The City of
SAN DIEGO

COMMUNITY FOREST ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, June 11, 2025
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Valencia Park/Malcolm X Branch Library
5148 Market St, San Diego, CA 92114

Members in Attendence: Leon Cassel (Horticulturist), Chris Tiffany (Landspace Architect), Ami Young (Artist), Jim Smith (D1), Morgan Justice-Black (D2), Brian Bagnall (D3), Wes Janssen (D4), Alyssa Way (D6), Michael Ackerman (D7), Frank Buncom IV (Chair, D8)

Staff Liaison: Brian Widener, Olivia Mabee

Item 1: **Call to Order and Roll Call**
- Meeting called to order at 10:04 a.m. All members present.

Item 2: **Announcements and Updates**
- Brian Widener: Terrell Rackley in process to join board (District 9 mayoral appointment). Met with potential District 5 board member. Brian spoke with Elektra Fike-Data (Tree San Diego) about non-profit seat.
- Frank Buncom: Chuck Morgan stepped away – non-profit seat now open. Ready, Set, Grow San Diego forum on July 15, 2025 in Oak Park. Trying to attend for CFAB representation.

Item 3: **Approval of Minutes**
- Morgan Justice Black moves, Michael Ackerman seconds – April minutes approved. Ami Young and Leon Cassel abstain due to April meeting absence.

Item 4: **Non-Agenda Public Comment**
- Emma Smith: Are you interested in changing codes? Is subcommittee interested tree protection?
- Ian Navapanich: Performed tree survey in Otay Mesa using i-Tree. Tree care is critical.
- Anne Fege: We should use data we have, to promote tree care.
- Anisah Enciso: Thank you for the tree planting event at the Boone Elementary planting event.

Item 5: **Safe Sidewalks Program**
- Brian Widener: Program helps residents and businesses fix sidewalks when their private property trees cause damages or when other issues require the property owner to repair the sidewalk. The property owner must hire their own contractor, and the City waives the permit fees.

Item 6: **Grow a Green San Diego** (Widener)
- Brian Widener: Grow a Green San Diego promotes the City's urban forest. City Communications Department supports this broad effort across all tree-planting departments. Private trees help grow the canopy. This is a branding and tree stewardship campaign that encourages all to support the growth of our urban forest.
- Ami Young: Valencia Park residents want to be stewards but need information.
- Morgan Justice-Black, Frank Buncom: Concern about diverse communities and translations, including translation on branding for Spanish-speaking communities.
- Chris Tiffany: Encouragement to push other departments to care about trees.
- Jim Smith: Efforts like this should be turbocharged to meet climate action plan goals and treated on par with DSD and Transportation.
- Public Comment:
  - Anne Fege: Every municipal program had major partners. Multi-department important to progress towards goals. Tree San Diego report encourages working together.
  - Emma Smith: Once you've planted trees, you've lost trust. How are you going to build that trust again? City can utilize ambassadors. Would like to see parks department at the table. All materials should be accessible; communities shouldn't have to ask.
  - Elizabeth Castelo: Thanks to team for Boone Elementary event. Popup events are successful to engage the community.

Item 7: **City Staff Reports**
- Brian Widener: Handout on tree canopy cover by community planning area, analyzed by council district and planning areas. Census tracts were not analyzed with no plans for further analysis. There was about a 2% citywide tree canopy cover increase from 2014 to 2021. Analysis mostly performed with aerial imagery.
- Question if this is a pulse check or action plan; need for exponential planting to meet goals and why the City set this goal (Frank Buncom, Jim Smith). Need for significantly more funding to achieve these goals (Jim Smith).

Item 8: **Discussion**
- Brian Widener: Environment Committee presentation includes handouts for the board. He encourages CFAB to attend future presentation in support of Urban Forestry.
- John Ide: Ready, Set, Grow San Diego planted over 2,200 trees. Going into inspections of trees. Ayad starting intense inspection for Trees for Communities trees. Trees for Communities planted over 1,964 trees, WCA still rapidly planting trees. 2 years over 2,700 trees planted. Outreach – 32 Trees for Communities efforts, 45 Ready, Set, Grow San Diego efforts, 14 combined events.

- Public Comment
  - Terrell Rackley: Ready, Set, Grow San Diego program initial planting phase went well. Sounds like project is getting off to great start.

Item 9: Proposed Agenda Items for Future Meetings
- None

Item 10: Adjournment
- Ami Young moves, Alyssa Way seconds. Meeting adjourned 11:33 a.m.