



City of Atlantic Beach  
**Agenda**  
**Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 8, 2026 - 6:00 p.m.**  
City Hall, Commission Chamber  
**800 Seminole Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233**

Page(s)

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

**2. CONSENT AGENDA**

2.A. Approval of Agenda

2.B. Approve minutes from the May 27, June 10 and June 24 ESC meetings 3 - 24

[ESC 05.27.2026 Minutes \(draft\)](#)

[ESC 06.10.2026 Minutes \(draft\)](#)

[ESC 06.24.2026 Minutes \(draft\)](#)

**3. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR (5 MINS.)**

**4. CHAIR REMARKS**

4.A. ESC Chair's Informational Report 07.08.2026 25 - 28

[ESC Chair Info Report - July 2026](#)

**5. COMMISSION AND/OR STAFF REPORTS**

5.A. Staff Report

5.B. Commission Calendar - Additional Sign-ups Needed 29 - 31

[ESC Member Attendance at 2026 Commission Meetings - July-Dec 2026](#)

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**7. OLD BUSINESS/ONGOING**

7.A. Environmental Awards

7.B. Minecraft Extension Activities

7.C. ESC Reports to Commission

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

8.A. Beach Gazette/Beach Buzz

**9. 90 DAY CALENDAR**

9.A. Speaker Series - July 9, 2026

[Flyer - June 9, 2026 ESC Speaker Series](#)

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9.B. Motion Tracker and Life Cycle of a Motion

## 10. ESC MEMBER REPORTS, REQUESTS AND/OR CLOSING REMARKS

10.A. LEADs - Updates, Questions and Next Steps

10.B. Member Closing Remarks

## 11. RECAP OF DECISIONS, ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

Any person wishing to speak to the Environmental Stewardship Committee on any matter at this meeting should submit a Comment Card located at the entrance to Commission Chamber prior to the start of the meeting.

This meeting will be live-streamed and videotaped. The video recording will be posted within four business days on the City's website. To access live or recorded videos, visit [www.coab.us/live](http://www.coab.us/live).

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 286.26 of the Florida Statutes, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this meeting should contact Deputy City Ladayija Nichols at 247-5821 or at City Hall, 800 Seminole Road, Atlantic Beach, Florida not less than three (3) days prior to the date of this meeting.



**MINUTES**  
**ESC Tree Sub-Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, May 27, 2026 - 6:00 PM**  
**City Hall, Commission Chamber**  
**800 Seminole Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233**

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**Present:** Amy Palmer, ESC Member 2  
Sarah Boren, ESC Member 4  
Matthew Mattila, ESC Member  
Bruce Andrews, ESC Member 6  
Daniele Giovannucci, ESC Member 7  
Christina Kelcourse, ESC Member 8  
Amy Franqui, ESC Member 9

**Absent:** Anastasia Houston, ESC Member 1  
Todd Miner, ESC Member 3

**Also Present:** Payton Jamieson, Principal Planner (PP)

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

**2. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR (5 MINS.)**

Chair Bruce Andrews invited public comment. One member of the public was present — a newly relocated resident attending their first meeting. Dan Giovannucci welcomed the individual and noted that a seat on the committee would soon be available, extending a lighthearted invitation to consider applying. No formal public comment was offered.

**3. CHAIR REMARKS**

Chair Andrews noted that the meeting would be focused on two principal matters: the Large Tree Protection discussion, and the preparation of the semiannual tree permit report that is required to be submitted to the City Commission twice per year. He stated that the report is due by June 29 for presentation at the July 13 Commission meeting. Chair Andrews mentioned that he had only just located the relevant document earlier that day.

The committee briefly noted that the meeting room was without Internet connectivity. Principal Planner Payton Jamieson indicated she would inform IT staff the following day.

**4. STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Heritage Tree Application**

Planner Jamieson presented a Heritage Tree application for a property located at 2210 Oceanwalk Drive West, submitted on March 6, 2026. She reported that the application concerns three Live Oak trees located on the west side of the property, with measured diameters at breast height (DBH) of 31, 44, and 51 inches respectively. The trees were

assessed by City Arborist Chris Delk as being in good condition and meeting the city's 30-inch DBH standard for heritage tree designation. Staff recommended approval of all three trees for heritage designation, noting that the City Arborist conducts an on-site assessment prior to every heritage tree application — a process that has been applied consistently and is yielding an increasing volume of applications, which staff characterized as a positive trend.

Giovannucci offered a comment regarding the photograph of one of the three trees, which he noted appeared to have slightly smoother bark than is typical of a Live Oak. He drew the committee's attention to the longstanding difficulty — acknowledged even by experienced local master arborists — of distinguishing between Live Oaks, Water Oaks, and Sand Oaks in this region, all of which share close visual similarities but differ substantially in lifespan. He suggested that, given City Arborist Chris's relative newness to the area, it may be worthwhile to encourage him to consult with local master arborists — specifically referencing a respected figure in the community — to ensure confident species identification going forward.

Chair Andrews agreed that it would be valuable for the City Arborist to develop expertise in *Quercus virginiana* specifically, so the committee could be fully confident in species distinctions when making heritage tree determinations.

***MOTION:*** To **recommend** that the City Commission approve the designation of three oak trees at 2210 Oceanwalk Drive West as heritage trees.

***Motion:*** Sarah Boren  
***Second:*** Amy Franqui

***Motion passed 7 to 0.***

Following the vote, the committee turned briefly to a related staff report item raised by Boren, who noted that City Arborist Chris had previously indicated he wished to bring questions to the ESC regarding the monthly tree report, but was unable to attend the meeting.

Planner Jamieson confirmed that staff had been engaged in an internal review of the accuracy of the monthly tree report data. She explained that the core challenge is a timing issue inherent in the permitting process: tree permits are typically among the first permits filed for a project but among the last to be formally closed, sometimes remaining open for up to three years. As a result, the data previously presented in monthly reports may not accurately reflect conditions on the ground — trees described as removed may not yet have been removed, and trees originally planned for removal may ultimately be retained if plans change. Staff was exploring whether separating permits into categories — such as those associated with new construction versus pools or additions versus standalone tree removals — might produce more accurate and useful reporting.

Giovannucci acknowledged the structural challenge but argued that the most statistically sound approach, given the constraints of the current system, would be to take the permit data at face value: if a permit has been filed, it should be assumed the removal will proceed. He cautioned

against over-engineering the categorization process, noting that it would be difficult to justify the added staff burden without a clear policy purpose for the additional granularity. He stated plainly, "I don't see the case for doing extra work on that data personally."

Boren respectfully disagreed, contending that more granular data — particularly the ability to distinguish new construction removals from minor project removals — would help the committee identify the right questions to ask, and that details had previously revealed important trends, such as the elevated frequency of removals under arborist letters. She indicated a preference for maintaining at least quarterly reporting and expressed interest in eventually adding data fields for heritage trees, city tree losses and plantings, and a general ledger of the tree fund.

Franqui connected the discussion to the ESC's longer-term goal of producing a biennial State of the Canopy report, suggesting that improvements to the monthly permit report — such as categorizing the type of permit — could contribute meaningfully to that larger effort. She recalled that the committee had previously requested the addition of a field asking applicants to explain why they were removing a tree, which had yielded useful information.

Planner Jamieson clarified the technical limitations of the City's current permitting software (referred to as the BSA system), which does not support fillable form fields, queryable data filters, or automated categorization. Filtering is currently limited to tree permits by year of submission and open or closed status. Arborist letters, she noted, are not submitted through the permitting portal — they are received via email, logged in a folder by date of receipt, and tracked manually. The numbers appearing in the monthly tree report for arborist letter removals are compiled by staff from that manual folder system, not from an automated database.

Giovannucci noted that the committee had previously submitted a list of requested data categories — including type of removal, reason for removal, species, and inches — in anticipation of a new software platform that was supposed to automate the reporting. Planner Jamieson confirmed that the new system had not been programmed to support those categories.

Chair Andrews redirected the discussion, asking when the committee could expect to receive the next monthly tree report in the current format — without changes to methodology — noting that the last report received was for March 2026. Planner Jamieson confirmed that staff had concerns about presenting data that was not fully accurate but acknowledged Chair Andrews's point that consistency in reporting methodology has value in itself. She indicated she would raise the matter with the Director, and the committee agreed that in the interim, staff should continue producing the report in its current format, with appropriate footnotes about the known limitations of the data.

Chair Andrews raised a related point about staff transition, noting that responsibility for the mitigation matrix and monthly tree report had passed between multiple staff members over time, and expressing concern that such transitions should not interrupt the reporting cadence. Planner Jamieson confirmed that City Arborist Chris is now the primary owner of that work.

The committee also discussed the preferred attendance arrangement for future meetings, with Chair Andrews suggesting it would be preferable to have City Arborist Chris present at tree

subcommittee meetings and Planner Jamieson attending the regular ESC meetings, to the extent scheduling allows.

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Current status of possible Chapter 23 changes**

Chair Andrews confirmed his understanding that the City Commission had effectively tabled active work on Chapter 23 revisions pending resolution of the large tree protection matter, which was designated as Phase 1. Chapter 23 revisions would follow as Phase 2.

Christina Kelcourse, who attended the May 26 City Commission meeting, confirmed that she had heard discussion suggesting the Commission intended to make progress on both items within the current year, with large trees constituting Phase 1 and Chapter 23 as Phase 2.

Amy Palmer reported that at the May 26 meeting, the Commission formally approved its priorities for Fiscal Year 2027. Commissioner Ring put forward a successful amendment to add work on Chapter 23 to those priorities, ensuring that the item would remain on the Commission's agenda even if it could not be completed before the end of the current fiscal year. Palmer characterized that addition as an important safeguard.

Kelcourse offered an observation that the lengthy discussion at the Commission meeting regarding a parcel-related decision — while not strictly a tree matter — had been influenced by prior discussion about tree protection and suggested that the tree conversation may have contributed to the Commission's decision to defer action on that item.

Chair Andrews noted that the substitute city attorney had repeatedly referenced during the Commission meeting that the city's current ordinance or process may be in conflict with state statute, raising it approximately five times. He recounted asking the attorney whether there is a legal deadline by which a municipality must come into compliance with state statute and was told there is no such deadline — the city remains either in compliance or out of compliance until a party brings legal action. Boren added that state statutes upon passage are generally effective immediately unless a deferral date is specified, placing the burden on city staff to update local ordinances accordingly when practicable.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Semi-annual tree permit report to the commission**

**Report due to Amanda to include in the Commission agendas as follows:**

- **by Monday, June 29, for the July 13 Commission meeting**
- **by Monday, November 30, for the December 14 Commission meeting**

Chair Andrews opened discussion of the upcoming semiannual tree permit report, due to the Director by June 29 for inclusion in the July 13 Commission agenda. He asked

Planner Jamieson to display the prior semiannual report — a presentation prepared by Giovannucci for the December reporting period — as the basis for discussion.

The committee reviewed the prior report, which drew on monthly tree report data through October 31 of the prior year, given that more recent months had not yet been finalized. Boren confirmed that monthly tree report data through March 2026 had already been included in meeting agendas and indicated that staff should be able to produce data through the end of May in the existing format in time for the June 29 deadline.

Chair Andrews suggested the forthcoming report should cover the period from January through June 2026, with November and December 2025 data — which had not been included in the prior report — incorporated to provide a more complete historical picture. He proposed that the data methodology remain consistent with prior reporting, even if imperfect, in order to maintain continuity.

The committee reviewed the data tables in the prior presentation. Chair Andrews observed that while the permit application count is likely fairly accurate, columns reflecting total trees removed, total inches removed, trees planted, inches planted, and total mitigation payments are all subject to the timing variability previously discussed. He concluded that the committee should not allow concerns about accuracy to prevent reporting and directed staff to continue providing the data in the current format.

Giovannucci noted that the prior report had included an estimate for "not-permitted removals," drawing partly on anecdotal information from Parks staff regarding trees removed without permits — particularly a pattern that had been observed in prior years of tree removal companies working on Saturdays before city staff could respond. He clarified which numbers in the prior report were from the formal tree report data versus estimates.

Discussion also addressed the process for tracking arborist letters. Planner Jamieson explained that arborist letters are received by email, organized in a dated folder, and that staff manually counts the trees listed in those letters for inclusion in the monthly report. They are not linked to addresses in the permitting system and cannot be queried. Giovannucci noted that the committee had previously requested that arborist letter submissions be standardized to include species, DBH, and other data fields, and that City Arborist Delk had independently proposed something similar. Planner Jamieson confirmed that the new system cannot accommodate automated data entry from letters. Boren acknowledged that an AI-based scraping approach — referencing a prior attempt involving a 13-year-old and a more recent effort by a staff member using AI tools — might be revisited as the technology has improved.

Chair Andrews raised a distinct process observation: he had learned from a constituent that City Arborist Delk had visited a property, assessed a palm tree as dead, and authorized its removal without requiring a tree permit or arborist letter, which is consistent with the city's authority under the ordinance for clearly dead or dying trees. Chair Andrews expressed support for this approach in clear-cut cases but asked that the

committee have an opportunity to hear from City Arborist Delk periodically about the types of field judgments he is making — both authorizations for removal and situations where he has persuaded property owners to preserve trees through alternative means.

Planner Jamieson noted that City Arborist Delk had already been active in encouraging property owners to consider mitigation strategies other than removal, and that he had changed people's minds in several cases. She indicated she would ask him to speak to those experiences at the next tree subcommittee meeting.

The committee briefly reviewed the narrative sections of the prior semiannual report, which included editorial commentary on the effectiveness of the tree ordinance. Chair Andrews suggested that the semiannual report should focus primarily on process oversight — how staff is administering the ordinance — rather than broader policy commentary, which is more appropriate for the State of the Canopy report.

Boren proposed that future semiannual reports consistently address the following topics: data on permits and removals; a process section including any appeals and variances received; a visual flowchart illustrating how tree permits and arborist letters each work, to help the public understand the distinctions; and a recommendations section. She suggested one recommendation for the current report would be that staff develop a model arborist letter and a model tree permit demonstrating the quality and data fields the city expects, which could be shared with local arborists to elevate submission standards without requiring a change to the software system.

Palmer noted the distinction between the semiannual report, the monthly tree report, and the State of the Canopy report, and suggested they should speak to one another coherently.

The committee agreed that members wishing to contribute to the content of the semiannual report should send their written input to Giovannucci, with Director Askew copied and at least Palmer included, ahead of the next relevant meeting. The committee discussed whether additional staff input would be required before the regular June meeting or the second meeting in June, leaving the precise submission deadline to be determined based on staff availability.

Regarding the data table, Chair Andrews proposed that staff be asked to analyze the most recent twelve months of tree permits and provide a breakdown of trees removed by species and by size category, specifically identifying oaks and using the following DBH groupings: under 20 inches; 20 to 24 inches; 25 to 30 inches; 31 to 36 inches; and greater than 36 inches. He acknowledged that species-level data beyond oaks would likely require manually reviewing individual PDFs and may represent too significant a staff burden. He suggested that, as a first step, the analysis be limited to oaks, since the mitigation matrix already tracks oaks separately due to the oak-for-oak replanting requirement. Planner Jamieson agreed to raise this request with City Arborist Delk and Director Askew.

**B. Large tree protection (email from Director Askew sent on May 19)**

At the May 26 meeting (Tuesday, rather than Monday due to the holiday), the City Manager has the topic of large tree protection on the under-city manager report for discussion.

Staff has prepared a draft memo for the Commission, although it was not included in the published agenda materials. The memorandum recommends establishing a formal definition of "Champion Trees" and outlining potential protections and regulations associated with those trees.

The City Manager intends for the Commission and the community to further discuss appropriate DBH standards for protections.

As I previously shared with the City Manager, if staff input is considered, we would recommend that all maritime species at least 20" DBH be included within the definition of a Champion Tree. Staff came to the conclusion of a 20" DBH because these trees are typically at least 100 years old.

This is the language that was first presented to the city manager for his review with the focus just on live oak trees.....

**Champion trees are those trees in the city which have been identified as 20-inch DBH or greater (diameter-at-breast height) Live Oaks.**

**Champion tree(s), as defined in Section 23-8, should be considered regulated trees in all areas of the city. Champion tree(s) removal is strongly discouraged. A tree permit is required to remove any champion tree(s). Prior to the removal of a champion tree(s), the owner shall give the city first right of refusal to relocate champion tree(s) otherwise designated for removal by the applicant. If a champion tree(s) is removed with certified arborist report, the city will obtain a 3rd-party arborist to provide an independent arborist report on the champion tree(s) to be removed. Champion tree(s) removal and/or relocation mitigation rate shall be determined by the city and equal to the cost of relocating the champion tree(s). If a champion tree(s) is removed without obtaining a proper tree permit, the mitigation rate assessed shall be doubled. Planting mitigation credits are only available with the planting of 4-inch caliper Live Oaks and require prior city approval of a landscape plan. Removing a champion tree requires approval from both the Community Development Board and the City Commission.**

Chair Andrews introduced the item, noting that a memorandum prepared by Director Askew had been distributed to ESC members via email on May 19 but had not been included in the published Commission agenda materials for the May 26 meeting. He reviewed his written responses to the memorandum, which he had shared with Director Askew and the City Manager.

### **Terminology — "Champion Trees"**

Chair Andrews flagged that the term "champion tree" is already a formally defined designation in Florida — the state has maintained a Florida Champion Tree Register since 1975, recognizing the largest specimen of each species. The term also has national usage in the same context. He recommended that the city adopt different terminology to avoid confusion, suggesting the term "landmark tree," consistent with Alachua County's ordinance. He noted the ESC has previously used terms including "heritage" and "legacy," but expressed a preference for "landmark."

Palmer agreed the point was well-taken, noting that the specific term "champion tree" carries established meaning in arboricultural and botanical contexts.

### **DBH Threshold — 20 Inches**

The memorandum from Director Askew recommended a 20-inch DBH threshold for the new protected tree designation, on the basis that trees of that size are typically at least 100 years old. Chair Andrews questioned the accuracy of that premise, citing as an example two oak trees in his daughter's yard on Sea Oats — one measuring 20 inches and one 23 inches — that were planted by a prior owner approximately 35 years ago. He suggested the age rationale was factually imprecise, though he acknowledged the underlying goal of protecting significant trees was sound.

Planner Jamieson indicated she would ask City Arborist Delk to send the committee an email explaining the specific arboricultural basis for the 20-inch threshold, noting it relates to growth ring spacing and is not simply an arbitrary estimate.

Giovannucci suggested that the memorandum's language could be amended to say trees "may be" up to 100 years old rather than "are typically" 100 years old, to avoid factual overstatement.

Mattila suggested framing the value of such trees in economic terms — noting that a tree of that size cannot be replaced for less than tens of thousands of dollars, if it can be replaced at all.

Palmer noted that the committee had previously passed a motion recommending a DBH range of 24 to 30 inches as a minimum threshold for the special protection category, and that at a subsequent meeting, the committee had expressed willingness to support the staff recommendation of 20 inches. Chair Andrews acknowledged uncertainty about whether the latter position had been formally motioned, and expressed his personal view that 20 inches is too low, though he acknowledged it may be a useful starting point for Commission negotiations.

A show of hands confirmed that a majority of members favored including multiple species — not live oaks only — in the large tree protection definition. Planner Jamieson confirmed that staff's position, as stated in the memorandum, is to recommend all maritime species at a minimum of 20 inches DBH. She noted discrepancies in the proposed language to the definition of champion trees and its focus on live oaks only. The committee affirmed its continued support for a multi-species approach.

**Species Scope — Maritime Species vs. Live Oaks Only**

Chair Andrews reported that in a separate conversation, the Mayor had indicated a preference at this stage for focusing the protection on live oaks only. The committee acknowledged this perspective but reiterated its position in favor of including all maritime species, consistent with prior motions. Boren gave the example of large maples she had observed on Royal Palms that would not be covered under a live-oak-only definition.

**Relocation Concept — City's First Right of Refusal**

Planner Jamieson explained a concept establishing the city's first right of refusal to relocate large trees designated for removal, rather than simply requiring mitigation payments. She noted City Arborist Delk has done research on tree relocation. Under this framework, if a property owner sought to remove a large, protected tree, the city could elect to have the tree relocated and the relocation cost would serve as the mitigation rate, with the relocation cost serving as the mitigation rate. If the city declined to exercise that right, the owner would still owe a mitigation payment benchmarked to the estimated cost of relocating a tree of that size, which staff indicated would be substantial. The intent is both to create a genuine option for tree preservation and to use the high cost of large-tree relocation as a meaningful deterrent to removal.

Kelcourse raised the question of whether the cost of relocation might in some cases be lower than standard mitigation fees, potentially creating an unintended easy-out for property owners. She also questioned what percentage of relocated trees would survive. Franqui raised concerns about ongoing maintenance costs — particularly watering — for a relocated tree of significant size.

Mattila, referencing the data showing net canopy loss, expressed support for giving the city additional tools to protect inches, and noted that the city could simply decline to exercise the right if the economics did not make sense.

**MOTION:** To **support** the relocation concept giving the City the first right of refusal to relocate large, protected trees.

***Motion:*** *Amy Palmer*

***Second:*** *Matthew Mattila*

*Amy Palmer (Moved By)*

*For*

*Sarah Boren*

*For*

*Matthew Mattila (Seconded By)*

*For*

*Bruce Andrews*

*Against*

*Daniele Giovannucci*

*For*

*Christina Kelcourse*

*For*

*Amy Franqui*

*For*

***Motion passed 6 to 1.***

Boren raised the point that a prior version of the staff proposal had included a requirement for applicants to demonstrate that removal was unavoidable — sometimes referred to as a "statement of infeasibility" but that this element appeared to have been omitted from the most recent draft presented to the Commission. She referenced the Alachua County Landmark Live Oak ordinance, which requires demonstration that development or construction cannot occur in any other location on the site, or that removal is unavoidable due to site conditions or design considerations beyond the applicant's control.

Chair Andrews confirmed this language was in the Alachua County ordinance excerpt he had reviewed and expressed support for Atlantic Beach adopting similar language.

Giovannucci suggested that staff, rather than the Commission, should be the initial decision-maker under this standard — with appeals or variance requests going to the Commission only when staff denies removal and the applicant wishes to challenge that decision. He cautioned that routing every large tree removal request directly to the Commission would generate an unmanageable volume of hearings, particularly if the threshold were set at 20 inches.

Boren proposed that the committee recommend staff and the Commission consider Alachua County's infeasibility language, augmented by a provision requiring consideration of pruning or other risk-mitigation measures as an alternative to removal — reasoning that if a large branch could be removed to resolve a concern about site constraints, the infeasibility standard would not be met.

### **C. Large Tree Protection (continued)**

#### **Proof of No Feasible Alternative — Alachua County Language**

Boren raised the point that a prior version of the staff proposal had included a requirement for applicants to demonstrate that removal was unavoidable — sometimes referred to as a "statement of infeasibility" but that this element appeared to have been omitted from the most recent draft presented to the Commission. She referenced the Alachua County Landmark Live Oak ordinance, which requires demonstration that development or construction cannot occur in any other location on the site, or that removal is unavoidable due to site conditions or design considerations beyond the applicant's control.

Chair Andrews confirmed this language was in the Alachua County ordinance excerpt he had reviewed and expressed support for Atlantic Beach adopting similar language.

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— reasoning that if a large branch could be removed to resolve a concern about site constraints, the infeasibility standard would not be met.

**MOTION:** To **recommend** that staff and the Commission consider adopting language based on Alachua County's infeasibility standard — requiring demonstration that development cannot occur in any other location, that removal is unavoidable due to site conditions or design considerations, and that pruning or other risk-reduction measures cannot serve as a feasible alternative — as the proof-of-no-feasible-alternative framework for large tree protection

**Motion:** *Sarah Boren*

**Second:** *Daniele Giovannucci*

**Motion passed 7 to 0.**

### **Process and Implementation — Decision Tree**

Giovannucci proposed that a visual decision tree be developed for use by staff in evaluating large tree removal requests, so that the vast majority of cases could be resolved at the staff level with clear criteria, and only contested cases would escalate to the Commission. Planner Jamieson indicated she would look into the feasibility of that approach.

### **Alachua County Implementation — Research Request**

Chair Andrews asked Palmer, given her contact in Alachua County, to make inquiries about how that county's landmark tree protections are administered in practice — specifically, what staff's role is in applying the infeasibility criteria, at what point requests reach the Board of County Commissioners, and how frequently commissioners are called upon to make those decisions.

Palmer noted anecdotally that her contact had described a dynamic in which developers seeking to remove large-caliper oaks for commercial projects would be told by the Commission that project approval would not be granted if the trees were removed, and that developers had in several cases redesigned their projects to accommodate the trees. She suggested the commission-level review may function as much through deterrence as through formal denial.

Planner Jamieson offered a planning-side caution against direct comparison to Alachua County, noting that Alachua County is significantly less densely developed, with substantially larger lot sizes, making tree-by-tree comparison methodologically problematic. She suggested the committee seek reference points from municipalities with lot sizes and development patterns more similar to Atlantic Beach.

### **Additional Consideration — Construction Protection and Surety Bond**

Boren raised a concern about a potential loophole under the current framework: a property owner may retain a large tree on a permit application, avoid mitigation fees, and then proceed to construct a pool, addition, or other structure in a manner that damages the tree's root system — ultimately killing the tree and permitting its removal under an arborist letter without any mitigation obligation. She suggested that large tree protection should include a surety bond or similar mechanism ensuring that a tree designated for preservation actually survives

construction. Giovannucci noted that the forthcoming Chapter 23 revisions already address setback rules for construction near existing trees, and that this concern could be incorporated into that phase, particularly as it applies to large trees specifically.

**7. MEMBERS CLOSING REMARKS**

Boren asked for clarification on whether, as a tree subcommittee meeting, reporting should be limited to tree-related matters. Chair Andrews confirmed that it should be. Boren acknowledged the clarification and noted she had intended to mention an upcoming film series but would refrain.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Attest:

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Amanda Askew, Neighborhoods Director

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Bruce Andrews, ESC Tree Chair



**MINUTES**  
**Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) Meeting**  
**Wednesday, June 10, 2026 - 6:00 PM**  
**City Hall, Commission Chamber**  
**800 Seminole Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233**

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**Present:** Anastasia Houston, ESC Member 1  
Amy Palmer, ESC Member 2  
Sarah Boren, ESC Member 4  
Matthew Mattila, ESC Member  
Bruce Andrews, ESC Member 6  
Daniele Giovannucci, ESC Member 7  
Christina Kelcourse, ESC Member 8  
Amy Franqui, ESC Member 9

**Absent:** Todd Miner, ESC Member 3

**Also Present:** Amanda Askew, Neighborhoods Department Director (NDD)

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- A. Approve minutes of the May 13, 2026 regular Environmental Stewardship Committee meeting.**

**MOTION:** To **APPROVE** the May 13, 2026 ESC Minutes.

***Motion: Amy Franqui***

***Second: Sarah Boren***

***Motion passed 8 to 0.***

**B. Approve minutes of the May 27, 2026 Tree Environmental Stewardship Committee**

Bruce Andrews requested to defer approval of the tree subcommittee minutes until the next meeting due to insufficient review time. Chair Palmer clarified that tree subcommittee minutes should be approved at tree subcommittee meetings rather than regular ESC meetings for proper governance.

**C. ESC Member Update Reports**

Chair Palmer presented her informational report and the updated agenda template, which combined elements from both regular ESC and tree subcommittee templates. Sarah Boren suggested moving certain items to the consent agenda and combining agenda

items 7 and 8 to reduce the number of sections. Palmer explained the template followed city clerk guidance and included a section for unfinished business borrowed from commission agendas.

**3. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR (5 MINS.)**

Chair Palmer announced that Nancy Staats had requested to address the ESC but would be late due to another meeting. Palmer proposed establishing a consistent process for candidates during election season, allowing 5 minutes for public comment and 5 minutes for Q&A, with staff serving as timekeeper. Sarah Boren suggested inviting all qualified candidates after the Friday qualifying deadline. The committee agreed to this approach.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

There was no discussion regarding this item.

**5. CHAIR REMARKS**

Chair Palmer noted that Bruce Andrews would be the ESC representative at the June 22nd commission meeting and discussed potential governance issues with the new meeting structure.

**6. COMMISSION AND/OR STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Commissions' approved priorities - FINAL**

Chair Palmer reported that Commissioner Ring had added completing work on chapter 23 as part of fiscal year 2027 priorities, with work beginning prior to the fiscal year start.

**B. Commission Calendar - Budget Workshops**

Chair Palmer announced budget workshops scheduled for June 29th, July 20th, and August 19th at 6 p.m. in the commission chamber. Director Askew noted additional workshops could be added as needed. Palmer suggested ESC members attend the neighborhoods department focused workshop.

**C. Governance: quorum/voting for Tree Subcommittee meetings**

Chair Palmer raised governance questions about the new meeting structure, noting she may have inappropriately made a motion during the tree subcommittee meeting despite not being a subcommittee member. Director Askew reported that City Clerk Donna confirmed only tree subcommittee members should make motions and vote during tree subcommittee meetings. Sarah Boren suggested either conducting double votes when both bodies have quorum or having tree subcommittee business come to the full ESC for approval.

Bruce Andrews expressed preference for treating the second meeting as an ESC meeting focused on trees rather than an official tree subcommittee meeting, citing complexity of the governance structure. The committee discussed various approaches to resolve the procedural issues.

**D. Tree Ordinance Discussion**

Director Askew provided an update on landmark tree protection efforts. Staff presented a memo to commission creating a definition for landmark oak trees with a recommended 20-inch DBH threshold. The proposal included discouraging removal, requiring third-party arborist review for hazard claims, and attempting relocation on-site or off-site at applicant expense, with commission approval required.

Anastasia Houston expressed concern that the focus on only the largest trees missed the broader goal of saving canopy coverage. She noted the tone was focusing on "biggest, baddest trees" rather than overall canopy preservation and suggested private meetings and demonstrations to change this approach.

Dan Giovanucci reminded the committee that existing ordinances already protect canopy through mitigation requirements and noted this initiative began with specific large oak removals like the Marsh Oaks incident. He emphasized the need for balance given diverse property rights perspectives in the community.

Bruce Andrews questioned language about third-party arborist review of state statute claims and relocation requirements, suggesting the relocation provision lacked practical substance.

Several members discussed the importance of protecting multiple species rather than just oaks and maintaining reasonable DBH thresholds to achieve meaningful canopy protection.

Nancy Staats, attending as a mayoral candidate, was given 5 minutes for public comment plus 5 minutes for Q&A. Staats expressed strong support for tree protection, advocating for the city's arborist to examine trees for free and suggesting current fines were too low given rising property values. She opposed limiting protection to only live oaks and supported a moratorium until comprehensive solutions were developed.

**7. OLD BUSINESS-ONGOING**

**A. Environmental Awards**

Anastasia Houston reported on planning for November environmental awards, potentially combining with ARCC awards at Marsh Oaks Community Center. She discussed investigating ticketed events for catering and suggested coordinating with the facility's grand opening celebration. Sarah Boren recommended requesting \$3,000 in budget and noted the potential cost savings of combining with the grand opening event.

**B. Minecraft Extension Activities**

Christina Kelcourse provided updates on the Minecraft challenge extension. Both Atlantic Beach and Mayport Middle schools sent invites to parents. A guest speaker from Jacksonville's winning team will present at Marsh Oaks on July 11th at noon. Students

have until August 1st to submit videos, with ESC serving as the judging committee through a Google Doc voting system.

The committee discussed prizes for winners, suggesting local gift card sponsorships and multiple award levels. Sarah Boren emphasized using Minecraft excitement to gather community input on community center programming and structural attributes, with potential workshops at town hall meetings.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

### A. ESC Accomplishments - Review of content for presentation/presentation constraints

Chair Palmer presented bulleted content covering ESC accomplishments from January through June 2026, organized chronologically. Staff recommended decoupling the ESC accomplishments presentation from the tree permit report, with Bruce Andrews and Dan Giovanucci presenting the tree report on July 13th and Palmer presenting accomplishments on July 27th.

Amy Franqui requested adding specific dates and photos from various events. Sarah Boren noted missing pages from the commission priorities document and provided additional budget workshop dates.

Sarah Boren expressed strong objection to the 5-minute time limit for presentations, arguing it was insufficient for meaningful two-way communication with commission. She suggested organizing content by priority rather than chronology and emphasized the need to address pending recommendations and funding issues.

## 9. 90 DAY CALENDAR AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE METRICS

### A. Speaker series - July

Amy Franqui reported on the July speaker series event, moved from July 4th week to July 9th to improve attendance. The event will feature a prerecorded presentation from Douglas Tallamy on "The Nature of Oaks" with live Q&A from Ixia chapter president Jody. Three Doug Tallamy books will be raffled. Twenty-two RSVPs have been received.

### B. Motion Tracker and Life Cycle of a Motion

Matt Mattila indicated he still needed to connect with city staff about the motion tracking process. Sarah Boren reported meeting with the city manager about ESC recommendation processes and shared a draft decision tree to improve staff input timing and prevent late-stage feasibility issues.

### C. Organizational Excellence Improvement Metric for 2026

**MOTION:** That the committee adopt following through on ESC committee assigned leads or ESC lead commitments as the organizational excellence metric for 2026.

*Motion: Sarah Boren*  
*Second: Anastasia Houston*

*Motion passed 8 to 0.*

**D. Film Series - evaluation**

Sarah Boren provided evaluation of the recent film event, reporting \$350 cost for 23 attendees with 4 panelists, 5 ESC members present, 8 new attendees, and 3 people requesting free trees. She noted challenges with Thursday night timing for family-friendly films and suggested weekend afternoons might be better. The committee discussed the ongoing value of the film series and budget considerations for continuation.

**10. ESC MEMBER REPORTS, REQUESTS AND/OR CLOSING REMARKS**

**A. Review Submitted Lead Summaries**

Chair Palmer thanked Amy Franqui, Dan Giovanucci, and Sarah Boren for submitting their lead planning documents. She clarified the priority and sub-priority categorization system, explaining that priorities referred to recommendations to commission/staff, outreach, and organizational excellence, while sub-priorities referenced specific focus areas like chapter 23 and parks master plan.

Sarah Boren requested direction on realtor/title company roundtables, suggesting informal sessions rather than noticed meetings for candid feedback. The committee agreed to this approach.

Sarah Boren also sought direction on private tree inventory, proposing a hybrid approach using aerial technology and ground-truthing in priority areas. Dan Giovanucci suggested various aerial data sources including military-grade access and Google Earth nonprofit programs. The committee supported further research into this hybrid methodology.

**11. RECAP OF DECISIONS, ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS**

There was no discussion regarding this item.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Palmer adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:08 p.m.

Attest:

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Amanda Askew Neighborhoods Director

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Amy Palmer, ESC Chair



**MINUTES**  
**Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) Meeting**  
**Wednesday, June 24, 2026 - 6:00 PM**  
**City Hall, Commission Chamber**  
**800 Seminole Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233**

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**Present:** Anastasia Houston, ESC Member 1  
Sarah Boren, ESC Member 4  
Bruce Andrews, ESC Member 6  
Daniele Giovannucci, ESC Member 7  
Amy Franqui, ESC Member 9

**Absent:** Amy Palmer, ESC Member 2  
Todd Miner, ESC Member 3  
Matthew Mattila, ESC Member  
Christina Kelcourse, ESC Member 8

**Also Present:** Chris Delk, City Arborist

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

**2. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR (5 MINS.)**

There were no public comments.

**3. CHAIR REMARKS**

Chair Andrews announced the addition of a standing agenda item designated "6.F - Other Time Sensitive ESC Matters," to allow the committee to address pressing non-tree-related items between regular meetings. The committee agreed unanimously.

**4. STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Tree Report**

City Arborist Chris Delk presented the tree data summary through May 2026. He noted that mitigation payment figures are now labeled "proposed" to reflect that numbers remain subject to change, as some applicants subsequently elect to plant trees rather than pay into the fund. He expressed his continued goal of increasing the number of trees planted on private property in lieu of mitigation payments. The current tree trust fund balance was reported at \$613,000 as of June 1.

Boren requested several enhancements to the monthly report, including separate line items for public plantings, removals, and losses; a tracking column for heritage tree designations; a general ledger for tree fund expenditures; color-coded differentiation between permits and arborist letter data; and a renaming of the "Adopt-A-Tree" column to "Trees for All." City Arborist Delk and Chair Andrews concurred with these suggestions. It was further suggested that the Finance Director provide a publicly

accessible, periodically updated link to tree fund expenditure data as a transparency measure.

Houston observed that through May 2026, 63 arborist letters had been received - a pace significantly exceeding the prior three-year annual average of just over 50 - and queried whether it was typical for a single arborist letter to involve an average of nearly two trees. City Arborist Delk acknowledged the trend as problematic and confirmed he is actively engaging the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) to address substandard letter quality and to establish a formal checklist of required documentation. He noted his intent to build rapport with the ISA so that certified arborists producing deficient or potentially fraudulent reports can face professional accountability, including potential loss of certification.

Boren proposed that an automated notification be sent to permit applicants upon submission, clearly setting out tree planting requirements in advance of construction, to reduce instances of non-compliance. City Arborist Delk expressed support and indicated a one-page informational sheet could be developed for this purpose.

Chair Andrews raised the current mitigation rate of \$181.00 per inch, noting that it may no longer be economically incentivizing tree planting over cash mitigation, as the cost to install a tree now likely exceeds the mitigation payment for smaller-caliper trees. City Arborist Delk confirmed that the city follows the City of Jacksonville rate and that a modest increase was anticipated.

Discussion also touched on the feasibility of requiring landscape plans as a condition of the permit process, which City Arborist Delk supported as a means of identifying tree placement conflicts early. Boren suggested that a proactive, automated communication to applicants early in the permit process could help address the issue of trees being planted in inappropriate locations.

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Semi-annual tree permit report to the commission to include in the commission agendas as follows:

- due to Amanda by Monday, June 29, for the July 13 Commission Meeting
- due to Amanda by Monday, November 30, for the December 14 Commission Meeting

The committee reviewed the draft semi-annual tree permit report due to the City Clerk by Monday, June 29, for presentation at the July 13 Commission Meeting. Chair Andrews noted that the ESC has been allotted 15 minutes total, including questions and answers. Boren suggested the report place greater emphasis on process - including appeals, variances, enforcement, and the impact of having a city arborist - rather than focusing primarily on statistics. She also recommended including ESC recommendations, a process flow diagram, a summary of outstanding motions that have not advanced to commission, a status update on the Centennial Tree Canopy Drive, and a path forward for the state-of-the-canopy report.

The committee agreed that the report should include a slide summarizing all outstanding ESC motions passed but not yet acted upon by the commission, and that this be framed as a call for a timeline and path forward. Boren noted that the tree fund action plan and proposed Chapter 23 changes have been pending without commission action for an extended period. It was agreed that the July 13 presentation would serve as the appropriate venue to seek that direction from commission.

**B. Current status of possible Chapter 23 changes**

The committee acknowledged that proposed Chapter 23 amendments, including provisions for tree relocation, Trees for All plantings in private rear yards, enhanced front yard tree requirements for wider lots, and other related measures, remain pending without commission action. Boren requested that this item remain as a standing entry on the agenda to keep it front of mind. Chair Andrews suggested that additional amendments could still be added, including requirements for multiple front yard trees on wider lots and restrictions on entirely inorganic front yards.

City Arborist Delk was asked to undertake a systematic street-by-street survey to identify properties lacking the required front yard tree, with code enforcement staff potentially assisting in follow-up. The committee expressed unanimous support for this effort.

**C. Tree Data**

The committee reviewed tree permit data for 2025. Discussion focused on the year-over-year trend in arborist letters and the significance of the data relative to the forthcoming semi-annual report. No separate action was taken.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Tree fund budget approval status**

The committee noted that no formal commission approval has been obtained for the tree fund budget line items proposed by the ESC, despite the items having been before the commission for an extended period. It was clarified that some expenditures - including the Trees for All giveaway - proceeded under a pre-existing approved departmental budget. Boren confirmed that larger proposed expenditures, such as the state-of-the-canopy report and centennial promotional activities, cannot proceed without formal commission approval. The committee agreed to use the July 13 commission presentation to press for a clear path forward on budget authorization.

**B. Free arborist day motion**

Boren reported that she and City Arborist Delk had met to review the previously passed motion recommending commission approval of up to \$12,000 to fund free arborist consultation days for citizens with mature or potential heritage trees (20 inches DBH or greater). The purpose of the program is to provide citizens with a professional care and maintenance plan - a service distinct from City Arborist Delk's advisory site visits - and

to connect the city with qualified ISA-certified arborists. The committee confirmed the motion remained appropriate and moved to reaffirm it.

**MOTION:** The Environmental Stewardship Committee recommends the Commission approve up to \$12,000 to schedule free Arborist Days two to four times per year, ideally once per quarter, where citizens can sign up for a free slot to have their mature and/or potential heritage trees (prioritizing 20 inches DBH or higher) assessed and evaluated for health and longevity, and be provided a care and maintenance plan with the goal of having the trees thrive and live a much longer life.

**Motion:** *Sarah Boren*  
**Second:** *Anastasia Houston*

<i>Anastasia Houston (Seconded By)</i>	<i>For</i>
<i>Sarah Boren (Moved By)</i>	<i>For</i>
<i>Bruce Andrews</i>	<i>For</i>
<i>Daniele Giovannucci</i>	<i>For</i>
<i>Amy Franqui</i>	<i>For</i>

**Motion passed 5 to 0.**

**C. Tree plantings in required drainage swales**

City Arborist Delk indicated he has not yet had the opportunity to fully research this matter but expressed general support for the concept, noting his experience with bioswale tree plantings in his prior position. Boren summarized that the city has historically avoided swale plantings due to uncertainty about tree survivability under periodic inundation and because stormwater capacity calculations were not developed with tree uptake factored in. She noted that the Public Works Director had expressed reservations and that further scientific review is needed. City Arborist Delk committed to researching the matter and reporting back.

**D. Tree losses from arborist letters**

The committee reviewed the arborist letter presentation and discussed the pattern of a small number of ISA-certified arborists associated with tree-cutting companies accounting for a disproportionate volume of removal letters. A committee member noted a conversation with the City Attorney indicating that where fraud in an arborist report is suspected, standard state statute protections may not shield the application from challenge, and that documentation of patterns of questionable letters could support referrals to the ISA for professional accountability. City Arborist Delk confirmed he intends to use this data in his outreach to the ISA.

**E. Landmark tree protection draft for first reading at June 22, 2026 Commission Meeting**

The committee reviewed the draft language of Ordinance No. 95-26-128, which establishes landmark tree protections focused on maritime species trees at or above 20 inches DBH. Discussion centered on several unresolved concerns arising from the first reading, including: the removal of a "statement of infeasibility" provision; the question of whether requiring commission approval for landmark tree removals creates an undue procedural burden; the relationship between the buildable footprint and tree protection applicability; and whether an independent third-party arborist requirement is legally permissible given the city now employs a staff arborist.

The committee discussed a possible process path in which applications to remove a landmark tree would first come before the ESC and then proceed to the Community Development Board (CDB), rather than to the full Commission, thereby addressing concerns raised by commissioners about the workload while retaining meaningful friction in the process. It was also noted that the ordinance language contains redundancy and lacks clarity in several areas, and that the Commission had requested simplified, specific language for the second reading scheduled for July 13.

Committee members agreed to submit suggested language revisions and a summary of key outstanding issues - including incentives, friction mechanisms, buildable footprint treatment, and the process flow - to the City Clerk ahead of the July 13 meeting.

**7. MEMBERS CLOSING REMARKS**

Franqui announced that "The Nature of Oaks" presentation is scheduled for Thursday, July 9 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Jody, current president of the Ixia Florida Native Plant Society, will participate in a live Q&A following the video presentation. Copies of the book The Nature of Oaks will be available for raffle for in-person attendees. The event will be promoted through the City's Facebook page, the recreation newsletter, and the Florida Native Plant Society mailing list.

Boren highlighted the significance of a forthcoming MOU between the City and the St. Johns River Water Management District related to restoration work at Tides View, noting it is one of only two such agreements in the state. She also proposed a recurring "Chat with the City Arborist" segment to take place at 5:30 p.m. before each ESC meeting, in which City Arborist Delk would answer frequently asked questions on camera, potentially in front of a tree, as a public outreach effort. The committee expressed support for the idea.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:22 p.m.

Attest:

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Amanda Askew, Director of Neighborhoods

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Amy Palmer, ESC Chair

## ESC CHAIR INFORMATIONAL REPORT – July 2026

### UPDATES:

-Monday, July 13 - CoAB Commission Meeting

--Second Reading scheduled for Landmark Tree legislation

--Semi-annual Tree Permit Report provided to Commission

-Monday, July 27 - CoAB Commission Meeting

-Semi-annual ESC Report to Commission

-Saturday, August 1 - Next due date for agenda items, staff written report updates, and LEAD planning summaries for regular ESC meeting

-Wednesday, August 12 – Next regular ESC meeting

-Wednesday, August 26 – Next Tree Subcommittee meeting

-Candidates for District 1306 Lisa Herrold and Jenn Lagner have both been invited to attend an upcoming ESC meeting.

-Board Member Review Committee

--According to ordinance, there shall be at least one member representing each district: 1306, 1307, 1308, 1312

--ESC members who are rolling off the committee, please focus on “replacing yourself.”

- 1306 - Sarah
- 1306 - Dan
- 1308 - Bruce
- 1312 - Amy F.

### FYI:

#### LOCAL JOURNALISM

The Beaches have a new nonprofit news outlet, the *Beach Gazette*.

Founded by Georgette Dumont (publisher) and Jennifer Ashley (editor), the weekly newspaper will be available free to all, online. A print edition is planned. A monthly publication called the *Beach Buzz* will provide entertainment news.

The co-founders were on *First Coast Connect* last week. Here is a link to the segment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BB5iAYDITQ>

To subscribe: <https://www.beachgazette.org/>

### PRUNING PALM TREES

Resident Carolyn Ettlinger shared a new article from UNF IFAS on the proper pruning of palm trees:

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/pruning/pruning-palms/>

Education on this issue is on-going and never-ending. This is great information to share.

### LIGHTS OUT UPDATE

#### **New! Lights Out Northeast Florida on Social Media**

**by Carol Bailey-White, Editor**

*We're thrilled to announce that our [Lights Out Northeast Florida](#) initiative (in partnership with the [Jacksonville Zoo & Botanical Gardens](#) and [St. Johns Regional Audubon](#)) now has [its own dedicated Facebook page](#)! Our new Facebook page joins the [Lights Out Northeast Florida Instagram page](#) introduced last year.*

*On both pages, our goal is simple: raise awareness, share solutions, and help make Northeast Florida safer for birds. Through community science, education, and conservation action, we can all play a role in protecting the birds that connect our neighborhoods to ecosystems across the hemisphere.*

*Follow along as we share local projects, migration updates, bird-friendly tips, and ways you can help. Together, we can make a difference—one light and one window at a time.*

*Please like and follow our Lights Out Northeast Florida [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages!*

It's not just birds and turtles:

Evidently, light pollution affects humans, too. Read the article:

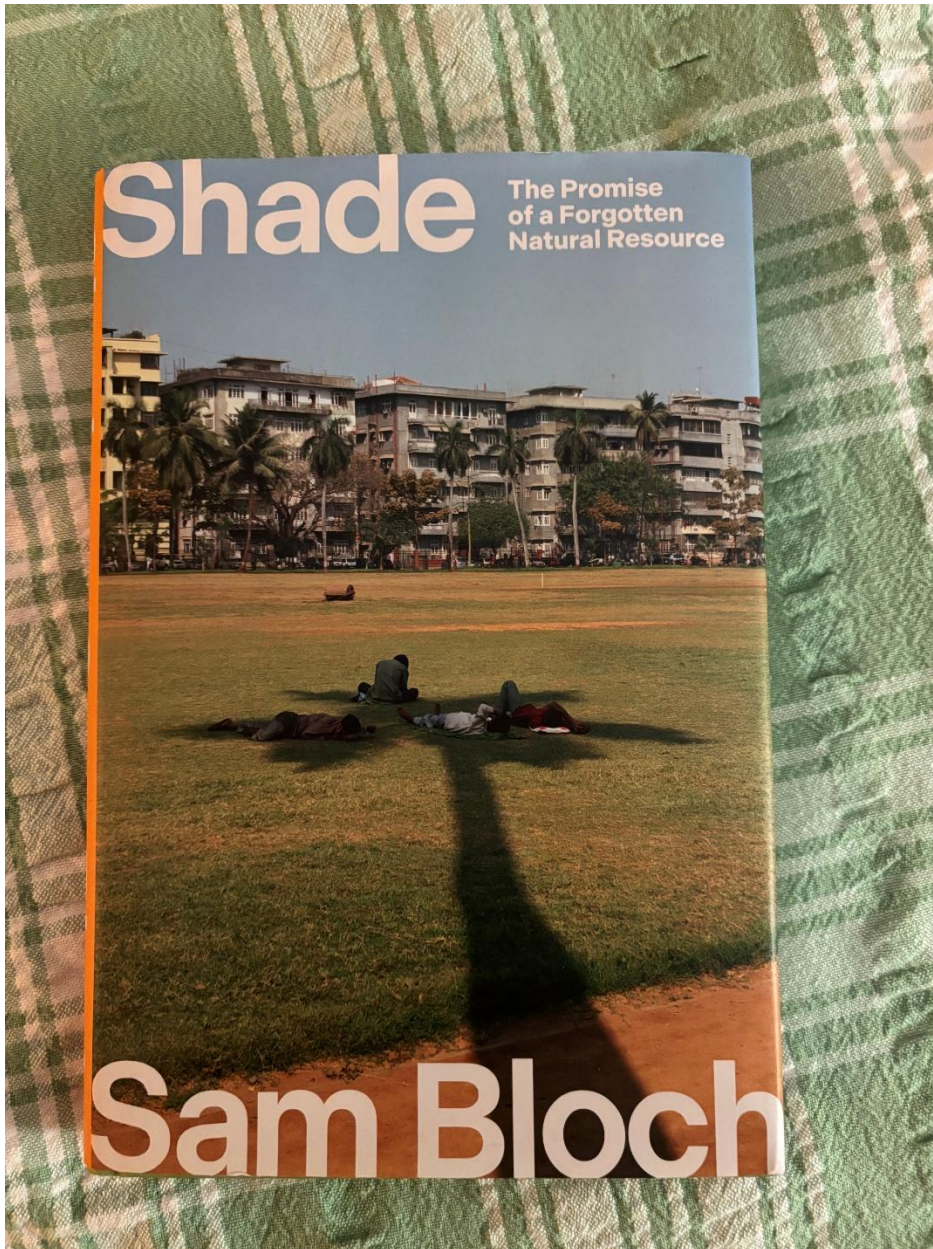
<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/04/climate/urban-light-pollution-pollen-allergies.html>

TREES

Replanting trees to recreate maritime forest in Costa Rica – effort led by surfer

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/jun/02/costa-rica-coastline-costas-verdes-native-trees>

Recent book on the social history of trees in urban settings



And another book describes a complicated situation of native wildlife adapting to invasive species. Author Hilary Flower shares the story behind the remarkable resurgence of the endangered snail kite in Florida in her newest book *The Kite and the Snail*.

### OYSTERS!

Project at Riverview Park in Jax; spearheaded by Riverview Community Collective. Nice article in the T-U:

<https://www.jacksonville.com/story/news/environment/2026/06/14/volunteers-install-oyster-reefs-at-park-on-jacksonvilles-trout-river/90459687007/>

The roughly 90 new formations, formally called [pervious oyster shell habitat \(POSH\)](#) modules, were added to the last year's batch (40) to make the largest artificial oyster reef in the St. Johns River watershed, said [St. Johns Riverkeeper](#) Executive Director [Jimmy Orth](#).

<https://www.jacksonville.com/picture-gallery/news/environment/2026/06/12/pervious-oyster-shell-habitats-installed-at-trout-river-jacksonville/90495837007/>

### More Marsh Studies from SASME:

#### [New method to raise investment funds for projects that restore coastal wetlands for climate adaptation.](#)

The Center for Coastal Climate Resilience partners with The Nature Conservancy and others to develop an innovative process for turning natural flood protection into a certifiable investment. By quantifying the exact dollar value of storm protection provided by wetlands, this new methodology creates "Coastal Resilience Assets" that can be sold to private and public investors. Learn more about this new tool at the link above.

[Dirt to the rescue: Using sediment to restore evolving saltmarshes in the subtropics.](#) One restoration approach gaining popularity today for helping wetlands keep up with sea level rise is thin-layer placement (TLP). This strategy adds thin layers of clean sediment (typically  $\leq 30\text{cm}$ ) to the surface of wetlands to rebuild lost elevation. TLP has been successful in northern saltmarshes but remains untested in subtropical regions where different plants, such as mangroves, exist. In this study, researchers explored how a drowning subtropical saltmarsh on the northern Atlantic coast of Florida would respond to TLP restoration. Find out what they learned in this blog or check out the [full scientific article here](#).

**ESC MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT CoAB COMMISSION MEETINGS – remainder of 2026**

**Purpose:**

- A way for ESC to continually monitor commission meetings/business/actions
- A way for ESC to regularly share committee updates with Commission

**Method:**

- Assigned ESC member attends the entire meeting
- Assigned ESC member reports back to ESC any pertinent information from the meeting
- Assigned ESC member makes public comment during Courtesy of the Floor to share current ESC updates
- (Be sure to submit a public comment card to city clerk prior to the meeting start; these are available on the desk, along with meeting agenda, as one enters commission chambers)

**Assignments:**

<b>DAY OF WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>START TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>REGULAR OR SPECIAL MEETING</b>	<b>ESC MEMBER</b>	<b>PUBLIC COMMENT OR SPECIAL REPORT</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Monday	7/13	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	-Amy F.  -Bruce & Dan	-Public Comment  -ESC Semi-annual Tree Permit Report to Commission	-Second Reading of Landmark Tree Protection legislation anticipated

Saturday	7/18	10 am	Gail Baker Center, Donner Park	Town Hall	???		Please observe; public comment optional
Monday	7/20	6 pm	Chambers	Budget Workshop	???		Please observe; public comment optional
Monday	7/27	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	-Todd  -Amy P	-Public Comment  -ESC Semi-annual Report to Commission	
Monday	8/10	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Sarah	Public Comment	
Wednesday	8/19	6 pm	Chamber	Budget Workshop	???		Please observe; public comment optional
Monday	8/24	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Dan	Public Comment	
Monday	9/14	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Amy F.	Public Comment	
Monday	9/28	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Amy P.	Public Comment	
Monday	10/12	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Anastasia	Public Comment	
Saturday	10/17	10 am	Adele Grage	Town Hall	???		Please observe; public comment optional

Monday	10/26	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Anastasia	Public Comment	
Monday	11/9	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Anastasia	Public Comment	
Monday	11/23	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	Amy P.	Public Comment	
Monday	12/14	6 pm	Chambers	Regular	-Dan  -Amy P.  -Bruce & Dan	Public Comment  -ESC Semi-annual Report to Commission  -ESC Semi-annual Tree Permit Report to Commission	



The Environmental Stewardship Committee  
Speaker Series Presents



# THE NATURE OF OAKS



Join us for a special video presentation on why oaks may be the single most important tree for wildlife in AB.

**July 9, 2026 at 6:00PM**  
Location: Commission Chamber  
800 Seminole Road, Atlantic Beach

Not able to make the event? Watch the *The Nature of Oaks* video on [HNPark.org](http://HNPark.org)

Doug Tallamy  
co-founder



**HOMEGROWN**  
NATIONAL PARK



Planning to attend?



**SCAN ME**

to help us plan!

