Knoll Park, (Espalier LLC, 2015)

Previous Actions

- Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project was initiated in 2007, initiated a series of burns
- Over 140 different species were identified in the park afterwards
- David Dyson, AL RF# 2152 wrote a management plan for Knoll Park in 2013
 - Well written plan, will be used for future management over Knoll Park



July 2023 Prescribed Burn (Fairhope Times, 2023)

Previous Actions

- 2014, Espalier LLC developed perimeter plan as beautification project
- Park was burned again in 2019/20, then in 2022 chemical treatment against invasives was enacted.
- 2023 the park was burned in July



Current Interpretive Sign at Knoll Park
(City of Fairhope, 2023)



Current Conditions

- In a report from 2013, there was 200 longleaf and 6,600 hardwood saplings per acre.
- Today, there are less than 50 young longleaf pines growing, and all are only on the perimeter of the park.
- Knoll Parks understory is now riddled with invasive and undesired species.
- Greenbriers, young hardwoods, and invasive grasses are dominating the inside of the park.
- While pine reproduction is not at zero, other species are stunting the longleaf pine stand

Current Conditions (Early Spring, 2024)



Hardwoods, invasive grasses, and other undesired species growing throughout the understory of Knoll Park

Current Conditions (Early Summer, 2024)



Vines and Hardwood saplings dominate the understory while young longleaf pines grow on the perimeter

Goals

- To return Knoll Park into a native sandhill longleaf pine stand
- This is to increase the overall quality of the natural habitat, while also increasing the aesthetics of the park and the number of visitors the park receives annually



Native longleaf pine stand with warm season grasses
(The Nature Conservancy 2022)



Objectives

- Since the Knoll Park Restoration Project was established in 2007, various efforts have been made but none have had lasting results.
- Using efforts like clearing the understory of all invasive and undesired species, planting native warm season grasses that are commonly found in longleaf pine stands, and committing to a consistent management schedule of prescribed burns, along with mechanical or chemical removal of any undesired species that may enter the park in the future
- By being aggressive with restoration efforts, the park could be set on a path to success of becoming a sustainable longleaf pine stand.



Objective 1: Clearing out the understory of invasive an undesired species

- While in the late 2000's there was an abundance of native plants growing in the center of the park, today the park is dominated by invasive and undesired species. Removal of these species can help Knoll Park become a native sandhill longleaf pine stand once again
- Forests that have neglected understory's have a heavy litter layer and dense brush in the understory
- Through methods like prescribed burning, mulching, or herbicide application can help lead a pine stand towards natural sustainability.
- Mulching helps when the understory is too dense and has been neglected for periods of time, as well as when there is not enough fuel for a prescribed burn
- Herbicide helps in targeting specific plants that may be too large to remove with burning, typically paired with mulching to ensure regeneration does not occur

Prescribed Burns

- Prescribed Burns is the least expensive and generally preferred method of understory management
- Without regular fire, hardwoods and other species will outcompete longleaf pines
- Fire helps promote longleaf pine rejuvenation
- Knoll Park has been burned several times before, but none on a sustainable management schedule



Knoll Park prescribe fire in July (Fairhope Times, 2023)

Mulching

- Mulching is typically the more expensive, and more aggressive method of control
- This helps when the understory is too dense and has been neglected for periods of time
- Can also be used when there is not enough fuel for a prescribed burn
- Area commonly sprayed with herbicide after mulching to treat stumps
- Recommended to be done 6-12 months before planting



Mulching to clear out a dense understory (Hisaka, 2024)

Herbicide Application

- Herbicide helps in targeting specific plants that may be too large to remove with burning.
- Typically paired with mulching to ensure regeneration does not occur but can also be used before burning to kill off plants that may not die from fire.
- Will not remove the unwanted plants as quickly as other methods



Herbicide targets invasives and keeps natives alive (Graves, 2019)

Hack and Squirt

- By making a cut deep enough into an undesired species can kill off the tree without damaging surrounding species
- Loppers can be used on hardwoods or camphor's under 3 inches to remove them entirely
- Less aggressive than mulching, effects less than foliar herbicide application, and helps in management when there is not enough fuel for prescribed burns,

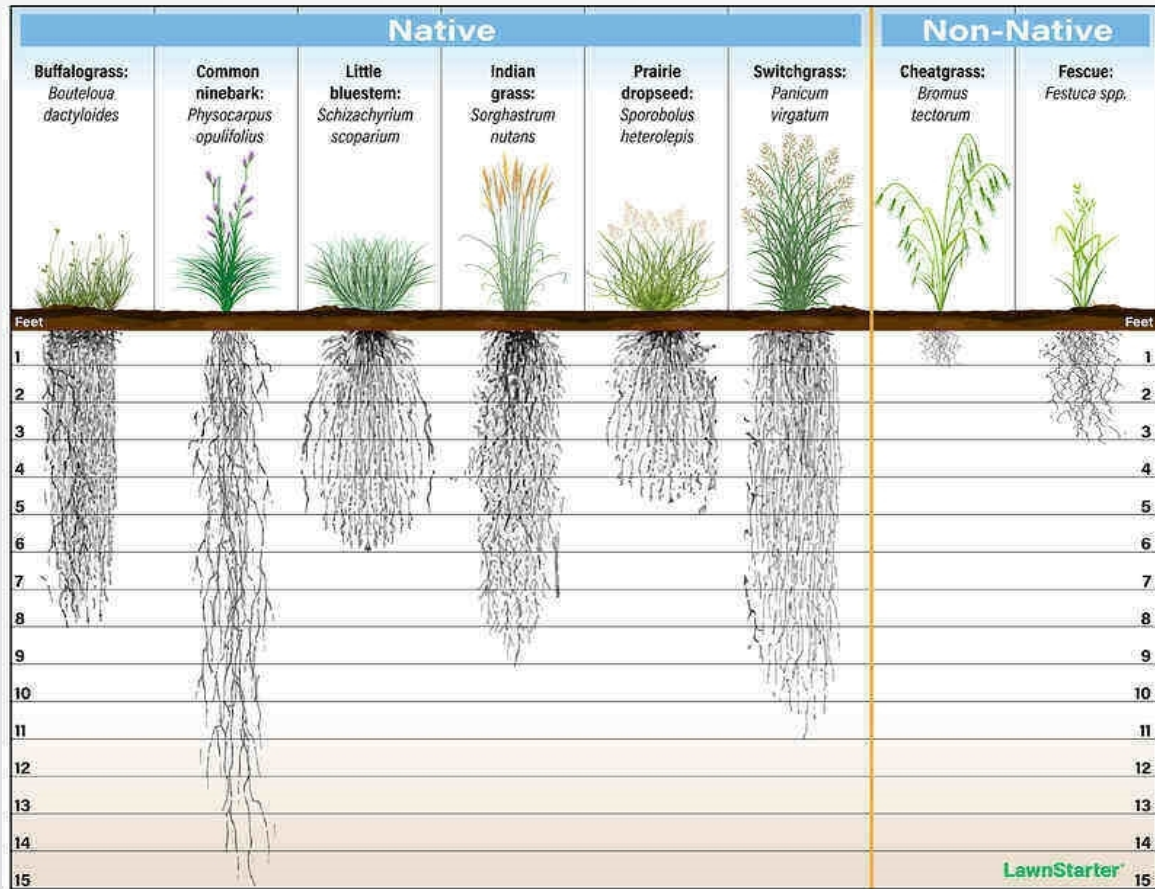




Objective 2: Planting native warm season grasses throughout the park's understory

- Native warm season grasses are common among pine longleaf pine ecosystems as the grasses provide valuable cover and present forage opportunities for wildlife, it provides fuel for prescribed burns, and is aesthetically pleasing
- The roots of these grasses are thick and grow deep into the soil. This makes for a longer lasting, stress tolerant, and low maintenance plant. They also help with increased absorption of rain and improve drainage rates.

Native Warm Season Grasses



NWSG Root depth (Rogers, 2023)



Healthy Longleaf Pine Stand with NWSG
(The Nature Conservancy, 2022)

Objective 3: Replacing Ornamental Perimeter

- In 2015 a perimeter landscape plan was enacted with 25 native flowers to be placed in Knoll Park
- Several of the original plants remain, the missing ones will be replanted, and the irrigation will be turned back on
- With adequate management, Knoll Park will be a must stop destination next to Downtown Fairhope



Espalier LLC (2015)

Objective	Item	Quantity	Individual Cost	Total Cost
Understory Clearing		Per Acre		
	Mulching	4	\$600	\$2,400.00
	Prescribed Burn	4	\$30	\$120.00
	Herbicide Application	4	\$90	\$360.00
Native Warm Season Grasses		Per Pound		
	Big Bluestem	7	\$22	\$152.25
	Little Bluestem	7	\$19	\$133.00
	Indian Grass	7	\$21	\$147.00
Perimeter Plantings		Per Plant		
	Blackeye Susan	71	\$8	\$568.00
	Oakleaf Hydrangea	27	\$25	\$675.00
	White Fringe Tree	9	\$20	\$180.00
	Ruby Spice Clethra	37	\$15	\$555.00
	Inkberry Holly	32	\$17	\$544.00
	Scarlet Anise	12	\$12	\$144.00
	Sunset Holly	26	\$15	\$390.00
Irrigation				
	Repairs	1	\$1,750	\$1,750.00
Total				\$8,118.25



Possible Grants

- Department of Agriculture/Forest Services
 - Urban and Community Forest Program
- National Fish and Wildlife Federation
 - Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund
- The Longleaf Alliance
 - Longleaf Alliance Planting Funds
 - Conservation Reserve Program
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - Partners of Fish and Wildlife Program

Implementation Schedule

Year	Implementation
Fiscal Year 2024	
June	Begin Understory Management
	Clean Up Perimeter
	Repair Perimeter Irrigation
	Design Interpretive Signage
July-December	Routine Maintenance
	(herbicide application, mowing perimeter)
	Install Interpretive Signs
Fiscal Year 2025	
February	Conduct Prescribed Burn
April	Plant Native Warm Season Grasses
	Plant Wildflowers
	Plant Ornamental Perimeter
May-December	Routine Maintenance
Fiscal Year 2026	
	Routine Maintenance
Fiscal Year 2027	
	NWSG will finally be fully grown
	Burn as needed, (Every 2-3 Years)*

Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Stand Restoration Project

By

Justin Hammers

Park Ranger/Urban Forest Manager

March 22, 2024

Revised May 1, 2024

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Background:

Knoll Park is a four-acre longleaf pine stand that sits in downtown Fairhope atop the bluff overlooking the bay. The park was given to the citizens of Fairhope by the Fairhope Single Tax Colony as a rare remnant of the Sandhill Longleaf Pine Forest. Such forest once dominated the Gulf Coast covering millions of acres. While having plenty of mature pine trees throughout the park, the stand could be at risk. Back in 2006, after a stand assessment, it was noted that there were zero pines under 50 years old and wildflower populations were nearly extinct in the park (Dyson, 3). As of 2024 there has been less than 50 pine saplings counted that are between 10-15 years old, mostly congregating to the northwest corner of the park, and a handful of wildflowers blooming around the perimeter of the park.

Knoll Park has been burned a few times in the past decade, and it has already proven to be beneficial to help restore the pine back to its native roots, but there is still work to be done. Over 140 Species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers were once identified within Knoll Park but are slowly diminishing as invasive species start to overcrowd the understory. In 2014, a landscape plan was drafted and implemented to plant native ornamental plants and shrubs around the perimeter of the park (Espalier). The plan allowed for people passing by to see native flowering plants in their local environment. As seen in **Figure 1**, initial efforts to restore Knoll Park were proving to be beneficial, but the park needed more attention.

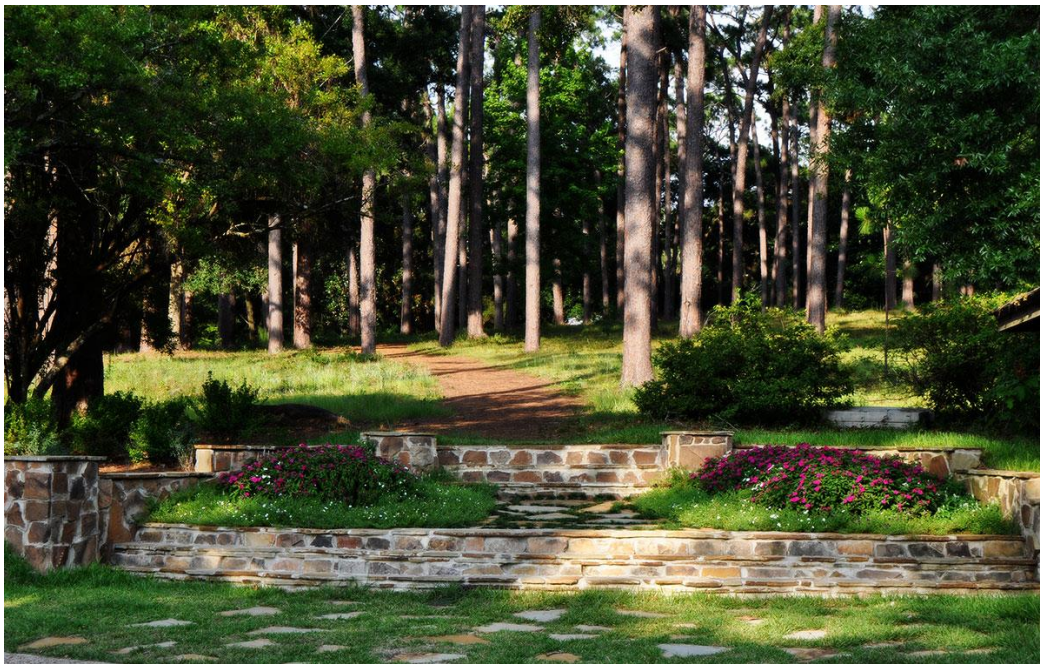


Figure 1. Knoll Park had native grasses throughout the understory and flowering plants showcased the colorful beauty of a natural sandhill pine ecosystem. Image from Espalier LLC

Previous Actions:

In 2007, the Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project was initiated by the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation with full cooperation with the City of Fairhope. At the time, Knoll Park had great potential to showcase a native pine stand but was underutilized. The project committee advocated for a prescribed burn, and in 2007 they initiated a series of burns. After burning they noticed 140 different species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers were found within Knoll Park. Boasting of its incredible diversity in such a small area. This diversity brought in over 30 different species of orchids, with 700 individuals of the Orchid family being identified by volunteers. These prescribed burns, coupled with brush removal programs, have shown thousands of longleaf pine seedlings growing throughout the park.

In early 2013, AL Registered Forester David Dyson wrote a well written management plan over Knoll Park which helped guide it towards the right direction of management. Later the summer of 2014 saw Espalier LLC, a landscape architect company devised a landscape plan for the perimeter of Knoll Park. The plan saw 25 different plant species being intricately placed around the perimeter of the park to increase biodiversity and beautification of the property. Espalier also would go on to help design an irrigation plan for the perimeter of the park to keep the plants watered. After its approval, the plan was put into action and the native ornamental plants were placed around the perimeter of knoll park.

Knoll Park was burned in 2019/2020 before covid put restrictions on what could be done. In 2022 JJ McCool of Wildlife Solutions volunteered its resources to chemically treat the invasive plants located inside the park. The plants were chemically treated and then it was suggested that the park be burned shortly after they started to die off, no further action was taken. The last thing to be done to Knoll Park in efforts of restoring it to its native features was a prescribed burn in July of 2023. The burn was put on by the City of Fairhope and CFM Fire Managers.



Figure 2. Knoll Park prescribed burn from July 2023. Image from Fairhope Times.

Current Conditions:

Knoll Parks current conditions bring up several points that cannot be avoided in discussion. While it is nice every once and a while to see nature set its own path in an unmanicured state. Invasive and undesirable species have started to take over the park and we must help restore the park to its native roots. The understory is riddled with hardwood saplings, vines of the *Smilax* variety (greenbriers), and various weeds.

In 2013, it was reported that Knoll Park was producing 200 Longleaf Pine Seedlings per acre, and 6,600 hardwood stems per acre (Dyson, 7). In 2013 this amount of hardwood stems was not largely problematic because it was small enough to be suppressed with fire, but after years without adequate management, the hardwood stems are now saplings and cannot be taken out with fire alone. While there are hardwoods growing inside the park, there are several pine saplings that are growing around the perimeter of the park. Pine reproduction is not at zero, but it is being beat out by hardwoods inside the park.

While not technically an invasive species, the greenbrier population among the park is certainly aggressive. It is difficult to find a spot in the park where the understory isn't coupled with greenbriers. This plant can be beneficial in moderation, it blooms green flowers and produces berries that animals love. But the number of briers in Knoll Park is stunting understory growth.

One of the largest invasive weeds that exist in the park is smutgrass. From the outside it looks like the target of growing native warm season grasses is being successful. Hailing from Asia, smutgrass is an invasive grass that takes over whatever environment it is in. This grass is not favored by wildlife and provides little foraging opportunities. It grows in small bunches rather than growing together and will outcompete native grasses if not treated properly.



Figure 3. Hardwood and other undesired saplings growing throughout the understory of Knoll Park



Figure 4. *Smilax* vines growing rampant throughout the understory.



Figure 5. Invasive grass takes up space throughout the forest floor.

Goals:

Given the current conditions and the number of visitors the park sees every year. The goals of Knoll Park are to restore it back to a native sandhill longleaf pine stand. This is to increase the overall quality of the natural habitat, while also increasing the aesthetics of the park and the number of visitors the park receives annually.

Objectives:

Restoring Knoll Park into a native sandhill longleaf pine stand is going to be easier said than done. But by following a steady path and proper management, the park will be restored in a few short years. While spraying invasive plants and prescribed burns has been proven to yield some results in restoring the park. Those alone have not been enough to restore it to its natural state. Since 2007 when the Knoll Park Restoration Project was first established, various efforts have been made to restore Knoll Park, but no lasting results have been made. By being aggressive with restoration efforts, the park could be set on a path to success of becoming a sustainable longleaf pine stand. Aggressive efforts would include clearing out the understory to rid the park of all invasive and undesired species, planting native warm season grasses that are commonly found in longleaf pine stands, and committing to a consistent management schedule of prescribed burns and mechanical or chemical removal of any undesired species that may enter the park in the future.

Objective 1: Clearing out the understory of invasive and undesired species.

While in the late 2000's it was shown that over 140 species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers were found and identified within Knoll Park, that number has only been dwindling in recent years. A quick walk through the park shows that is being dominated by other undesirable species. All hope is not lost though, a walk around the perimeter of the park shows that native species are still present and doing their best to survive on the land. By removal of any invasive and undesired species inside the park, and supplementation of desired species, Knoll Park can once again become a true sandhill longleaf pine stand.

Using Prescribed fire is the least expensive and generally the preferred method of understory management. Without regular fire, hardwoods and other species will outcompete against longleaf pines (Hatch, et al). However, the last burn on the park was conducted in July of 2023, there is not enough fuel on the forest floor to conduct another one. Seeing how recent the last prescribed burn was and how little fuel is currently on the forest floor, it may be best to look at some other options.

Herbicide usage is typically the quickest method of control. This method can also be used as an additive to enhance the effects of a prescribed burn. By chemically treating the understory, it is possible to target specific plants, shrubs, and trees rather than targeting the entire understory. Chemically spraying an understory can also help kill off any unwanted flora that otherwise wouldn't be affected by burning and allow fire to take over the species and remove it from the forest floor (Hatch, et al). One downside to herbicide is the potential adverse effects to the environment, so careful selection of herbicide is crucial and ensuring proper spraying methods are being used are of the utmost importance.

A more selective method of management would be to hack and squirt. By taking a tool with a sharp edge (machete or hatchet) or pair of loppers, one can hack at the bark of an undesired hardwood or camphor trees and squirt herbicide into the open or cut species. Generally, undesired species under 3 inches will be cut down and species over 3 inches will just be cut into. It is vital to ensure that the proper herbicide mix is used during this method. Using a herbicide that is not "soil active" is crucial, seeing as soil active could result in damaging a non-target species (Minogue, et al.) This method is helpful when there is not enough fuel on the forest floor for prescribed burns, and is less intrusive than some other methods of understory management.

A final, and more aggressive method of control would be understory mulching. Mulching is more commonly used among forests that have been fire excluded for long periods of time. When the understory is full of dense vegetation or small midstory trees that are not easily reduced by fire, mulching can quickly reduce it. Following up with herbicide treatment after mulching is generally recommended to treat stump sprouts (Hatch, et al). Understory mulching can leave a deep mat of wood chips on the forest floor, so it should be conducted 6 months to a year before beginning the process of regeneration.



Figure 6. This pine restoration project in NW Georgia shows a cleared understory from tactics such as spraying herbicides and prescribed burns. Picture from Heart and Sole

Objective 2: Planting native warm season grasses throughout the park's understory.

In order to regenerate a longleaf pine stand, it requires preparing the site to control the understory. One way to help keep the understory in control is to plant native warm season grasses. NWSG has advantages over other grasses because of their ability to withstand harsher environmental conditions like high temperatures, drought, and nitrogen limitations. During a drought the NWSG can minimize its water loss while other grasses may lose up to 95% of their water intake through transpiration (Kaesler and Kirkman). Native warm season grasses are common among the long leaf pine ecosystems as many grasses provide valuable cover and present forage opportunities for wildlife. It is also an important source of fuel for prescribed burns.

Usage of native warm season grasses is beneficial as not only is it as aesthetically pleasing grass, but the grass roots also are beneficial to the ecosystem. The roots of these grasses are thick and grow very deep into the soil. This makes for a longer lasting, stress tolerant, and low maintenance plants. Their root systems can also help with increased absorption of rain and improve drainage rates. NWSG root systems are dense and can prevent unwanted weeds or invasives from growing in the understory, making for a low maintenance forest floor.

Choosing a local ecotype is imperative because native plants will have a better time adapting to their new environment through conditions like drainage, temperature, soil types, precipitation, and elevation. A soil survey of Baldwin County shows Knoll Park to be a sandy loam, which suits native warm seasons grasses if they are planted around ¼ inch deep (McBride and Burgess). The Conservation Reserve Program Longleaf Pine Initiative (CRP-CP36)

recommends planting a mixture of grasses including big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), yellow Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), with wiregrass (*Astrida stricta*) being a substitute for Indiangrass or big bluestem (Kaeser and Kirkman, 9).

Some things to consider with planting native warm season grasses is the land preparation requirements and the planting conditions. It is recommended that sites should be pre-treated with herbicides to get rid of any unwanted grasses of plant life for 6 months to a year before planting the grasses. Treatment of sites should be done in spring (late-February through mid-April) and again in the later summer months and early fall to produce the best chances of success for NWSG. (Kaeser and Kirkman, 9). In the southeast, grass mixture should be planted between February and May for successful growth. Planting in the early spring lets seedlings establish a root system before the hot and dry summer months and allows them to effectively compete with weeds. It could take up to two years before the native warm season grasses are fully established and show noticeable above ground growth.



Figure 7. This longleaf pine stand shows thriving native warm season grasses and an understory free of invasive species. Picture from The Nature Conservancy

Objective 3: Replanting of ornamental perimeter

In 2014, Espalier LLC, a landscape architectural firm, made a conceptual landscape plan for the perimeter of Knoll Park. The Plan included 25 carefully selected native flowers and flowering plants to be placed around the park, along with a new irrigation route. In 2015 the plan was put into effect and after the park was updated, Espalier LLC was presented with the 2015 Fairhope Beautification Award for their work on this project. Since then, many of the plants have died off and a select few are still surviving around the park.

After walking through the park and reading over the former plans, Fairhope Horticulture Supervisor Jamie Rollins determined it was worth using this former plan as inspiration to bring back the beautification of the perimeter of Knoll Park. After determining which plants have survived the at knoll park over time, and which ones can bring vibrant colors to the park, a handful of the original plants will be replanted around the park. He also noted that the irrigation system is not currently working at the moment and will need to be repaired. But after repairs, planting, and proper management of the perimeter, Knoll Park will be a must stop destination right next to downtown Fairhope.

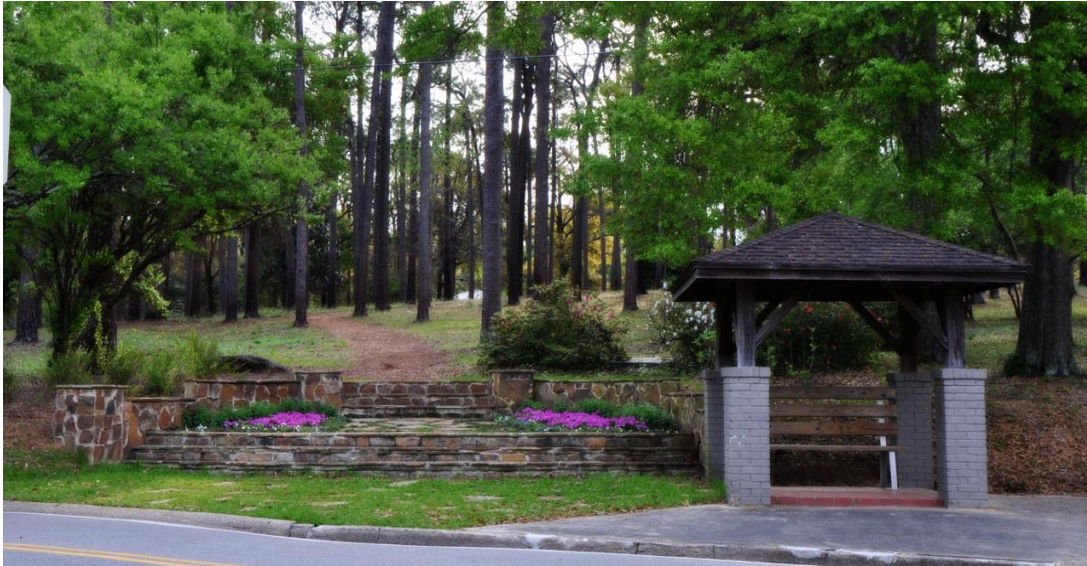


Figure 8. Knoll Park in 2015 after Espalier LLC had planted the perimeter.

Costs Assessment:

Objective	Item	Quantity	Individual Cost	Total Cost
Understory Clearing		Per Acre		
	Mulching	4	\$600	\$2,400.00
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	Repairs	1	\$1,750	\$1,750.00
Total				\$8,118.25

Implementation Schedule:

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June	Begin Understory Management
	Clean Up Perimeter
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	Design Interpretive Signage
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	(herbicide application, mowing perimeter)
	Install Interpretive Signs
Fiscal Year 2025	
February	Conduct Prescribed Burn
April	Plant Native Warm Season Grasses
	Plant Wildflowers
	Plant Ornamental Perimeter
May-December	Routine Maintenance
Fiscal Year 2026	
	Routine Maintenance
Fiscal Year 2027	
	NWSG will finally be fully grown
	Burn as needed, (Every 2-3 Years)*

Summary:

Since the creation of the Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project was created in 2007, the management of the park hasn't been as consistent as the park needed. First efforts to restore the park were once shown to be fruitful, with the park changing from having zero young pines to showing more than 200 saplings sprouting. But with inconsistent burns on the park and lack of oversight, invasives and undesired species soon took over. Pine stands need fire to grow and to suppress unwelcome species and it is recommended that they see fire every 2-3 years. Knoll Park went over 10 years without a prescribed burn taking place. The ornamental perimeter around Knoll Park also saw the same fate. Since its conception in 2014, the irrigation system that once watered the plants is now out of order, and over half of the once blooming plants have died off or become overgrown with vines and invasives trees.

While efforts to restore Knoll Park will need to be a bit more aggressive, keeping the park a native sandhill longleaf pine stand requires simple, yet regular maintenances efforts. Knoll Parks understory is currently overgrown with invasive and undesired species. Removing these prevalent species is crucial to helping set Knoll Park up to be a sustainable ecosystem. The

number of hardwoods and greenbriers growing in the park has made it difficult for longleaf pines to rejuvenate. Knoll Park was given to the city from the Single Tax Colony nearly 100 years ago and has been a beloved Fairhope location. By targeting the unwelcome plant species, we can return the rare longleaf pine stand back to its native habitat.

These aggressive efforts will only be performed one time during this restoration process, with regular maintenance of prescribed burns and chemical spot treatment coming later. Since the park was burned recently and there is not enough fuel on the forest floor, mulching the understory is a must to rid it of hardwoods that have grown too large to be removed with fire. In an article posted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System covering costs and trends in forestry management, we can expect to pay close to \$3,000 in preparing the understory to return Knoll Park into a native longleaf pine ecosystem. This price covers having a forestry mulcher come in and clear the understory, followed with chemical treatment and having a prescribed burn to prepare the understory in planting native warm season grasses. Longleaf pine stands tend to have a blend of native warm season grasses. Given Knoll Parks soil content, it is recommended that a blend of Big Bluestem, Indiangrass, and Little Bluestem get planted. After averaging the prices of these grasses, it is estimated to cost roughly \$435 to plant these grasses. With proper management at Knoll Park, this will only need to be a one-time purchase. Filling in the ornamental perimeter will be the final step. After walking the park and looking at the current and former plants that were once active. Seven species of plants have been selected based on appearance and survival rates to fill in the perimeter. Repairs to the irrigation system will also need to be carried out to help these plants survive. Ordering the same number of these plants as the original plan, including the irrigation repairs, will cost roughly \$468.

With proper management of the park and following a consistent schedule, Knoll Park can once again be the sandhill longleaf pine stand that it once was. This will not be a change that happens overnight, but within a few short years, the park can once again be a beloved location between downtown Fairhope and Mobile Bay.

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STATE OF ALABAMA)(
 :
COUNTY OF BALDWIN)(

The City Council met in a Work Session at 4:30 p.m.,
Delchamps Room, 161 North Section Street,
Fairhope, Alabama 36532, on Monday, 13 January 2014.

Present were Council President Jack Burrell, Councilmembers: Rich Mueller, Diana Brewer (arrived at 4:41 p.m.), Michael A. Ford, and Kevin Boone, Mayor Timothy M. Kant, and City Clerk Lisa A. Hanks. City Attorney Marion E. Wynne was absent.

Council President Burrell called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

The following topics were discussed:

- Don Druse and Rob Cowden (President) with Safety Plus, Inc. did a presentation of their web-based Quasi Loss Control Management program which gives access to training, SDS items, JSA's, Tool Box Talks, a large selection of required forms, IH requirements (monitoring), and four monthly site inspection; and Safety Plus will train the City's administrative personnel to enter and remove data. Three options were explained along with the cost of each. Council President Burrell stated we must have buy-in from supervisors and the Mayor or this will not work.

Pandora Heathcoe, Human Resources Manager, gave the following figures from Workers Compensation claims: 2010 – 47 claims; 2011 – 21 claims; 2012 – 75 claims; 2013 – 68 claims; and there have been five already this year.

- Julie Brent and Chester Schmidt addressed the City Council and gave a brief description of the proposed franchise agreement and gave a demonstration. Store front location was questioned by Councilmember Brewer. Ms. Brent replied there is not one at this time. Mayor Kant commented he was concerned with other businesses doing the same thing. Solicitation and holidays were both addressed. Mr. Schmidt said they are making the community of the type of service they are providing which would help the other businesses as well.
- Councilmembers Brewer and Ford both mentioned their committees will begin again this week. Mr. Ford commented the Recycling Committee is in full force.
- Councilmember Boone discussed the Harbor Board; and the need to repair exposed electric wires and take care of the abandoned boats. Mayor Kant is working on this issue.

Then, Councilmember Boone passed around a picture of what Knoll Park from the 1960s. He said this is now an eye sore that needs to go away. Mayor Kant replied that it is fifty/fifty for clean looking or natural looking. Councilmember Mueller commented we need to make it an appealing park; and the 108 acres we just bought is going to be kept natural. The property on County Road 44 and County Road 13 are natural.

Monday, 13 January 2014

Page -2-

Jennifer Fidler said the Knoll Park land is an ecosystem perfect for wildflowers and long leaf pines (sandhill ecosystem). Ms. Fidler did mention the Knoll Park Committee took the buffer of the plan which is what the City requested. Councilmember Brewer stated this is in the transition phase and we need to see the plan.

- Councilmember Mueller commented he was looking for dates to have the Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board meetings.
- Council President Burrell said the Paul Myrick has revised the personnel handbook; the Personnel Board has reviewed it and made some recommendations. He asked Pandora Heathcoe, Human Resources Manager, to send the Councilmembers a copy for them to begin their review.
- Jonathan Smith, Planning Director, addressed the City Council and mentioned the following projects in his department:

Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Traffic Study is to be updated

ACE Report to be presented; then begin Comprehensive Plan revisions

Sign Ordinance revised to be a stand-alone Ordinance

Low Impact Design (LID) – working on incentives for the developers

Sub-committee being formed to look at this issue and report back to the Planning Commission. Councilmembers Brewer and Mueller volunteered for the Sub-committee.

- Jennifer Fidler, Public Works Director, addressed the City Council and said her department is working on the storm water management on the bluff. She announced that the widening of Fairhope Avenue should be completed by mid-February.
- Jill Cabaniss, Finance Director, addressed the City Council and stated that the CAFR would be presented at the next City Council meeting by Dennis Sherrin from Hartmann, Blackmon & Kilgore.
- Council President Burrell announced there would be a Strategic Planning meeting on January 14, 2014 at 4:30 p.m. in the Delchamps Room.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was duly adjourned at 5:44 p.m.


Jack Burrell, Council President


Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

24 February 2014

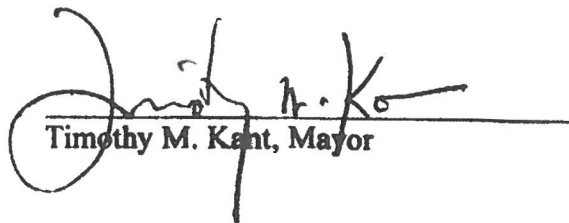
Councilmember Brewer introduced in writing, and moved for the adoption of the following resolution, a resolution that the City of Fairhope has voted to purchase Additional Computer Hard Drive Space for the Current Server System for the Information Technology Department and the requested item is available for direct procurement through the National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance ("National IPA") Technology Solution Contract; and therefore does not have to be let out for bid. The cost is approximately \$17,030.00 to allow for freight cost variations at ship time. Seconded by Councilmember Boone, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 2182-14

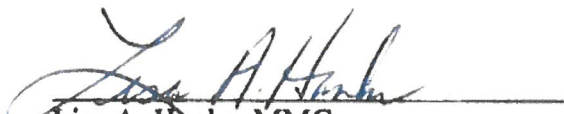
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE, ALABAMA, as follows:

[1] That the City of Fairhope has voted to purchase Additional Computer Hard Drive Space for the Current Server System for the Information Technology Department and the requested item is available for direct procurement through the National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance ("National IPA") Technology Solution Contract; and therefore does not have to be let out for bid. The cost is approximately \$17,030.00 to allow for freight cost variations at ship time.

Adopted on this 24th day of February, 2014


Timothy M. Kent, Mayor

Attest:


Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

Councilmember Brewer moved to amend Agenda Item No. 9: a resolution for Knoll Park by changing Bullet No. 3 from six to nine committee members; and by changing Bullet No. 4 by deleting Jennifer Fidler's name. Seconded by Councilmember Boone, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

24 February 2014

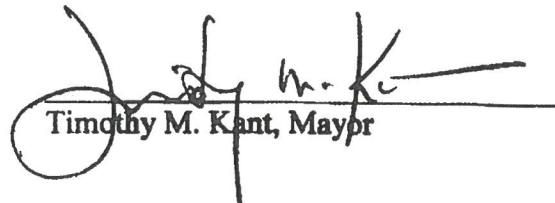
Councilmember Brewer introduced in writing, and moved for the adoption of the following resolution as amended, a resolution that the City of Fairhope hereby authorizes and adopts to continue with the longleaf pine restoration for Knoll Park; to place Knoll Park under its direction with advisory through the Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board (FEAB); the City Council will create a sub-committee, consisting of nine members, of the FEAB for Knoll Park and requests for any Fairhope citizen who wishes to be part of this sub-committee to please submit an application to the City Clerk's office; and that the Public Works Director, is to immediately begin a landscape plan of the outside perimeter of Knoll Park which will include a sidewalk; and this plan must be presented to the City Council for approval. Seconded by Councilmember Boone, motion passed unanimously by voice vote. Councilmember Brewer mentioned that it is a given that the plan will be recommended by the FEAB's sub-committee.

RESOLUTION NO. 2183-14

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE, ALABAMA, that the following are hereby authorized and adopted for Knoll Park:

- The City of Fairhope is desirous to continue with the longleaf pine restoration for Knoll Park; and
- Knoll Park will now be under the direction of the City of Fairhope with advisory of same through the Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board ("FEAB"); and
- The City Council will create a sub-committee, consisting of nine members, of the FEAB for Knoll Park and requests that any Fairhope citizen who wishes to be part of this sub-committee to please submit a committee application to the City Clerk's office; and
- That Public Works Director is hereby authorized to immediately begin a landscape plan of the outside perimeter of Knoll Park which will include a sidewalk; and this plan must be presented to the City Council for approval.

Adopted on this 24th day of February, 2014


Timothy M. Kant, Mayor

Attest:


Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

STATE OF ALABAMA)(
 :
 COUNTY OF BALDWIN)(

The City Council, City of Fairhope, met in regular session at 6:00 p.m., Fairhope Municipal Complex Council Chamber, 161 North Section Street, Fairhope, Alabama 36532, on Monday, 22 September 2014.

Present were Council President Jack Burrell, Councilmembers: Rich Mueller, Diana Brewer, Michael A. Ford, and Kevin Boone, Mayor Timothy M. Kant, City Attorney Marion E. Wynne, and City Clerk Lisa A. Hanks.

There being a quorum present, Council President Burrell called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by City Attorney Wynne and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Councilmember Brewer moved to approve minutes of the 8 September 2014, regular meeting; minutes of the 8 September 2014, work session; and minutes of the 8 September 2014, agenda meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Boone, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Kant addressed the City Council and thanked everyone for the Coastal Clean-up which was approximately 4-1/2 tons off of Fairhope beaches.

Rob Gilpin, citizen of Fairhope and member of the Fairhope Recreation Center, addressed the City Council regarding Juana Murray, employee at the Recreation Center. Mr. Gilpin explained that on September 4, 2014 he never knew he was driving to his death at 7:20 a.m. He thanked the City of Fairhope for having AEDs in their buildings. He is here today due to three things: taking a baby aspirin every day, the Recreation Center having AEDs, and for Juana Murray being there and knowing what to do. Mr. Gilpin said he now has an "Angel" for life.

Mayor Kant then presented Juana Murray with a plaque from the City of Fairhope for her act of heroism by using her CPR and AED skills at the Recreation Center.

Council President Burrell recognized Boy Scout Peyton Beaver who was in the audience working on his Communications Badge.

The following individuals addressed the City Council during Public Participation for Agenda Items:

- 1) Anne Nix, 415 Myrtle Avenue, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Ms. Nix said the City Council needs to take over the Park. She is in favor of the two resolutions.

22 September 2014

- 2) Mike Shelton, 401 Yupon Avenue, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Mr. Shelton said the Park is a conservation and restoration project. This habitat is an environmental issue; and we should move forward as it currently is with the process. He is not in favor of the two resolutions.
- 3) Patrick Waldrop, 20900 Lowery Drive, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. The plan as presented will need protection for flowers and brush; and native plants need water. The plan is okay, we just need to change the type of flowers. He urged the City Council to reconsider the plant selection.
- 4) Anil Vira, 701 South Mobile Street, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Mr. Vira said he wants the Park to look like the rest of Fairhope. He is in favor of the two resolutions.
- 5) Bobby Green, 415 Maple Street, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Mr. Green said the plan designed by Joe Comer is only a draft. We need to look at alternative plants and the placement of the plants. He said it needs fire to promote growth of the Park. He is not in favor of the two resolutions.
- 6) Fred Nation, 120 Havenwood Circle, Daphne, Alabama, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Mr. Nation said this is a diverse habitat. He said we rush to judgment, rush to vote on plan that is not right; and rush to get rid of a Committee that wants to help. Mr. Nation said he hopes the City Council doesn't let the Park slip away. He is not in favor of the two resolutions.
- 7) David Powell, 10928 Skylane, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. He told the City Council about his son being at Knoll Park recently and ran into an artist painting the trees. She told his son this is a great stand of trees which we do not have in Boston. Mr. Powell requested that the City Council leave the Park the way it is now. He is not in favor of the two resolutions.
- 8) Rick Hall, 514 Third Street, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Mr. Hall said the Park needs to look good and it does not. He is in support of the City Council takings care of the Park situation. He is in favor of the two resolutions.
- 9) David Dyson, 751 Prospect Avenue, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Mr. Dyson mentioned that the wiregrass has been reestablished on the site which is very rare to do. There has been great progress that the public is not aware of. He said the ornamental and native plants need to complement each other. He is not in favor of the two resolutions.

22 September 2014

10) Debra Green, 415 Maple Street, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. She said the Park is one of the greatest gifts Mother Nature has given us. She said if Knoll Park was somewhere else, we would not have these issues. We need to hold off and get the people who don't like it to give their opinions. She is not in favor of the two resolutions.

11) Linda Gibson, 10928 Covey Drive, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Ms. Gibson said she is a member of the Wisteria Garden Club and have worked on the Park. If we work together, we can put items in there that will grow and last. She is not in favor of the two resolutions.

12) Bob Clark, 381 Pecan Avenue, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. He commented that not only snowbirds, but citizens are asking about the Park and its condition. He is in favor of the two resolutions.

13) Mae Moss Parker, 695 Belangee, addressed the City Council regarding Agenda Items Number 11 and Number 12 regarding Knoll Park and the Knoll Park Committee. Ms. Parker appealed to the City Council to keep the Committee intact and try to work out this issue; and to please allow them to do more work. She is not in favor of the two resolutions.

Councilmember Boone addressed the City Council and said he would be abstaining on Agenda Items Number 5 and Number 6 due to his company being involved in both subdivisions.

Council President Burrell addressed the City Council and thanked the Councilmembers, Mayor Kant, City Treasurer Nancy Wilson, and Finance Director Jill Cabaniss for their work with the budget. He announced there would be a Special-Called City Council meeting next Monday at 5:30 p.m.

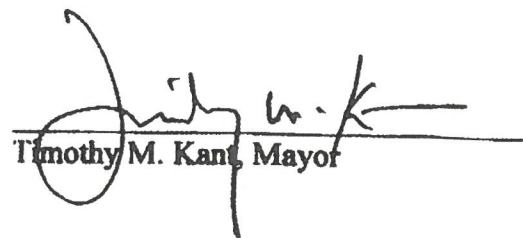
Councilmember Brewer introduced in writing, and moved for the adoption of the following resolution, a resolution accepting the public streets, public right-of-ways, and all of Fairhope's public utilities located in public right-of-ways within Sedgefield Subdivision, Phase 3, for maintenance; and authorizes Mayor Timothy M. Kant to execute the Maintenance and Guaranty Agreement between the City of Fairhope and Sedgefield-Fairhope, LLC. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mueller. Planning Director Jonathan Smith addressed the City Council and explained Agenda Items Number 5 and Number 6. Council President Burrell questioned retention ponds and maintenance. Mr. Smith replied that the property owner associations and developers must maintain the ponds. After further discussion, motion passed by the following voice votes: AYE – Burrell, Mueller, Brewer, and Ford. NAY – None. ABSTAIN - Boone.

22 September 2014

RESOLUTION NO. 2264-14

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE, ALABAMA, that Mayor Timothy M. Kant is hereby authorized to execute a Contract with Volkert, Inc. as Design Engineer of Record for RFQ No. PS018-14, Design Engineering Services for U.S. 98 and AL 104 Multi-Use Path; (Project No. PW010-14); with a cost not to exceed \$64,271.00.

Adopted on this 22nd day of September, 2014


Timothy M. Kant, Mayor

Attest:


Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

Councilmember Boone moved to grant the request of Teddy J. Faust, Jr., Fairhope Sunset Rotary Club Charity, Inc., approval of the 2014 Oktoberfest on October 25, 2014 for use Fairhope Stadium Grounds located on the Northeast Corner of 701 Volanta Avenue from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. and approval to allow alcohol on City property. Seconded by Councilmember Brewer, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Council President Burrell stated that the City Council typically has a motion and second before discussion on an agenda item. However, we can discuss prior to the motion if Council desires. He commented we have had quite a few speakers tonight on the Knoll Park issue and had a special council meeting dedicated to this subject.

Councilmember Boone said he wanted the Park moved in a positive direction and right now it looks awful. We need to make a change.

Councilmember Mueller said he wanted the resolution reworded to read: "the Public Works Director is hereby authorized to oversee and maintain an approved plan for Knoll Park" instead of oversee and maintain the approved plan.

22 September 2014

Councilmember Brewer stated we have previously heard similar pleas from experts and thought we were moving in the right direction; and the compromise was to select plants to complement the long leaf pine forest. She said we did not allow the Knoll Park Committee restore the Park; and hoped we truly would reach a compromise.

Council President Burrell said he thought the plan was good, but now not so sure after what has been presented. The flowers, plan, and irrigation system for the Park were questioned as to whether or not budgeted. Ms. Fidler replied that \$36,000 has been budgeted and all were included. Council President Burrell also questioned if the City oversees and maintains the Park would burning be allowed, since we have heard experts after experts state that burning is necessary and is a key component for the long leaf pine restoration. He said Mr. Waldrop put off burning 14 times to avoid smoke going in the wrong direction. Councilmember Boone stated this is the wrong place to burn in downtown Fairhope.

The Council commented that had not seen the maintenance plan; and Bobby Green said at the June 11, 2014 meeting, the Knoll Park Committee unanimously voted for the maintenance plan and Councilmember Ford was given the plan to present to the Council. Everyone agreed the plan was close to what they wanted, but they needed to approve the maintenance plan. Patrick Waldrop, David Dyson, and Fred Nation all stated that fire is the best way to restore the long leaf pine habitat.

Council President Burrell asked the City Council if he could be heard and passed the gavel to Council President Pro Tempore Ford to preside over the meeting. Council President Burrell stated he wanted to amend the resolution to read: that the landscape plan for Knoll Park designed by Joe Comer is approved and adopted subject to Public Works Director given discretion to specific plants to be used; and the Public Works Director is hereby authorized to oversee and maintain the Park subject to the Maintenance Plan adopted by the Knoll Park Committee on June 11, 2014.

Council President Burrell moved to amend the resolution to read: that the landscape plan for Knoll Park designed by Joe Comer is approved and adopted subject to Public Works Director given discretion to specific plants to be used; and the Public Works Director is hereby authorized to oversee and maintain the Park subject to the Maintenance Plan adopted by the Knoll Park Committee on June 11, 2014. Seconded by Councilmember Brewer, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Council President Burrell then moved for the adoption of the following resolution for Koll Park as amended. Seconded by Councilmember Brewer, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

22 September 2014

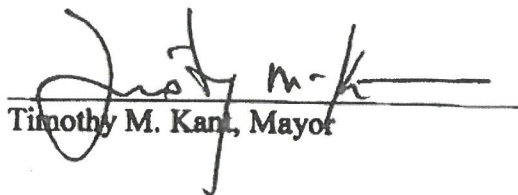
RESOLUTION NO. 2266-14

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2183-14 on February 24, 2014; Resolution No. 2211-14 on April 24, 2014; and Resolution No. 2251-14 on August 11, 2014 that established the Knoll Park Committee and its rules and Mission Statement; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby desires to repeal the above resolutions which will dissolve the establishment of the Knoll Park Committee; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE, that Resolution No. 2183-14, Resolution No. 2211-14, and Resolution No. 2251-14 are hereby repealed.

Adopted on this 22nd day of September, 2014


Timothy M. Kant, Mayor

Attest:


Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

City Council reviewed an application for Application for a Non-Profit Tax Exempt License by Fairhope Sunset Rotary Club Charity, Inc., by Teddy J. Faust, Jr., for the 2014 Oktoberfest on October 25, 2014 for use Fairhope Stadium Grounds located on the Northeast Corner of 701 Volanta Avenue from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Councilmember Boone moved to approve the issuance of the license. Seconded by Councilmember Mueller, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

City Council reviewed an application for Application for a Non-Profit Tax Exempt License by Point Clear Charities, Inc., by Travis Goodloe, Jr., for the 2014 Polo at the Point on October 18, 2014 located at 7883 County Road 32, Point Clear, Alabama. Councilmember Mueller moved to approve the issuance of the license. Seconded by Councilmember Brewer, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

STATE OF ALABAMA)
 :
COUNTY OF BALDWIN)(

The City Council met in an Agenda Meeting at 5:30 p.m.,
Delchamps Room, 161 North Section Street,
Fairhope, Alabama 36532, on Monday, 23 February 2015.

Present were Council President Jack Burrell, Councilmembers: Rich Mueller, Diana Brewer, Michael A. Ford, and Kevin Boone, City Attorney Marion E. Wynne, Mayor Timothy M. Kant, and City Clerk Lisa A. Hanks.

Council President Burrell called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. The City Council reviewed and discussed the agenda for their meeting to be held today at 6:00 p.m.

Council President Burrell brought up the burning of Knoll Park and the Maintenance Plan which calls for burning. He mentioned speaking to Mr. Dyson who wrote the plan and told him now is the time to burn. Councilmember Ford said we could do one burn and if it works then consider for the future.

Mayor Kant said there are three distinct areas for burning. The experts should decide which ones need to be done and when. We need to make sure there is enough fuel for the fire. Mayor Kant commented he told the managers to follow the resolution. Councilmember Mueller stated the restoration began in 2007. Councilmember Boone said this is for their personal agenda; and he does not want it burnt. Councilmember Brewer replied the burning is for the many species of wild flowers and not the trees. Councilmember Ford said we can either reject the plan or do the plan.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was duly adjourned at 5:59 p.m.


Jack Burrell, Council President


Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

STATE OF ALABAMA)(
 :
 COUNTY OF BALDWIN)(

The City Council, City of Fairhope, met in regular session at 6:00 p.m., Fairhope Municipal Complex Council Chamber, 161 North Section Street, Fairhope, Alabama 36532, on Monday, 23 February 2015.

Present were Council President Jack Burrell, Councilmembers: Rich Mueller, Diana Brewer, Michael A. Ford, and Kevin Boone, Mayor Timothy M. Kant, City Attorney Marion E. Wynne, and City Clerk Lisa A. Hanks.

There being a quorum present, Council President Burrell called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Associate Pastor Chris Peters of Trinity Presbyterian Church and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Councilmember Brewer moved to approve minutes of the 9 February 2015, regular meeting; minutes of the 9 February 2015, work session; and minutes of the 9 February 2015, agenda meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Boone, motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Kant addressed the City Council and mentioned the "State of the City" which was held Sunday is online for viewing. He said we made it through Mardi Gras, but will be addressing some KOER issues.

Councilmember Mueller addressed the City Council and mentioned the Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board needs more participation.

Councilmember Brewer addressed the City Council and stated the reason she was not able to attend the State of the City was due to her working at the Mobile Symphony.

Council President Burrell addressed the City Council regarding the Knoll Park Maintenance Plan and mentioned the debate on the burning of the interior. The burning promotes wild flowers; native species. He said the plan emphasizes burning; and we unanimously voted for the plan not for maintenance. The plan does specify three different options for the park. The expert says we need to burn and residents will not be harmed. The burning will be done with the utmost care. Hopefully, this will be the direction we move.

Councilmember Brewer moved for final adoption of Ordinance No. 1532, an ordinance to rezone the property of Anez Investments, Inc. from R-A Residential / Agriculture District to B-4 Business and Professional District. This property is generally located at 20252 State Highway 181, Fairhope, Alabama. Parcel No. 05-46-06-14-0-000-001.502. (Introduced at the February 9, 2015 City Council Meeting)

Tree Committee Meeting

January 13, 2022

10:03 a.m.

Delchamps Room

Members present: May Moss Parker, Craig Tappan, Skip Jones, Patrick Waldrop, Joanne Hogan, Paul Fontenot, Jamie Rollins. Absent: Corey Martin and Knox McMurphy. Gayle Fogarty took minutes. Guests: J.J. McCool of Wildlife Solutions and Lisa Todia

Paul Fontenot called the meeting to order. The minutes from the meeting held on December 15, 2021 were reviewed and approved, motioned by Skip Jones and 2nd by Patrick Waldrop and unanimously carried.

New Business:

There was general discussion of the date and time of Arbor Day for 2022, it was decided that February 12, 2022 at 10 a.m. will be the City of Fairhope Arbor Day celebration, on a motion made by Patrick Waldrop and 2nd by Joanne Hogan and unanimously carried.

There was general discussion among the committee regarding Arbor Day and the logistics of the day, Jo Hogan asked that a press release be done on the students that win the poster contest. There was also discussion of Arbor Day Award recipients, the committee selected three recipients on a motion made by Skip Jones, and 2nd by Patrick Waldrop and unanimously carried. The recipients selected were John Bethea, 76 S. Section Street for unique architectural structure to downtown streetscape; Moore Building, 152 N. Section Street for continuing exceptional architecture, planning and historical preservation by blending new construction within a phased development that is complementary to the historic downtown streetscape; and Five Gold Monkeys, 51 S. Section Street for complimentary renovation of existing commercial facade and adaptation and conversion of existing unaesthetic architecture. Jamie Rollins informed the committee that the City will take care of packaging the seedlings for Arbor Day. He added that he is in the process of ordering the seedlings needed for the event, and shared the tree list that will be ordered:

Acer rubrum (Red maple) BR
Carya glabra (Pignut hickory) BR
Celtis laevigata (Sugarberry) BR
Crataegus marshallii (Parsley haw) BR
Fagus grandifolia (American beech) BR
Quercus myrtifolia (Myrtle oak) BR
Rhus glabra (Smooth sumac) BR
Taxodium distichum (Baldcypress) BR
Viburnum dentatum (Arrowwood viburnum) BR

Jamie Rollins shared an update on the status of Knoll Park with the committee. Guest J.J. McCool of Wildlife Solutions shared information with the group that his crew can chemically treat the invasive exotic plants located in Knoll Park at no cost to the City of Fairhope. There was general discussion among the Tree Committee members and Jamie recommended moving forward with this offer from Wildlife Solutions, the committee agreed with Jamie's recommendation on a motion made 1st by Craig

Tappan and 2nd by Skip Jones, and unanimously carried. Patrick Waldrop stated that he would like Knoll Park to be burned before March 2022.

Paul Fontenot inquired about Mayor Sullivan and Hunter Simmons attending a future tree committee meeting to discuss the tree ordinance wording regarding planning and zoning.

Old Business:

Paul Fontenot stated that the live oak in front of the Lutheran Church doesn't look good and is severely stressed and feels it is a safety hazard. Jamie Rollins suggested a risk assessment be completed, Paul F. added that some mitigation has been done on the tree and thinks it is too late and now safety is a concern. Jamie made a recommendation to the committee to have a risk assessment completed, before the City takes any action, a motion was made by Patrick Waldrop to accept Jamie's recommendation and 2nd by Joanne Hogan, and unanimously carried.

The committee discussed future meeting dates for 2022, it was determined that the dates would be: April 14, August 18 and November 10, all the meetings will be held in the Delchamps room and will begin at 10 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

22 September 2014

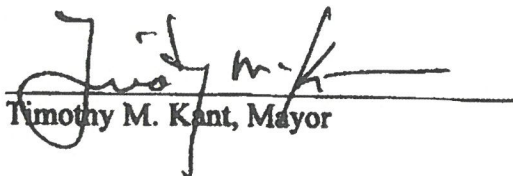
RESOLUTION NO. 2265-14

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to approve and adopt the landscape plan for Knoll Park designed by Joe Comer subject to Public Works Director given discretion to specific plants to be used; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Director is hereby authorized to oversee and maintain the Park subject to the Maintenance Plan adopted by the Knoll Park Committee on June 11, 2014.

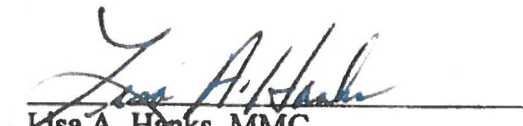
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE, that the landscape plan for Knoll Park is approved and adopted subject to Public Works Director given discretion to specific plants to be used; and the Public Works Director is hereby authorized to oversee and maintain the Park subject to the Maintenance Plan adopted by the Knoll Park Committee on June 11, 2014.

Adopted on this 22nd day of September, 2014



Timothy M. Kant, Mayor

Attest:



Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

Councilmember Boone introduced in writing, and moved for the adoption of the following resolution, a resolution that Resolution No. 2183-14, Resolution No. 2211-14, and Resolution No. 2251-14 are hereby repealed which dissolves the establishment of the Knoll Park Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mueller. Council President Burrell commented this would be a bad move and the Committee should implement this project. Councilmember Boone replied no other park has a committee. Councilmember Ford said he would go with the resolution. Councilmember Brewer commented that no other park has a long leaf pine habitat; and the citizens need to be a part of the community who volunteer to help. After further discussion, motion passed by the following voice votes: AYE – Mueller, Ford, and Boone. NAY – Burrell and Brewer.

Knoll Park Restoration

What is Knoll Park ?

Given to the citizens of Fairhope by the Fairhope Single Tax Colony, the park is a rare, remnant of 'Sandhill Longleaf Pine Forest'. Such forests once dominated much of the Gulf Coast landscape from New Orleans to Tallahassee, covering millions of acres. In its natural state, the park would be characterized by the towering Longleaf Pine with an open understory of herbaceous wildflowers alive with color in the Spring and the Fall.

Why is it endangered?

Today, Knoll Park remains one of Fairhope's treasures. Long-time Fairhopian's may take them for granted, but to many newer residents the huge pines are unique, and have a rather exotic character. However, some of its most remarkable components have diminished during the past century. By 2006, even the towering pines were in danger. Though collectively quite healthy, they were not reproducing, and there was not a single pine under fifty years old on site. Wildflower populations had become almost insignificant. Mostly they clung to existence at the bases of trees, and on the perimeter slopes. Liatris, asters, and a few others still flowered, but there was a time when wild iris and some now-Federally-endangered plants flourished.

What is the aim of the restoration project?

The Knoll Park Restoration Project, a joint effort of the Fairhope City Council and Fairhope Single Tax Corporation, aims to restore the site to a point much as it appeared to Fairhope's Founders. The Founders understood the importance of large passive-use areas to a community. There are precious few Southern Longleaf Pine remnants within urban settings, and the restoration of Knoll Park would be a wonderful gift to future generations.

Why do you keep burning it?

The Longleaf Pine Ecosystem is very fire-dependent. The pines themselves depend on fire to create a good seedbed and eliminate vines and brush that would stymie seedling establishment. Many populations of herbaceous plants require the same conditions for regeneration and growth.

The project committee consulted foresters and botanists about methods for restoring the native plant populations. These specialists recommended a series of controlled burns, aiming toward a self-sustaining ecosystem. The committee initiated a series of such burns in 2007. The burns are done with permission and participation from the Alabama Forestry Commission and the City.

How successful have you been?

Over 140 species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers now have been found and identified within Knoll Park. That number indicates an incredible diversity over a relatively small area. Some herbaceous species seen here are rare or no longer extant elsewhere in Fairhope. Of particular interest are some thirty specimens of the orchid species *Spiranthes praecox*. Consultations with native plant experts have led to re-introduction of lost herbaceous plants which botanists would expect to be on this type site. Over 700 such plants have been planted throughout the park by volunteers. The controlled burns, coupled with a brush removal program within the park, have yielded thousands of tiny longleaf pine seedlings throughout the park.

How can we see the park?

A simple series of bark paths lead visitors to a central gathering area at the knoll of the park which gives one a spectacular view of Mobile Bay as well as an expansive view of the park. We ask visitors to keep to the paths while the fragile surroundings recover.

What's next?

A simple parking area is planned for Bayview Avenue. Interpretive signs explaining the history and ecology of the park will be added. It is envisioned that the park becomes a teaching tool for area schools, as well as a place for Fairhope citizens and out-of-town visitors to see what the historic Sandhill Longleaf Pine Forests were like in the Founders' day.

How can we help?

Vigilance and patience. To be truly restored, Knoll Park must remain a passive-use area. It is difficult for modern man to see a piece of real estate and not place a monument to himself upon it. It will take continued stewardship and dedication shown by the Fairhope Single Tax Colony, City Of Fairhope, and the many volunteers who have helped with the project.

There is no other place in Fairhope where the harmony of truly natural surroundings can be more appreciated for its simple splendor. We have a golden opportunity to salvage a remnant of that beauty that drew our founders here more than 100 years ago.

*

THE FAIRHOPE SINGLE-TAX COLONY (ORIGINAL DONOR OF THIS AND OTHER PARK LAND IN FAIRHOPE) AND THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE ARE THE PRINCIPAL SPONSORS OF THE RESTORATION PROJECT. COLLABORATORS INCLUDE THE WISTERIA GARDEN CLUB, THE FAIRHOPE TREE COMMITTEE, AND THE ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION. PLANT SPECIALISTS GENA TODIA, HARRY LARSEN AND FRED NATION HAVE IDENTIFIED THE MANY PLANT SPECIES AT THE SITE AND HELPED IN OTHER RESTORATION WORK. MEMBERS OF THE KNOLL PARK RESTORATION COMMITTEE HAVE PLANNED AND CONDUCTED MUCH OF THE WORK ALSO. THEY INCLUDE MAC McCAWLEY (SINGLE TAX COLONY PROJECT CHAIRMAN), BOBBY GREEN (LANDSCAPE DESIGNER AND NURSERYMAN), LIBBY McCAWLEY (MASTER GARDENER AND ARTIST), DOT YEAGER (REALTOR), MAE MOSS PARKER (WISTERIA GARDEN CLUB), JOHN PATE (GENERAL CONTRACTOR), TOM ELLIS (FAIRHOPE TREE COMMITTEE), MIKE FORD (REALTOR AND CITY COUNCILMAN), PEGGY DYSON (LOCAL TEACHER AND BOTANIST), AND JENNIFER FIDLER (FAIRHOPE CITY HORTICULTURIST).

*

Special thanks to John and Julie Pate who have contributed a great deal of time and monies to the project; Electrical Superintendant, Scott Sligh; The Fairhope Volunteer Fire Department; and all the supportive immediate neighbors of Knoll Park.



ISSUED / REVISED

SITE INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

PROJECT NO.	LC-10
DATE	7/11/14
BY	
CHECKED BY	
APPROVED BY	

KNOLL PARK SITE ANALYSIS

NOTES

- SYMBOL**
- 1 PHOTO #1
View from Magnolia Ave. looking SW into park.
 - 2 PHOTO #2
View looking East into park at intersection of Magnolia & Fairhope Ave.
 - 3 PHOTO #3
View from Fairhope Ave. looking W into park.
 - 4 PHOTO #4
View from Bayview looking NW into park.

BAYSIDE ENTRY

Trailhead is steep and uninviting. Exposed roots and erosion are safety and environmental concerns. This is an opportunity for further interpretation of Sand Hill Long Leaf Pine forest and a formalized main entrance.

MAGNOLIA ENTRY

Trailhead is inconspicuous to unfamiliar visitors. Erosion on street edge and byside of trail caused by concentrated runoff make it unlighty. Opportunity for highlighting pedestrian circulation and controlling run off.

FAIRHOPE AVE ENTRY

Runoff from road and signage accent this entry better than others. However, further opportunity for enhancements could direct pedestrian circulation more effectively and stabilize erosion.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO WOODLINE

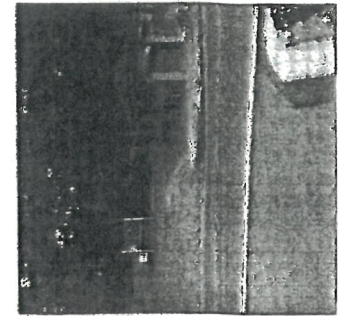
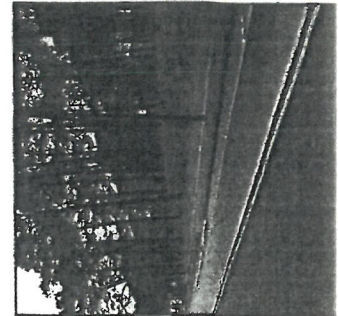
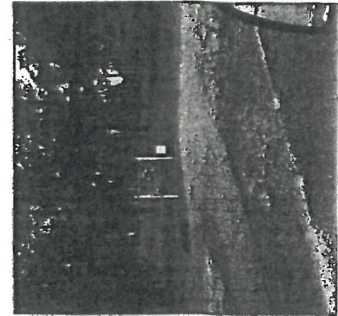
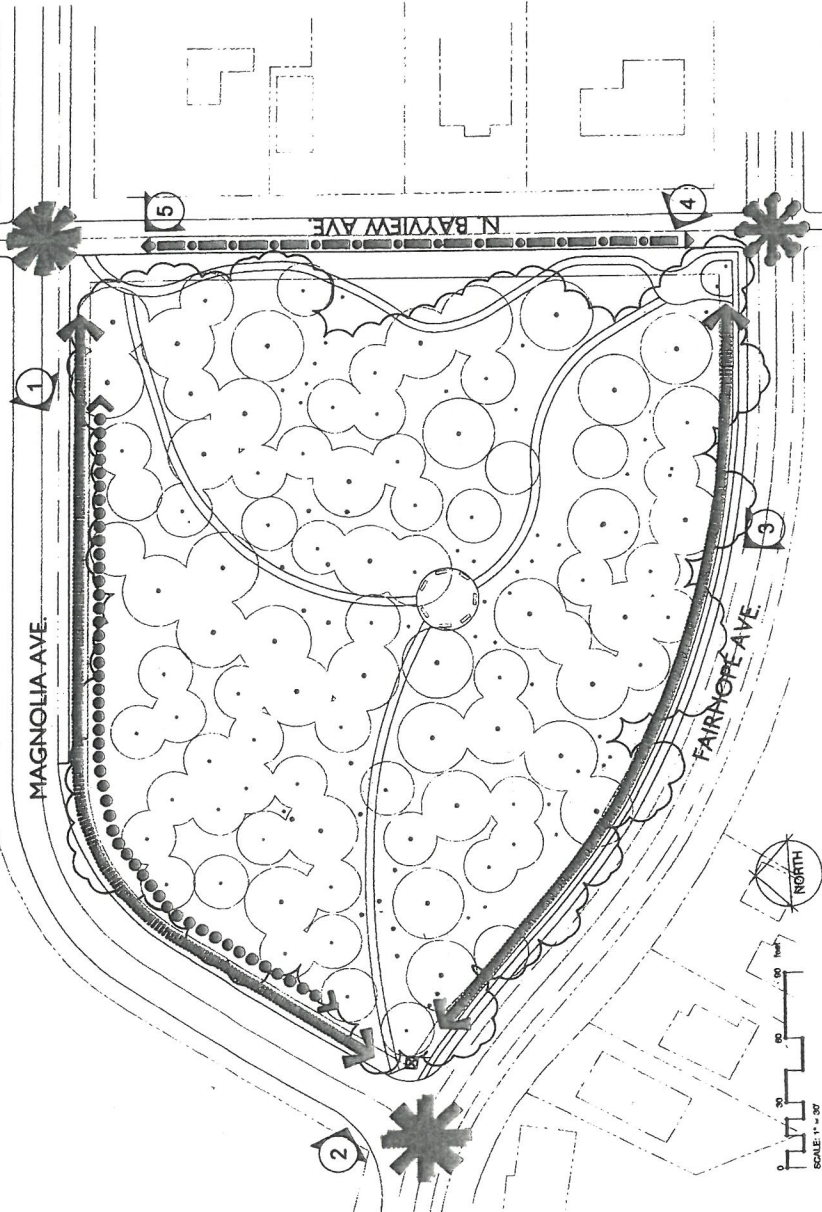
Lack of pedestrian access on this edge. Observation of the border plant species has a unique and different quality than interior portions. Pedestrian access along this border to guide visitors would be beneficial. It would also be important to give pedestrians a visual boundary to discourage foot traffic on sensitive plants.

PERIMETER EDGE TREATMENT

Mowing/maintenance limits are not defined making for unlighty edge conditions. This is an opportunity to form a low impact defined physical edge to maintain to and provide a more manicured look from the outside looking in. Pedestrians would also get the sense of a protected area but feel welcome to look from the edge.

BAYVIEW EDGE TREATMENT

Vehicle area is eroding and street runoff is washing out certain areas. This border is slightly different in that the groundcover layer is less prominent. Edge treatment may not be as crucial except for maintenance limits.



NOTES:
1. THIS INFORMATION IS NOT A SURVEY.
2. THIS INFORMATION IS NOT A SURVEY.
3. LOCAL LAWS AND ORDINANCES IN EFFECT.

DRAFT
Management Plan
for the
Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project

Prepared for the City of Fairhope

By

David S. Dyson
Alabama RF #2152

February 20, 2013
Revised March 19, 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- I. The partnership between the City of Fairhope and the Single Tax Corporation on the Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project represents a valuable opportunity for the Fairhope community to share ownership in restoring and enriching a unique resource that will provide direct benefits to local environmental quality. This project also addresses previously-identified suggestions for improving utilization and sustainability of Fairhope's natural resources.
- II. Thoughtful stewardship by the Colony and City of Fairhope has maintained Knoll Park in a condition that makes it suitable for restoration with minimal effort and expense. In particular, mature longleaf pines of similar age (150-200 years) are uncommon both locally and regionally; therefore, ecosystem restoration on this site can provide public access to a type of urban forest not available in many communities. Restoring this common green space provides a new opportunity for Fairhope to stand out by protecting its natural heritage, involving the public with the environment, and conserving an endangered ecosystem.
- III. Since the project's inception, several measurable gains have become visible: establishment of planted and natural longleaf pine seedlings (the first in decades), reintroduction of wiregrass, a keystone ecosystem component, and reappearance of native wildflowers such as milkweed, silk-grass, and vanilla leaf. Eastern bluebirds also have been seen in the park, utilizing the open-pine habitat. These gains can be built upon with further time and management.
- IV. The long-term unsustainability of the park's forest structure is being addressed through tree planting and natural regeneration. As additional disturbance kills mature pines, more growing space can be allocated to younger age classes.
- V. Fire is vital to longleaf pine ecosystems and is irreplaceable in native community restoration and maintaining ecosystem sustainability and health. Careful, deliberate use of prescribed fire is the single-most important facet of the restoration process, but can be augmented mechanically and chemically. Various methods are available to mitigate impacts of burning on the surrounding urban area.
- VI. Adaptive management provides a conservative approach that insures progress while minimizing the potential for harm. A long-term philosophy is sure to bring the most complete gains and allow for continued public interest and involvement.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project was initiated by the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation in 2007 with cooperation from the City of Fairhope. At that time, Knoll Park was an underutilized resource with great potential. The park's vegetation consisted primarily of mature (>120 year-old) longleaf pine trees and Indica azaleas, many of which had become overgrown with *Smilax* vines and small hardwood trees (Figure 1). With endorsement from the City of Fairhope, volunteers from the Colony and Fairhope community removed non-native azaleas and other shrubs as the first step in a project intended to restore Knoll Park to its native longleaf pine sandhill plant community. Subsequent projects including prescribed burning, tree planting, and reintroduction of native plant species have resulted in additional visible gains.



Figure 1. Example of Indica azalea in Knoll Park prior to sandhill ecosystem restoration project. Photo by Bobby Green.

A 2003 report by Audubon International lists longleaf pine forests as one of Fairhope's highly endangered ecological communities and recommended preservation and restoration of these and other native ecosystems in Fairhope's long-term plans (Woolbright and Todia, 2003). The report further states that Fairhope's open space plan will need to include a variety of long-term restoration efforts due to altered forest cover and hydrology.

Restoring Knoll Park's native vegetation presents a valuable opportunity to address multiple objectives identified by Woolbright and Todia (2003). Not only does native vegetation include numerous rare or threatened plant species, but it also supports a wide variety of animal species, particularly butterflies and birds. Furthermore, Woolbright and Todia's 2003 report states that natural ecosystems are good water quality buffers and need to be maintained or restored. In particular, Knoll Park's situation atop the bluff provides a valuable area for groundwater recharge through percolation. This groundwater flows downward through the soil and reemerges via springs at the base of the bluff, benefiting water quality and the natural hydrology and ecology of the Bay. Furthermore,

higher fresh water content in the soil and along the Bay shore help sustain a population of Atlantic white-cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) identified in the report as notable and “very rare or vulnerable” in the State (Figure A-2, appendix). Thus, restoring Knoll Park to its natural plant community can directly address this recommendation with minimal cost and will indirectly benefit other areas of concern listed in the report at no additional cost.

Why Knoll Park?

Knoll Park provides a restoration opportunity not present elsewhere in Fairhope because it is largely intact despite going decades without natural disturbance from fire. The overstory longleaf pines have been dated to between 150-200 years of age minimum, and therefore this primary sandhill community component is already present, an irreplaceable capsule of Fairhope’s natural heritage. With proper management strategies and objective-driven management, a functioning native plant community can be achieved without major expense. Furthermore, Knoll Park’s location near the center of Fairhope makes it readily accessible to all. With time, the project can become a showpiece for the natural beauty of the Eastern Shore, the vision and stewardship of Fairhope’s founders and civic leaders, and cooperation between local public and private entities.

Given the opportunities and potential benefits of the Knoll Park project, the purpose of this management plan is to identify a set of management strategies that will assist the City of Fairhope in achieving the goals identified by the Single Tax Corporation’s Knoll Park Restoration committee. The underlying philosophy presented below is one of adaptive management, in which management activities are constantly evaluated for effectiveness and altered as determined necessary to increase effectiveness and better-achieve stated goals.

1.1 Objective

The objective of the Knoll Park Longleaf Pine Sandhill Restoration Project is to reestablish a functioning longleaf pine sandhill ecosystem consisting of a longleaf pine forest with a species-rich understory of native grasses and forbs and a wide diversity of wildflowers. Such ecosystems were described by early naturalists including Bartram (1791) and Williams (1827) and provide the best estimation of pre-settlement plant community composition and structure.

1.2 Site Description

Knoll Park consists of 4.6 acres located near the center of Fairhope, at the crest of a bluff overlooking the eastern shore of Mobile Bay in Baldwin County, Alabama (Figures 2 and 3). Climate is mild and humid, bordering on subtropical, driven by proximity to and tempered by the Gulf of Mexico; average frost-free period is 262 days (McBride and Burgess 1964). Fairhope is located in the Bay Insert of the Alabama-Mississippi middle Coastal Plain Climate Area, receiving 65-70 inches of rainfall annually, with monthly peaks in March and July and minima in May and October (Craul et al. 2005). Craul and others (2005) classify this as the Alabama area Site Zone, exhibiting annual mean temperature between 66-68°F. Hurricanes in late summer or fall occasionally damage property, but can also provide copious rainfall (McBride and Burgess 1964). Elevation

ranges from 60 to approximately 90 feet above sea level. Figure 4 shows virgin (original growth) longleaf pine forest 10 miles east of Fairhope in 1902.

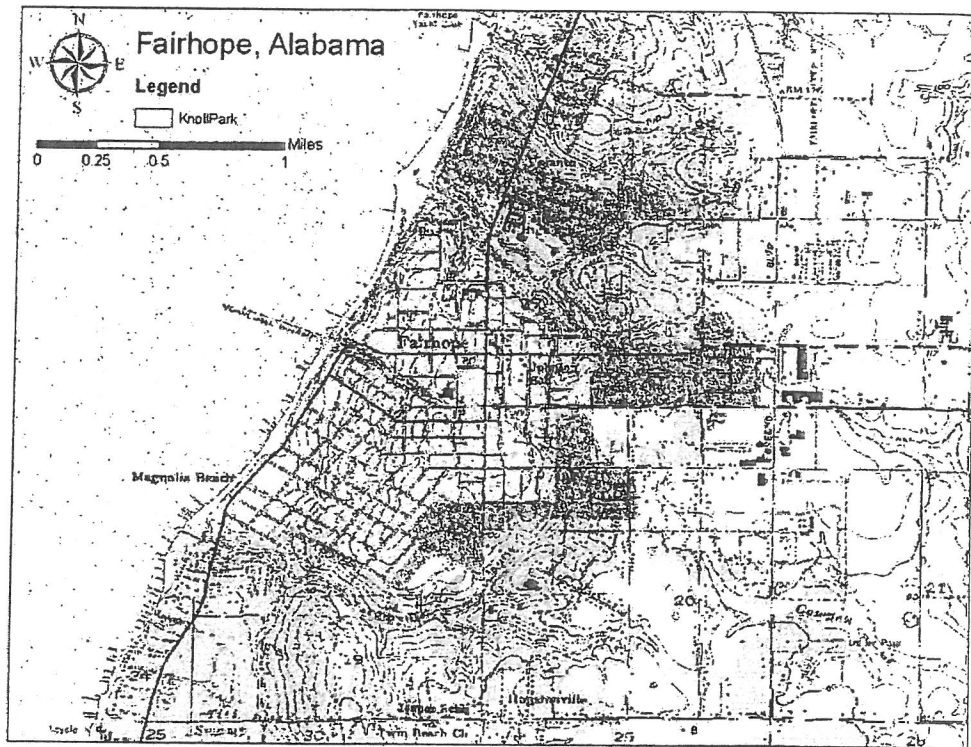


Figure 2. Location map of Knoll Park within Fairhope, Baldwin County, Alabama.

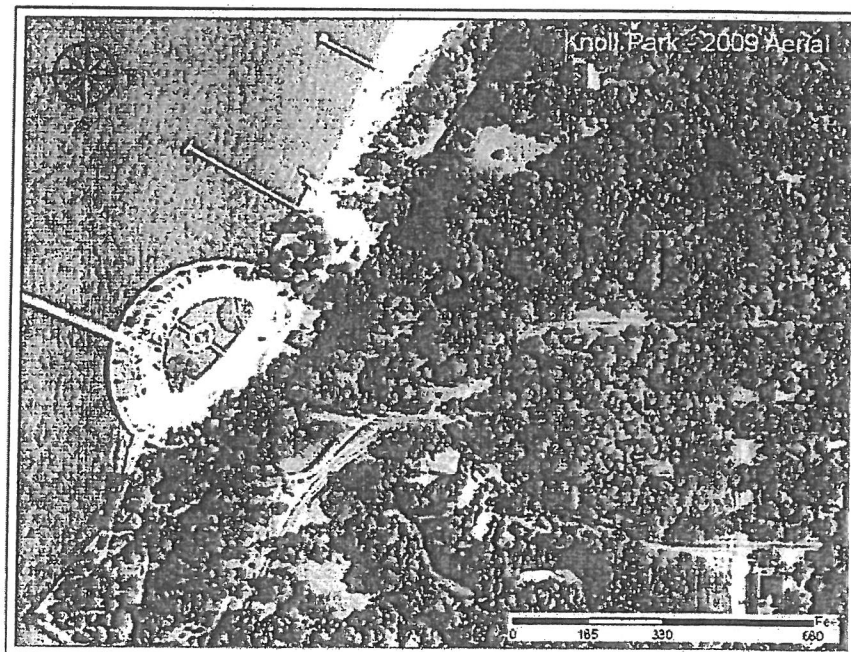


Figure 3. Aerial photograph (2009) showing Knoll Park and surrounding area.



Figure 4. Virgin longleaf pine forest 10 miles east of Fairhope, 1902 (Harper, 1913). Note virtual absence of hardwood species.

The following soil information is taken from McBride and Burgess (1964). Soil series present in Knoll Park is Lakeland loamy fine sand (Thermic, coated, Typic Quartzipsamments), 0-5% slope, derived from sandy marine deposits from sedimentary rock. Soil moisture is low except after rains. This deep (>80"), low-fertility, excessively drained soil is underlain by the Citronelle Formation, a Pliocene formation of cross-bedded sands with thin layers of clay. Because of high annual rainfall and temperatures and coarse soil texture, soil organic matter is low and leaching rates are high. Lakeland series soils exhibit high water transmittance, from 6-20 inches per hour. Site index, a measure of site productivity, estimates average tree height at a given reference year, and is classified here as 70 (base age 50) for longleaf pine.

2.0 METHODS

Knoll Park was sampled with a 100% inventory of all tree stems ≥ 4.5 feet tall in February, 2013. Heights of dominant/codominant longleaf pines were subsampled at a 5% ratio. Reproduction (pine and hardwood seedlings) was sampled using a systematic grid of 30 milacre plots. Additional milacre plots were sampled in gaps and along edges where longleaf pine seedlings were known to exist. For the purposes of this inventory, sparkleberry was considered a shrub and was not sampled.

3.0 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

3.1 Overstory Trees

Forest inventory data from Knoll Park show that a total of 200 mature longleaf pines exist on the property, with dominant and codominant tree heights averaging 80-85 feet. The longleaf pine timber exists in an even-aged stand, defined by the Society of American Foresters as one in which the range of tree ages is approximately 20% of the oldest trees (Helms, 1998). This can be determined by the bell-shaped diameter distribution (Figure 5). Recent age estimates from dead trees in the bayfront parks date the trees to between 150-200 years old. Of note is the truncated left-hand tail of the bell curve, showing that the smaller, more suppressed stems have been succumbing to density-dependent mortality. Density-dependent mortality, or self thinning, is a natural part of forest stand dynamics in which less vigorous individuals die, providing more growing space for dominant stems. In longleaf pine stands, self thinning usually occurs in pulses of mortality approximately every 30 years (J.S. Kush, Auburn University, pers. comm).

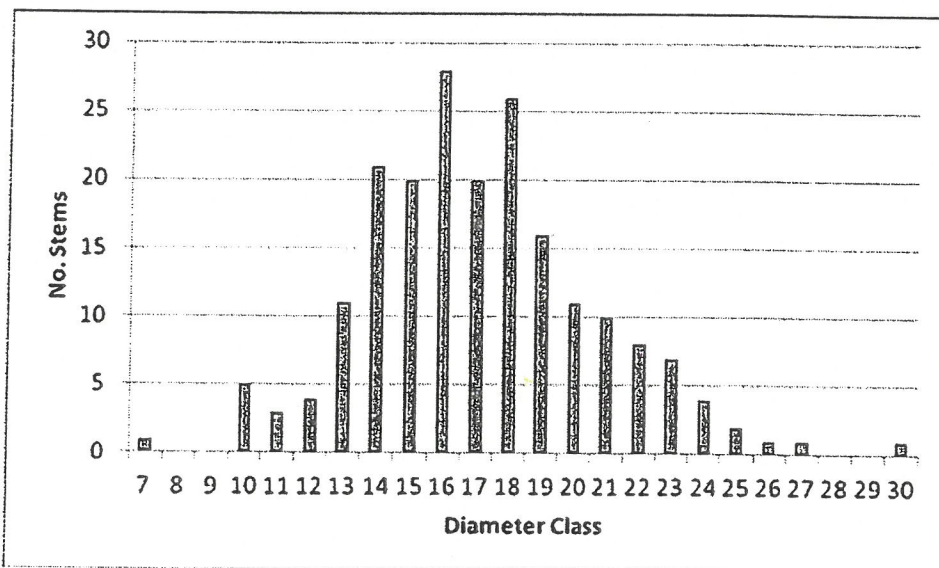


Figure 5. Diameter distribution for overstory longleaf pines in Knoll Park. This modified bell curve demonstrates an even-aged stand that has already begun a period of self-thinning.

Table 1 shows a stand table for Knoll Park developed from a 100% inventory of longleaf pines reduced to per-acre figures. Trees per acre (TPA) and basal area (BA) are measures of stand density that are used together to assess current stand conditions. Basal area is the cross-sectional area of tree stems measured at breast height (4.5 feet) expressed per unit

of stand area (Helms, 1998). The two measures are interrelated in that the same BA can result from a low number of large trees or a high number of small trees; taken together, TPA and BA provide useful information regarding the amount of growing space available and the stage of stand development.

Table 1. Stand table for Knoll Park; 100% inventory, February, 2013.
"Other" includes Eastern red-cedar and loblolly pine.

	Species			TOTAL
	Longleaf Pine	Hardwood	Other	
TPA	44	11	2	57
BA (ft ² /ac)	73	21	1	94

Quadratic mean diameter, the diameter of a tree of average basal area, for longleaf pines is 17 inches. Using the Goelz-Leduc Stand Density Index (GLSDI) (Kush et al., 2006), this places the timber in Knoll Park approximately at crown closure but below the density at which significant density-dependent mortality begins. However, because the GLSDI was developed for longleaf pine plantations and not natural stands, in this case it should be considered for reference only, not as an absolute tool for density management.

Total stand basal area in Knoll Park is over 90 square feet per acre, making it too dense to adequately recruit new age classes at the stand scale. Not only does cone production decrease with stand density greater than 30 ft²/ac (Crocker, 1973), but dense stands with greater than 70% canopy cover typically do not provide enough growing space for seedlings, resulting in minimal seedling recruitment rates (Boyer, 1993a; Palik et al., 1997). In fact, a study of seedling recruitment by Palik and others (2003) estimated that only 16% of ground area in mature longleaf pine forests provides conditions adequate for seedling survival.

3.2 Pine and Hardwood Reproduction

At the stand scale, Knoll Park averages 200 longleaf pine seedlings per acre and over 6,600 hardwood stems per acre. Longleaf pine seedlings were almost entirely in the grass stage, probably born of the 2008, 2009, and 2011 seed crops, which were classified as either "fair" or "good" by the U.S. Forest Service (D. Brockway, USFS, unpublished data). Seedlings can emerge from the grass stage as quickly as during their second year from seed, but may persist without height growth for two decades depending on available growth resources and weather conditions (Hardin et. al., 2001). An additional 12 longleaf pine saplings (> 3 feet tall) are present within the park due to previous years' plantings.

A separate seedling inventory of canopy gaps known to contain longleaf seedlings revealed seedlings stocked at a quantity of approximately 24,500 per acre and 7,000 hardwood stems per acre. This level of stocking is at least four times that recommended by Boyer (1993b), who recommended securing 2,000-6,000 seedlings per acre for stand-scale regeneration in even-aged management systems. Since active timber management is not a factor in Knoll Park, far fewer seedlings are required to sustain the stand. During previous prescribed burns, newly-germinated seedlings were protected from fire to prevent growth reductions and mortality, resulting in such high stocking in these areas.

Despite a low number of longleaf seedling throughout the park, high stand density and lack of advance pine reproduction (seedlings) does not present a major problem in Knoll Park because timber production is not a management objective. Rather, the project objective of restoring the ecosystem allows a more conservative approach. In this case, existing and future natural gaps resulting from mortality events will provide areas for seedlings to germinate and grow. Once these seedlings are established, they will provide a standing reserve that will be released and grow into the canopy with additional overstory disturbance (mortality).

In contrast to the stocking level of longleaf pine reproduction, the amount of hardwood reproduction present could become problematic. Although not currently a problem because the hardwood reproduction is small enough to be suppressed with fire, such a high number of stems shows how quickly the park's composition could shift to hardwoods without proper use of prescribed fire and other vegetation management.

4.0 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Forest Structure

The mature longleaf pine forest present in Knoll Park shows healthy structure, but it is unsustainable in the long term. Although longleaf pines have been documented to live as long as 500 years, losses from various natural and stochastic events increase to the extent that stand-scale growth may be minimal after approximately 120 years (Kush et al., 2006). Therefore, without a large disturbance, it is expected that individual pines will continue to die over time. For that reason, it is imperative that a new cohort of longleaf pines is recruited to the site. Plantings from previous years have resulted in several young longleaf pines that are at present in the "bolt" stage (> 1 foot tall, < 2 inches dbh).

Cone production should be monitored in order to time prescribed burning to capture natural regeneration, and further planting can take place in canopy gaps in the park's interior. However, it should be noted that, due to the harsh environment, planted seedlings typically exhibit much lower survival rates than naturally-regenerated seedlings. Therefore, planting should be arranged randomly within canopy gaps; mimicking high-density natural clusters of seedlings will allow for seedling mortality while still providing for a percentage of seedlings to survive with growing space to eventually recruit to the overstory. Periodic inventory of longleaf pine reproduction within the park will be necessary to determine if and when additional planting is necessary.

The City of Fairhope's history of mowing Knoll Park has largely prevented the development of a subcanopy of mesic hardwood species that is common to most historically fire-excluded longleaf ecosystems, but it equally prevented the recruitment of additional cohorts of longleaf pine. Despite mowing, the park contains over 20 ft²/ac of hardwoods—primarily oak—that likely survived by growing in areas inaccessible to mowers. Such oak density is uncharacteristically high relative to historic records, which

show that hardwoods were typically restricted to steep slopes and wet areas with lower fire frequency. In fact, in the 1820s pine and oak are estimated to have occurred together on only 9% of land area in Escambia and Covington Counties (Predmore et al., 2007).

Hardwoods take up more growing space than pines of equal size and therefore have a more suppressive effect on pine reproduction. Because their density within the park is uncharacteristically high and is counter to the objectives of native community restoration and pine regeneration, large hardwoods (especially oaks) should be discouraged. Any additional growing space allocated to midstory and overstory hardwoods will directly reduce that available to young pine reproduction.

Recommendation: To prevent hardwoods from capturing additional growing space, all oak and sweetgum stems less than 12 inches dbh should be evaluated for removal as weeds. Additional hardwood removal (of larger trees) would further benefit ecosystem health and sustainability. Understory composition should be monitored on a regular basis to determine the need for vegetation management treatments; prescribed burning averaging every 2 years will prevent most hardwood recruitment. If necessary, mechanical or chemical treatments can be used to supplement, but not replace, prescribed fire—hardwood stems typically become resistant to fire after stems reach 1 inch in diameter, so hardwoods should be controlled mechanically or chemically if they surpass this size.

4.2 Understory/Groundcover

Prescribed fire is the primary tool used in understory restoration because it selects for native fire-adapted plants, maintains safe and sustainable fuel loads, and stimulates growth of long-suppressed plant species. However, fire suppression lasting more than 50 years has been documented to deplete native seed banks (Ruth et al., 2008). Planting native species can shorten the time required for long-suppressed species to reappear and also replace extirpated plant populations. However, this should take place with care in order to insure that site-adapted species are chosen, for project integrity and to minimize the need for watering. Sources such as Taylor (1998) can provide names of possible candidates for artificial reestablishment.

One of the City of Fairhope's major desires for this project is to restore an ecosystem that maintains itself and thus does not require intensive management such as watering or vegetation management. That desire fits neatly with the project objective of restoring the native plant community, because understory plants native to sandhill communities are adapted to the local climate and site conditions. Therefore, plantings within the park should be limited to species that are documented members of the longleaf pine sandhill community.

Recommendation: Regular use of prescribed fire generally will restore and maintain the understory to native species composition. Occasional planting projects can aid species reintroduction. A partial list of species recommended for potential future planting is appended. Undesirable woody species, especially hardwoods and invasive species, can be removed chemically or mechanically. Garlon (triclopyr) selects against

broad-leaved species and can help remove undesirable hardwoods without harming grasses and forbs. Specific prescriptions will be required for removal of invasive species.

4.3 Prescribed Fire

Longleaf pine ecosystems are fire-dependent, and any restoration project will require the targeted use of prescribed fire to restore and maintain the ecosystem. Fire is particularly effective relative to alternatives because it favors grasses and forbs over woody species (Outcalt and Brockway, 2010). It is estimated that the historical fire interval in coastal Alabama varied between every 1 and 3 years, resulting in fires of varying intensity (Frost, 2006). Although managers commonly attempt to use prescribed fire to mimic that fire regime, fire is more appropriately used to achieve specific objectives, such as understory plant composition or forest structure, because prescribed fires rarely burn under the same conditions or intensity as historical wildfires. Most studies have shown that longleaf pine communities should be burned as frequently as fuels permit (Glitzenstein et al., 2012), and some show that burn intervals longer than every 2 years can result in woody plant encroachment over time (Outcalt and Brockway, 2010; Glitzenstein et al., 2012). In effect, there is no complete alternative to fire, but fire can be combined with herbicides and mechanical treatments to accelerate restoration and to make prescribed fire more manageable (Outcalt and Brockway, 2010).

Because the longleaf pine-sandhill community is adapted to frequent fire, many of the understory plants native to this community are stimulated by or depend on fire for survival. For example, wiregrass typically flowers only after burning during the growing-season, and many native wildflowers also bloom prolifically following burns.

Knoll Park's location in the center of Fairhope makes smoke management a special concern. Although the tract's small size and low fuel load result in low smoke emissions during prescribed burns, neighboring residential properties and downtown require careful smoke screening. However, studies have shown that smoke is not a barrier to the use of prescribed fire for a majority of the population (McCaffrey and Olsen, 2012). However, care should be taken to minimize public exposure to smoke. Almost one-third of the population holds concerns regarding smoke effects on human health, but increased education regarding smoke management and risk mitigation may assuage these concerns (McCaffrey and Olsen, 2012).

Recommendation: It is recommended that burning should occur at an interval not longer than 3 years and preferably close to biennially. However, all burning should be objective-driven and not based entirely on a predetermined schedule. If necessary, the park could be bifurcated into multiple areas, such that smaller sections are burned on a more frequent interval. This would increase the cost of burning, but would mitigate smoke concerns and would provide a sort of "diversification" that could benefit plant and animal populations as well as public use of the park.

4.4 General Aesthetics & Accessibility

For safety and to provide a gradual transition from the roadway into the native plant community, the City has suggested a manicured strip around the park's perimeter. Frontage on Bayview Street, which is mowed along the street and has a few ornamental plants, provides an example (Figure 6). Jennifer Fidler designed a series of low-maintenance plantings with native species for the frontage on Magnolia Avenue that will provide food for birds and butterflies in addition to other stated objectives. This manicured zone would need to be approximately 10 feet wide in order to achieve the City's objective and also facilitate easy maintenance with existing equipment.

The City also desires that Knoll Park be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Although the park would be exempt under the U.S. Access Board and U.S. Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines because it contains "existing" trails, is privately funded, and not on federal land (U.S. Access Board, 2009; U.S. Forest Service, 2006), achieving compliance is a stated objective and can increase public use of the park. Accessibility guidelines suggest that trails without resting intervals should not exceed 1:20 grade and must have clear tread width of 36 inches. Currently, foot paths through the park are maintained with mulch, making them easily discernible and preventing soil compaction. The path meets the sidewalk adjacent to the shelter at the intersection of Fairhope Avenue and Magnolia Street, but not at grade, resulting in a short area potentially subject to soil compaction and erosion. The path from the Magnolia/Fairhope Ave. intersection to the crest rises at a gradient of approximately 8-10% and is not a good option for ADA compliance. In contrast, with existing parking and sidewalk on Bayview Street, handicapped accessibility could be easily achieved.

Recommendation: A manicured zone along Magnolia Street frontage can be added by continuing mowing into the park approximately 10 feet from the road edge. Jennifer Fidler's plantings can be arranged with enough distance between them to allow clear line-of-sight into the park and easy mowing. Flowering trees such as silverbell (*Halesia* spp.) could be incorporated into plantings to provide white flowers in spring. It should be noted, however, that additional beds will increase complexity of prescribed burning.

The slope of the path from Magnolia Street to the knoll crest averages 4-5% and could provide handicapped access to the park's interior with minimal additional work. This slope is compliant with U.S. Access Board (USAB) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) standards which identify a 1:20 maximum grade without resting intervals. Additional concrete might be required to make a smooth transition into the park, because the current transition exhibits slight erosion after rains.

At the Fairhope Ave./Magnolia St. entry, minimal site work in conjunction with a slight northward re-routing of the path will allow easier access to the park, reduce erosion, and protect soil structure. The minor amount of work needed could be completed as time and funding allow, when similar work is undertaken in the area.



Figure 6. Knoll Park from Baview Street vantage point. Minimal landscaping provides transition from urban environment to native ecosystem, protecting native plant species in the park's interior and providing a safe manicured area along the roadway.

5.0 PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Longleaf pine seedlings were planted as one of the first steps in the restoration project. As mentioned above, the current population of longleaf pine saplings date from this effort and provide a "reserve" to protect against overstory mortality. Careful application of prescribed fire has also allowed capturing of natural longleaf seedlings in multiple years, the first surviving reproduction in decades.

Wiregrass (*Aristida beyrichiana*) is considered a keystone component of the longleaf pine ecosystem because it plays a vital role in maintaining ecosystem structure and function (Noss, 1989). Ironically, however, wiregrass is a highly sensitive species commonly known for its slow rate of spread and poor seed viability and seedling survival rates (Kaesler and Kirkman, 2012). The restoration committee's successful reintroduction of wiregrass to the park therefore represents a major success towards the project's goal and also for the ecosystem itself.

Despite the limited use of prescribed fire since the project's beginning, several native wildflower populations have already begun to reappear and expand. Especially visible among them are vanilla leaf (*Carphephorus* spp.), milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.), and silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), each of which supports native invertebrates and underpins the community food web. Continued burning will enhance these populations and may encourage others species to reappear.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Ecosystem restoration is a long-term process that can take decades, especially when degradation has taken place for extended periods. Scientifically-based management strategies can assist restoration by shortening the process and also insuring that gains are

more complete. It is important that a conservative approach is maintained throughout the process in order to maintain ecological integrity and prevent potential negative side-effects of restoration treatments. Employing adaptive management allows for building on gains and reducing or eliminating ineffective treatments through regular monitoring.

Knoll Park provides a unique opportunity to foster a spirit of cooperation among the Single Tax Corporation, the City of Fairhope, and the larger community through a long-term ecosystem restoration project that has direct and indirect benefits expressed immediately and in the future. Not only does this small-scale restoration project engage multiple entities and the general public in a constructive project for future generations, but its short-term benefits to local environmental quality also provide tangible results for today's residents. Furthermore, reestablishing the native plant community in Knoll Park represents a cost-savings to the City because of reduced overall maintenance costs relative to manicured parks. In effect, the native sandhill ecosystem manages itself with only minor outside management necessary.

Fairhope is well-known for its sense of community that stems from the cooperative nature of its founding and its founding principles. Additionally, Fairhope is known for and benefits from two major resources: its parks and public spaces and Mobile Bay. The Knoll Park Restoration Project integrates these resources with the community by engaging the public in a cooperative project that enhances a public park and indirectly benefits the Bay.

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Appendices

A. THE LONGLEAF PINE ECOSYSTEM

Interest in restoring and managing longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris* Mill.) ecosystems has steadily increased during the past four decades and especially in recent years (Brockway et al., 2005a), with restoration a high conservation priority (Kirkman et al., 2004). [Figure A-1 shows the native range of longleaf pine]. In fact, the longleaf pine forests and woodlands of the Southeastern Coastal Plain have been described as “critically endangered” because of their more than 98 percent decline from their previous 28-36 million hectares (Means and Grow, 1985; Noss, 1988, 1989; Goetz, 1998; Ware et al., 1993; Mitchell et al., 2000). Concern has also been expressed due to recent statistics showing that most remaining longleaf stands are aging without replacement (Brockway and Outcalt, 2000), meaning that many mature longleaf pine stands lack the younger age classes necessary to replace mortality in the near-term. Kirkman and Mitchell (2006) and Brockway and others (2005b) assert that the longleaf pine ecosystems’ long-term sustainability and recovery depend on managing for structural features that promote fire and permit natural regeneration of overstory species that leads to normal stand replacement dynamics.

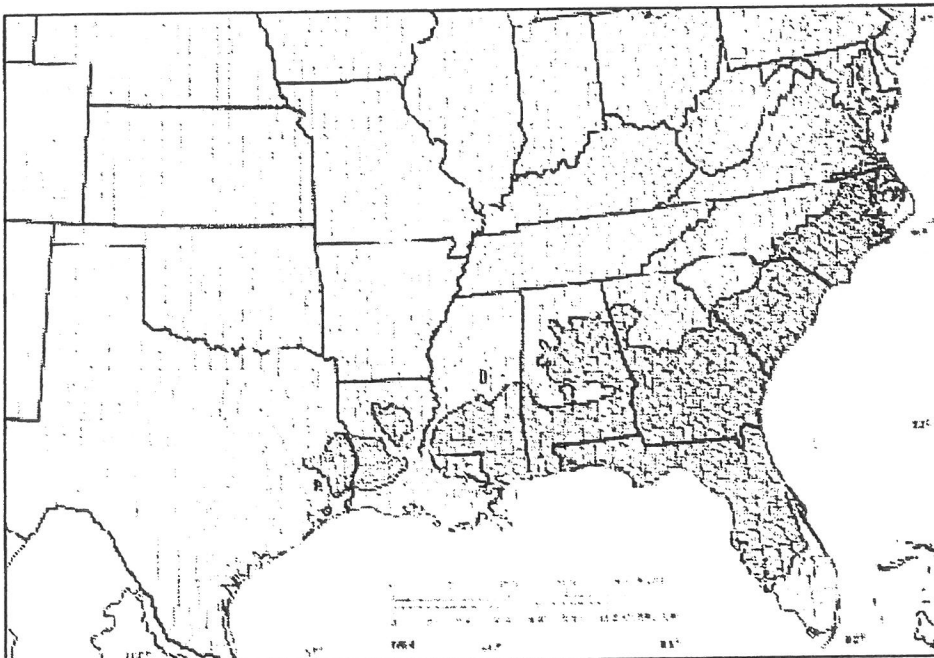


Figure A-1. Native range of longleaf pine (Boyer, 1990).

Longleaf pine has been described as a very intolerant pioneer species (Baker, 1949; Boyer, 1993b; Hardin et al., 2001, p. 144), but unlike most pioneer species, it is typically a poor (irregular) seed producer (Landers et al., 1995; Boyer, 1998), and has large seeds that do not remain viable for a long time. Good seed crops are estimated to occur once every 5-7 years (Hardin et al., 2001, p. 144) or sometimes only once every 8 to 10 years (Maki, 1952). Bumper seed crops are not common (Boyer, 1987), although cone

production varies year-to-year and place-to-place (Boyer, 1993b). However, region-wide data show that the frequency of cone crops adequate for regeneration has increased in recent years (Pederson et al., 2000; Brockway et al., 2006). Largely due to seed predation, few seeds become established seedlings (Boyer, 1964a), so bumper crops make successful regeneration more likely.

Unlike most southern pines, under good conditions longleaf pine seedlings germinate within one (Boyer, 1990) and five (Hardin et al., 2001, p. 144) weeks. Longleaf seedlings produce virtually no above-ground stems; this stemless condition is called the “grass stage” and is a time during which the seedling’s growth is concentrated in the root system. Seedlings remain in the grass stage until they have developed a root collar of about 2 to 2.5 cm in diameter (Pessin, 1939; Wahlenberg, 1946; Haywood, 2000), after which they begin height growth, a process referred to as “bolting.” The grass stage can last from 1 to more than 20 years, but 3 to 6 years is typical (Hardin et al., 2001, p. 144). Factors causing seedlings to languish in the grass stage include repeated defoliation from severe brown-spot needle blight infections (caused by *Mycosphaerella dearnesii* M.E. Barr) (Pessin, 1944) and lack of prescribed fires (Wakeley and Muntz, 1947; Phelps et al. 1978). A prolonged grass stage can be a compounding problem: the longer seedlings stay in the grass stage, the more susceptible they become to brown-spot (Johnson and Gjerstad, 2006). Other potential pathogens that could lengthen the grass stage include insect infestations such as pine webworm (*Pococera robustella* Zeller) (Mayfield, 2007). Seedlings that survive the grass stage and “bolt” (begin rapid height growth) are considered established once they reach 1 meter in height (Wahlenberg, 1946).

Sandhill Community. Sandhill communities are described by Myers (1990) and highlighted below. They are located on Entisols without appreciable profile development. Vegetation in this community is characterized primarily by longleaf pine, deciduous oaks, and wiregrass: longleaf pine overstory, deciduous oak midstory (underwood), and herbaceous groundcover. Sandhill vegetation can also be present on less severe sites associated with the Citronelle Formation. Midstory oaks include turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*), blackjack oak (*Q. marilandica*), bluejack oak (*Q. incana*), post oak (*Q. stellata*; *Q. margaretta*) and an occasional sand live oak (*Q. geminata*). Less common hardwoods include persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), and sand hickory (*Carya pallida*). Shrub species present may include sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*) and yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*). As the fire interval lengthens, these species are replaced by southern red oak (*Q. falcata*), laurel oak (*Q. hemisphaerica*), and water oak (*Q. nigra*). Groundcover is dominated by a matrix of wiregrass (*Aristida beyrichiana*) and piney woods dropseed (*Sporobolus junceus*) intermixed with forbs, low shrubs, and other grasses, including gopher apple (*Licania michauxii*), bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), golden aster (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), blackberry, (*Rubus cuneifolius*) and low-bush blueberry (*V. myrsinites*). This herb layer may exhibit 50 or more herbaceous species within several square meters (Clewett 1986, cited in Myers 1990).

B. RANGE MAP OF ATLANTIC WHITE-CEDAR

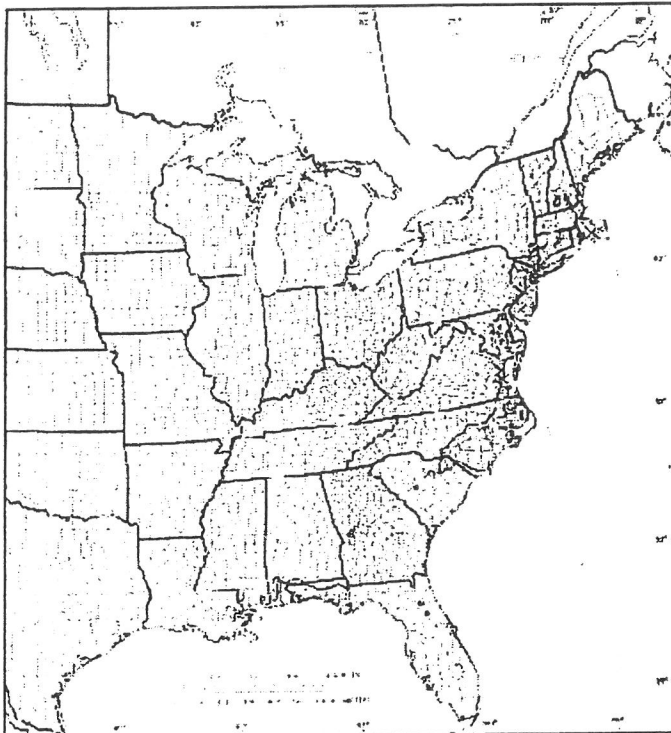


Figure A-2. Range map for Atlantic white-cedar (Little and Garrett 1990). In Alabama, this species occurs only in the extreme southwest of the State.

C. BENEFITS OF URBAN FORESTS (courtesy USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station)

- 1) Trees improve air quality by trapping dust, ash, and pollen as well as producing cooling shade. One acre of trees produces enough oxygen in a day to support 18 people. It's been estimated that the trees in Atlanta, Georgia remove almost 10,000 tons of air pollutants every year.
- 2) Trees clean water by slowing the flow of stormwater that frequently includes sediment and pollutants washed from impervious surfaces such as roads and parking lots. During a heavy rain, a healthy forest can absorb thousands of gallons of water an hour.
- 3) Trees reduce city noise by absorbing sound.
- 4) Urban forests provide habitat for wildlife species that range from insects, to bats and birds, to reptiles and amphibians, to rabbits, foxes, bobcats, coyotes, and deer.
- 5) Wooded areas near work and retail areas encourage people to get out and take walks. Studies continue to show that walking outside in the woods relieves stress and increases feelings of well-being. Urban forests and parks are also popular as places to run, bike, rollerblade, watch birds, and relax.

6) Studies have also shown that people who live near common green spaces are more likely to interact with their neighbors, increasing community vitality.

D. POSSIBLE PLANT SPECIES FOR REINTRODUCTION

Reintroducing native wildflowers through planting can accelerate the restoration process and show noticeable gains to an interested public. Native species can be difficult to locate, but some nurseries do offer a limited number species. The following is a partial list of species for consideration:

Amsonia ciliata
Asclepias spp.
Asimina angustifolia
Aster spp.
Liatris spp.
Licania michauxii
Lupinus diffusus
L. perennis
Mimosa microphylla
Morella pumila
Vaccinium stamineum
V. myrsinites

Native plant nurseries may not have many of these species available at this time, but the increasing interest in longleaf pine ecosystem restoration may result in more sources and more available species soon. Currently, the North Carolina Forest Service – Claridge Nursery in Goldsboro, NC, provides some native understory plants (<http://nc-forestry.stores.yahoo.net/>).



CITY OF FAIRHOPE
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item ID: 2024-369

FROM:	Hannah Noonan, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
SUBJECT:	Discussion of the City of Fairhope Employee Personnel Handbook Revisions 2024
AGENDA DATE:	May 13, 2024

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Hannah Noonan, Human Resources Director to discuss with Council the City of Fairhope Employee Personnel Handbook Revisions 2024.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BUDGET IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE:

GRANT:

LEGAL IMPACT:

FOLLOW UP IMPLEMENTATION:

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **1.D, Employment for Classified Positions**

- Establishes that request to fill vacant position must be approved by HR Director, Treasurer, and Mayor
- Establishes that applications will be “active” for 6 months for civilian positions and 12 months for Public Safety. “Active” means that the eligibility list may be used to fill additional vacancies of the same classification for the period defined based on the type of job.
- Establishes that the City complies with Department of Homeland Security & E-Verify by confirming eligibility to work in US upon hire.
- Establishes that the City is drug-free & tobacco-free workplace.

- **1.E, Probationary Employees**

- Establishes that employees may use sick leave during initial probationary period
- Establishes 6-month probationary period for civilian positions, and 12-month probationary period for Sworn Officers
- Establishes that additional pay opportunities may be available during or after completion of probation so long as it was approved at the time of hire on appropriate internal forms.

- **1.F, Reemployment of Former Employees**

- Establishes that if an employee is rehired within 180 days of separation, they may return at the same relative pay rate (same grade, same rate subject to any COLAs applied in the separation period)
- Establishes that the employee will be considered a new employee for all purposes except any vested retirement service with RSA, in which case would follow RSA rules.

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **2.A, Wage & Salary Administration**

- Establishes that Mayor has final authority over offer rate for newly hired employees which will not exceed midpoint of assigned range. Mayor has final authority over offer rate for promoted employee which may exceed midpoint of assigned range but may not exceed maximum of assigned range or amount budgeted.
- Confirms Ordinance 1635, 1738 establishing additional pay opportunity for obtaining CDL or specialized certification/training will be effective for hourly employees on the first of the pay period following completion of requirements.
- Includes Marina Staff as eligible to receive tips and required to report such income.

- **2.B, Attendance**

- Confirms concept of existing Attendance policy but moves to a 52-week lookback period rather than a calendar year.
- Moves to addressing unplanned absences, rather than excused or unexcused absences, since the lack of planning causes more of a hardship on department operations rather than the classification of excused or unexcused.
- Establishes that determination of excused status is at the discretion of the Department Head in consultation with HR Director

- **2.C, Work Hours and Time Records**

- Establishes that exempt personnel must advise designated employees of any absences so that the timecards may be reflected accurately.

- **2.D, Breaks and Lunch Periods**

- Establishes responsibility of employee and supervisor/Department Head to report an interrupted unpaid break to Payroll Administrator so that the notation may be entered on the timecard
- Confirms Ordinance 1617 which establishes that certain hourly employees will have lunch breaks automatically deducted from their timecards, and establishes responsibility of employee to report any interruptions of the unpaid break to their supervisor/Department Head

- **2.E, Working Before/After Regular Hours**

- New policy which ensures consistency in best practice

- **2.F, Overtime**

- Confirms Ordinance 1573 establishing overtime practices

- **2.G, Compensatory Time**

- Increases limit to 64 hours for 2080 employees and to 96 hours for 2184 employees. In recent years due to staffing shortages, opportunities to use vacation time or compensatory time for time off have been limited and have pushed employees to max out on accrued time

- **2.H, On-Call and Stand-By Employees**

- Revises Ordinance 1662 which establishes on-call pay for designated employees
- Establishes that beginning 10/01/24, there will be differentiation between on-call and stand-by designation for certain classifications/roles/departments within the City.
- Confirms that employees on stand-by must reside within police jurisdiction to ensure timely response. Also confirms the pay structure for employees on stand-by will remain as 8 hours at 1.5 times base rate for each day on stand-by or the actual time worked, whichever is greater, for weekend & holiday
- Establishes a per diem of \$100 per week that an employee is on-call to be available if needed during non-business hours. Employees responding to a call during this time frame will be paid for the actual time worked, and the pay will be in accordance with Policy 2.I, Emergency Call-In.

- **2.I, Emergency Call-In**

- Revision to align with 2.H, On-Call and Stand-By Employees. Will revise what was adopted in Ordinance 1662

- **2.J, Hurricane Operations Plan for City Employees**

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- New policy adopted in Ordinance 1755
- **2.K, Additional Pay During**
 - Establishes ability to apply administrative pay for a whole or partial day to those employees who are directed not to report to work due to a declared emergency
 - Establishes premium pay rate for exempt employees on duty during a declared emergency if exempt staff required to work an abnormal schedule. Pay will be at a calculated hourly rate and is capped at 8 hours per 24-hour period. Mayor may allow exempt employee to accrue vacation time in lieu of additional pay capped at 8 hours per 24-hour period. Any additional vacation time must be used within 180 days of emergency event.
 - Establishes premium pay rate for non-exempt employees on duty during a declared emergency if working in traditional role. No additional pay if assigned to alternative duties. If working traditional role during declared emergency, will be paid 1.5 times base hourly rate for duration of regularly scheduled shift. If an employee works longer than regularly scheduled shift, will be paid 2 times the base hourly rate for additional hours. Overtime will be determined based on regular threshold and rate will be adjusted accordingly.
 - Establishes that any employee assigned to provide mutual aid to another agency will be paid in accordance with that agency's pay policies.
 - Each of the portions of the policy ensure FEMA reimbursement of wages during the declared emergency and during mutual aid. Also provides incentives to employees to report to work as required during a declared emergency, and to remain competitive with other government/utility agencies in the area.
- **2.N, Military Leave Pay**
 - New policy to remain in compliance with federal law
- **2.O, Pay Periods & Direct Deposit**
 - Confirms Ordinance 1687 defining Part Time employment and establishes lookback period to monitor part time hours worked
 - Establishes that direct deposit will be mandatory for all pay periods and establishes procedure for submitting a direct deposit change request
- **2.Q, Safe Harbor Policy**
 - New Policy establishing the good-faith effort of the City to pay all employees in accordance with state and federal law.
- **2.R, Garnishments & Levies**
 - New Policy establishing that the City will garnish wages when directed.

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **3.A, Equal Employment Opportunity**
 - Expansion of policy based on sample provided. Elaborates on forbidden types/forms of harassment and sexual harassment. Expands protected classes to include pregnancy, childbirth, and other related medical conditions.
 - Expands on sexual harassment prohibitions and obligations of all employees. Will request inclusion of harassment of sexual orientation & gender identification as prohibited forms of harassment
 - Expands on complaint procedure and investigation procedure
- **3.E, Workplace Violence Prevention**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices
- **3.F, Americans with Disabilities (ADA)**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **3.G, Pregnancy Non-Discrimination**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **3.H, Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPPA)**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **3.J, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**
 - Expanded Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations. Relocating to “IV Leave Policies”
 - Will also require employee to use any available sick leave accrued before using vacation or compensatory time during the approved leave period
- **3.K, Whistleblower Protection**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **3.L, Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **4.C, Dress Code**
 - Establishing examples of unprofessional clothing/fashion. Establishing outlines for “casual Friday” dress. Reminder to employees to be mindful of the nature of their job when discerning what to wear to work
- **4.E, Worksite Standards**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices
- **4.I, Travel Expense Reimbursement**
 - Confirms Ordinance 1739 with minor additions to the structure
- **4.K, Personal Property**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices
- **4.L, Use of City Property**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices
- **4.O.IV, Solicitation**
 - Establishing process for requesting to be on City premises for solicitation purposes
- **4.P, Inclement Weather**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices
- **4.Q, Cross-Training**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices
- **4.R, Promotions**
 - Establishes pay structure following promotion to a job classification assigned to a higher grade. Promotion pay will be 5%-10% above the current rate of pay, or the minimum of the new grade, whichever is greater. Pay will must be approved by Mayor.
 - Establishes that exceptions are to be considered where an increase of more than 10% may be warranted but these exceptions must be approved by the Mayor
- **4.T, Transfers**
 - Establishes that a “transfer” is defined as a move between two classifications which are assigned to the same pay grade.
 - Establishes the effective date of transfer must be the beginning of a pay period, and that the employee is required to provide a notice to their current Department Head.
 - Establishes that the notice period may be shorter or longer to ensure the transfer occurs at the beginning of a pay period and to ensure no undue hardship on City operations
- **4.U, Temporary Assignments**
 - Establishes that the Mayor may temporarily assign an employee to a vacant role within the City and may assign a temporary pay rate of the Mayor feels it is appropriate based on the nature of the temporary assignment.
 - Establishes that additional, temporary pay may be granted with the Mayor’s approval if the temporary assignment will last longer than 15 consecutive working days

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **5.B, Notice for Individuals Declining Health Coverage**
 - Revising Ordinance 1691, 1760 to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **5.D, Identification Cards**
 - Revising Ordinance 1691, 1760 to remain compliant with federal regulations and consistent with best practices
- **5.E, Annual Enrollment/Transfer Period**
 - Revising Ordinance 1691, 1760 to remain compliant with federal regulations and consistent with best practices
- **5.F, Benefit Premiums/Payroll Deductions**
 - Revising Ordinance 1691, 1760 to remain compliant with federal regulations and consistent with best practices
- **5.H, Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)**
 - Establishes that Human Resources is the point of contact for COBRA eligibility questions.
 - Establishes that medical coverage at the group rate is not applicable to an employee who elects COBRA due to expiration of a qualifying leave of absence. Ensures consistency with terms of the medical plan
- **5.I, Life Insurance Benefits**
 - Confirms Ordinance 1691
- **5.J, Change in Status**
 - Revising Ordinance 1691, 1760 to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **5.K.4, Retirement Benefits**
 - Establishes retirement benefit qualification standards adopted in Ordinance 1760
- **5.L, Disability Retirement**
 - Confirms Ordinance 1691, 1760
- **5.M, Disability Insurance**
 - Revision to remain consistent with best practices
- **5.O, Longevity Pay**
 - Confirming Ordinance 1734
- **5.P, Incentives for Recruiting New Employees**
 - Confirming Ordinance 1782

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **6.A.5, Official Holidays**

- Revising Ordinance 1780 and establishing an opportunity for employees to opt out of taking Mardi Gras day as a Holiday if they are assigned to work Special Events during the pay period so as not to lose overtime opportunities.
- Establishes that the employee must submit an official request which is subject to a deadline and approval by the Department Head. Department Head must ensure work is available for the employee regardless of whether other City operations are open or closed.
- Employees will have opportunity to use 8 hours of Holiday pay on another day within six (6) months of Mardi Gras Day.

- **6.B, Vacation Leave**

- Establishes that employees will be eligible to begin using accrued vacation time after completion of their six- or 12-month probationary period rather than after 12 months of employment.
- Establishes a new accrual rate for employees at 6-10 years of employment. Ensures competitiveness with other local agencies and provides incentives for employees to remain with City during a crucial period of their tenure in an effort to reduce turnover
- Establishing no vacation leave advances
- Establishing vacation buy-back option on a quarterly basis which includes eligibility requirements, timeframe for payroll processing, and conditions for buy-back
- Due to the staffing crisis of recent years, many employees have been unable to take full advantage of accrued vacation time and have lost unused time.

- **6.C, Sick Leave**

- Confirms eligibility to use for employees who are still in a probationary status
- Expands on General Requirements to require a minimum of 30-minute notice for use of sick leave, and states that after an exhaustion of accrued sick leave that vacation leave or time without pay will be applied
- Expands on Requirements for Extended Use to require a medical report to return to work if using sick time for 3+ days and states that the employee may qualify for FMLA after 3 days
- Establishes definition of Fraudulent Use and its consequences
- Requires use in 1-hour increments

- **6.D, Bereavement Leave**

- Establishing step-relations as qualifying as immediate family and 24 hours of bereavement leave.
- Clarifies that Bereavement Leave is available in 24- or 8- hour increments to align with various work schedules in the City

- **6.G, Political Leave of Absence**

- Establishing that an unpaid leave of absence is required of any employee who wishes to run for political office in accordance with Code of Alabama 1975

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **7.D, Disability**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with federal regulations
- **7.E, Death**
 - New Policy to remain consistent with best practices

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **8.A, Progressive Discipline Procedures**
 - Renames first step in Progressive Discipline from Verbal Warning to Employee Counseling
 - Revision to remain consistent with best practices
- **8.C, Suspensions Without Pay**
 - Establishing that the Department Head will determine the date(s) of suspension and provides limitations to the length of time between approval by Mayor and suspension date(s)
- **8.H, Limitations on Disciplinary Appeals**
 - Establishing limitations for appeals topics to only allow an appeal hearing for changes in employment status or pay rate.
 - Law Enforcement PGOs referenced are out of date and no longer used.

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **9.A, Ethical Conduct**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with state regulations
- **9.B, Statement of Economic Interests**
 - New Policy to remain compliant with state regulations
- **9.D, Secondary Employment**
 - Establishes guidelines for secondary employment/moonlighting to ensure employment with City remains a priority
- **9.E, Nepotism**
 - Expands on current policy to establish limitations if relatives are to be employed by the City.
 - Establishing a “grandfathered” clause and an exception to be approved by Mayor. Will request that “exemption” will not be considered if existing relatives apply for transfer or promotion to the relative’s department

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **10.D, Transitional Duty**

- New Policy to remain consistent with best practice
- Also known as “light duty”, establishes procedures and guidelines when considering transitional duty following an accident or injury which occurred on the job.

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **11.A, Alcohol & Drugs, Drug-Free Workplace Policy**
 - Expands on existing guidelines to remain in compliance with current Workers' Compensation Carrier requirements for a Drug-Free workplace. Ensures continued discount due to Drug & Alcohol program
 - Establishes standards to remain in compliance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Participation is mandatory for any agency who employs CDL drivers
- **11.I, Personnel Board**
 - Adopted in Ordinance 1573, Revised in Ordinance 1612

Employee Personnel Handbook – Revision Summary for Council (Detail)

- **12, Use of City Vehicles**
 - Expanding from original policy, Adopted in Ordinance 1618
- **12.D, Assignment of Vehicles**
 - Confirms Ordinance 1618



CITY OF FAIRHOPE
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item ID: 2024-367

FROM:	Erik Cortinas, BUILDING OFFICIAL
SUBJECT:	Discussion of Schedule of Fees for Construction and Building Permits
AGENDA DATE:	May 13, 2024

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discussion of Schedule of Fees for Construction and Building Permits.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BUDGET IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE:

<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Current Budget</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Available Budget</u>
		\$ ____	\$ ____	(\$ ____)

GRANT:

LEGAL IMPACT:

FOLLOW UP IMPLEMENTATION:

For time-sensitive follow up, select deadline date for follow up:

Individual(s) responsible for follow up:

Action required (list contact persons/addresses if documents are to be mailed or emailed):

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 1599,
CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ALTER THE SCHEDULE OF FEES
FOR CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING PERMITS.

WHEREAS, The City of Fairhope desires to ensure proper construction standards are utilized to provide for adequate health, public safety, and welfare of our citizens; and,

WHEREAS, The City of Fairhope desires to be competitive in the user fees charged so as to adequately cover the expenses incurred by the City in enforcing established construction standards;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE,
ALABAMA:

1. THAT, the following schedule of user charges are hereby adopted:

New Construction Permit Fees		
Fees	residential	commercial
Building Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of project value (min \$25.00)	\$6.00 per \$1000.00 of project value (min \$100.00) (\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value additional fee for non-residential construction in compliance with Alabama Act 2015-308)
Electrical Permit Fee	\$75.00	\$1.00 per \$1000 of value (min \$100.00)
Temporary Elect. Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Plan Review Fee	\$75.00 (additional \$150.00 per revision submitted after a permit has been issued)	\$2.50 per \$1000.00 of value (additional \$250.00 per revision submitted after a permit had been issued)
Plumbing Permit Fee	\$75.00	\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$100.00)
Mechanical Permit Fee	\$75.00	\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$100.00)
Security/Structured Wire/ Fire Alarm stand-alone permit	\$25.00	\$.50 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Fire Suppression hood (stand-alone project)	N/A	\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value
Sprinkler System	\$50.00	\$1.00 per \$1000 of value
Sewer Tap Inspection Fee	\$25.00	\$50.00
Gas Permit Fee	See fees in Ordinance 1701	See fees in Ordinance 1701
Plan Review Fee	\$50.00 (For informal reviews with no contractor of record listed, a review fee of \$200.00 will be charged)	\$2.50 per \$1000.00 (For informal reviews with no contract, fee will be charged at calculated rate with construction costs determined by ICC Building Code Valuation Tables) (For projects sent for 3rd party review, the review fee shall be either the cost of the review or the standard charge of \$2.50/\$1000, whichever is greater)

Fence Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Sign Permit Fee	N/A	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Demolition Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Reinspection Fees	\$100.00 for the first reinspection, \$200.00 for the second reinspection, \$300.00 for the third reinspection. All fees must be paid in person at the Building Department.	
Swimming Pool Fees	\$50.00 \$100.00	\$100.00 \$250.00
Roofing Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Name of electrical contractor and electrical permit required for issuance of Swimming Pool Permit		
Fine for continuing work without approved inspections	\$500.00 per occurrence as determined by the Building Official.	
Remodeling Permit Fees		
Fees	Project value \$0.00 - \$5,000.00	Project Value \$5,001.00 - \$20,000.00
Building Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$6.00 per \$1000.00 of value (\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value additional fee for non-residential construction in compliance with Alabama Act 2015-308)
Electrical Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$35.00
Temporary Elect. Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Plumbing Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$35.00
Mechanical Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$35.00
Sewer Tap Inspection Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Gas Permit Fee	See fees in Ordinance 1701	See fees in Ordinance 1701
Fees	\$20,001.00 - \$50,000.00	\$50,001.00 - above
Building Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00	\$6.00 per \$1000.00 (\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value additional fee for non-residential construction in compliance with Alabama Act 2015-308)
Electrical Permit Fee	\$50.00	new construction rates
Temporary Elect. Fee	\$25.00	new construction rates
Plumbing Permit Fee	\$50.00	new construction rates
Mechanical Permit Fee	\$50.00	new construction rates
Sewer Tap Inspection Fee	\$25.00	new construction rates
Gas Permit Fee	See fees in Ordinance 1701	See fees in Ordinance 1701
Right of Way Permit Fee	See fees in Ordinance 1757	See fees in Ordinance 1757

Building Moving Permit Fees	
Building Moving Permit	\$50.00
Required Police Escort	\$300.00 (minimum)
Required Utility Department Work	\$120.00 per hour (minimum of 3 hours)
Regulations governing the moving of existing buildings are outlined in City Ordinance 1035	
A convenience fee for all credit cards charges may apply and will be assessed directly by the credit card processing vendor.	
<u>Waiver of Permit Fees</u> Permit fees may be waived at the discretion of the Mayor for projects including, but not limited to: • projects providing public infrastructure or facilities specifically for use by the citizens of Fairhope; • non-profit 501c3 organizations that are non-discriminatory and non-political in nature that are performing work for citizens in need, and that will not be offered for sale; • Required repairs that occur due to a natural disaster may have the fees waived at the discretion of the Fairhope City Council, to be determined at the time of such event.	
<u>FINES AND PENALTIES</u>	
Where work for which a permit is required by this Code is started or proceeds prior to obtaining a permit, the fees herein specified shall be doubled, but the payment of such double fees shall not relieve any persons from fully complying with the requirements of this Code in the execution of the work nor from any other penalties prescribed herein.	
<u>Fine for continuing work without approved inspections (relocated from another section)</u> Fine for beginning or continuing work without approved inspections of \$500.00 per occurrence as determined by the Building Official. After the 2nd documented case, all further permit applications from that contractor will be denied until the case has been adjudicated by the Fairhope Municipal Court.	
<u>Fine for submitting incorrect contractors on a permit application</u> \$100.00 fine per occurrence if an inspection is scheduled and performed with an incorrect subcontractor listed on the permit. There will be no fine or charge if a contractor changes and the information is submitted to the Building Department prior to any inspection being performed.	
<u>Occupying a Structure without a Certificate of Occupancy</u> A fine of \$500.00 will be assessed if a homebuilder or owner builder allows a structure to be occupied prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. After the 3rd documented case of a builder allowing this to occur, all further building permit applications from that builder will be denied until the case has been adjudicated by the Fairhope Municipal Court.	
<u>Refund Policy</u> Building Permit fees of \$250.00 or greater may be refunded within 180 days of the expiration of the permit if no work has taken place. The refund policy only applies to primary building permit and Impact Fees, and a written request to refund the fees and void the permit must be submitted in writing by the permit applicant. An administrative fee of \$50.00 will be deducted from the amount of the refund to be issued.	

2. **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE**, If any subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.
3. **EFFECTIVE DATE**, This ordinance shall take effect upon its due adoption and publication as required by law.

ADOPTED THIS 13TH DAY OF MAY 2024

Corey Martin, Council President

ATTEST:

Lisa A. Hanks, MMC
City Clerk

ADOPTED THIS 13TH DAY OF MAY 2024

Sherry Sullivan, Mayor

ORDINANCE NO. 1599

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 1586,
CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ALTER THE SCHEDULE OF FEES
FOR CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING PERMITS.**

WHEREAS, The City of Fairhope desires to ensure proper construction standards are utilized to provide for adequate health, public safety, and welfare of our citizens; and,

WHEREAS, The City of Fairhope desires to be competitive in the user fees charged so as to adequately cover the expenses incurred by the City in enforcing established construction standards;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE, ALABAMA:

1. **THAT**, the following schedule of user charges are hereby adopted:

New Construction Permit Fees		
Fees	residential	commercial
Building Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of project value (min \$25.00)	\$6.00 per \$1000.00 of project value (min \$100.00) (\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value additional fee for non-residential construction in compliance with Alabama Act 2015-308)
Electrical Permit Fee	\$75.00	\$1.00 per \$1000 of value (min \$100.00)
Temporary Elect. Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Plumbing Permit Fee	\$75.00	\$1.00 per \$1000 of value (min \$100.00)
Mechanical Permit Fee	\$75.00	\$1.00 per \$1000 of value (min \$100.00)
Security/Structured Wire	\$25.00	\$.50 per \$1000 of value (min \$25.00)
New Construction Permit Fees		
Fees	residential	commercial
Sewer Tap Inspection Fee	\$25.00	\$50.00
Gas Permit Fee	\$40.00	\$75.00
Plan Review Fee	\$50.00 (For informal reviews with no contractor of record listed, a review fee of \$200.00 will be charged)	\$2.50 per \$1000.00 (For informal reviews with no contract, fee will be charged at calculated rate with construction costs determined by ICC Building Code Valuation Tables) (For projects sent for 3rd party review, the review fee shall be either the cost of the review or the standard charge of \$2.50/\$1000, whichever is greater)
Fence Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Sign Permit Fee	N/A	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Demolition Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Reinspection Fees	\$100.00 for the first reinspection, \$200.00 for the second reinspection, \$300.00 for the third reinspection. All fees must be paid in person at the Building Department.	
Swimming Pool Fees	\$50.00	\$100.00
Name of electrical contractor and electrical permit required for issuance of Swimming Pool Permit		

Fine for continuing work without approved inspections	\$500.00 per occurrence. Fine shall be paid in person at the Building Department and contractor/owner must correct all noted deficiencies	
Roofing Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)	\$5.00 per \$1000.00 of value (min \$25.00)
Remodeling Permit Fees		
Fees	Project value \$0.00 - \$5,000.00	Project Value \$5,001.00 - \$20,000.00
Building Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$6.00 per \$1000.00 of value (\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value additional fee for non-residential construction in compliance with Alabama Act 2015-308)
Electrical Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$35.00
Temporary Elect. Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Plumbing Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$35.00
Mechanical Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$35.00
Sewer Tap Inspection Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Gas Permit Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00
Fees	\$20,001.00 - \$50,000.00	\$50,001.00 - above
Building Permit Fee	\$5.00 per \$1000.00	\$6.00 per \$1000.00 (\$1.00 per \$1000.00 of value additional fee for non-residential construction in compliance with Alabama Act 2015-308)
Electrical Permit Fee	\$50.00	new construction rates
Temporary Elect. Fee	\$25.00	new construction rates
Plumbing Permit Fee	\$50.00	new construction rates
Mechanical Permit Fee	\$50.00	new construction rates
Sewer Tap Inspection Fee	\$25.00	new construction rates
Gas Permit Fee	\$35.00	new construction rates
Building Moving Permit Fees		
Building Moving Permit	\$50.00	
Required Police Escort	\$300.00 (minimum)	
Required Utility Department Work	\$120.00 per hour (minimum of 3 hours)	
Regulations governing the moving of existing buildings are outlined in City Ordinance 1035		
Where work for which a permit is required by this Code is started or proceeded with prior to obtaining said permit, the fees herein specified shall be doubled, but the payment of such double fees shall not relieve any persons from fully complying with the requirements of this Code in the execution of the work nor from any other penalties prescribed herein.		

2. **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE**, If any subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.
3. **EFFECTIVE DATE**, This ordinance shall take effect upon its due adoption and publication as required by law.

ADOPTED THIS 14TH DAY of AUGUST, 2017



CITY OF FAIRHOPE
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item ID: 2024-382

FROM:	Kim Creech, CITY TREASURER
SUBJECT:	FY2023 Audit Review by Warren Averett
AGENDA DATE:	May 13, 2024

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Warren Averett to present FY2023 Audit Review to Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BUDGET IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE:

GRANT:

LEGAL IMPACT:

FOLLOW UP IMPLEMENTATION:



CITY OF FAIRHOPE
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item ID: 2024-383

FROM:	Kim Creech, CITY TREASURER
SUBJECT:	6-Month Financial Review
AGENDA DATE:	May 13, 2024

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Kim Creech, City Treasurer to present 6-Month Financial Review to Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BUDGET IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE:

GRANT:

LEGAL IMPACT:

FOLLOW UP IMPLEMENTATION: