



Maeve Gillis (Position 10 – Get Engaged) • **Melanie Ocasio** (Position 11 – Environmental Justice)
• **Lia Hall** (Position 13 – Community/Neighborhood)

Commissioners Absent

Lani Chang (Position 3 - Natural Resource Agency or University)

Facilitators

Aaron Clark (Position 1 – Wildlife Biologist) • **Drue Epping** (Position 5 – Arborist) • **Andrea Starbird** (Position 12 – Public Health) • UFC staff

Briefings

Tim Lehman: Land Use, Indigenous and Tribal Perspectives

The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle

Minutes

June 10, 2026, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m

1. **The meeting was called to order at 3:05, the Chair conducted roll call, and the agenda was reviewed.**
2. **The Chair facilitated Public Comment and provided a guideline to the public for engaging in this period.**

Steve Z made the following comments:

- Thanked OSE for uploading the minutes and recordings onto the UFC website. Notes that there are a few are still missing and urged them to update these to ensure that the record is publicly available.
- Noted that the deadline to apply for vacant positions on the UFC has been pushed out and questions why this update has not been sent out to UFC mailing list. Advises the UFC to do so as soon as possible to ensure that this news reaches everyone who may be available and also encourages the current Commissioners to encourage the people in their circles to apply.
- Discussed several issues that are currently before City Council, specifically Council Bill 21215.

- Noted the deadline to respond to the Climate Plan Update is approaching and urged Commissioners and individuals to respond.

3. **Vote: Approve Meeting Notes from 05/13/2026.**

- Aaron motions to approve. Maeve seconds.
- UFC unanimously approved.

4. **Updates & Announcements**

- Hannah provided the following updates from OSE:
 - UFC application deadline for vacant positions has been extended to 06/14 – encouraged everyone to spread the word.
 - Encourages everyone to share/complete the Climate Action Plan survey before the due date of 06/30
 - 2026 Application for the Environmental Justic Fund is now open – Deadline is 07/14 and also asks everyone to spread the word.
 - Provided and background of the interest groups with key stakeholders that OPCD is conducting to gather feedback to inform Mayor Wilson’s “Taller, Denser, and Faster” implementation for Phase III of the Comprehensive Plan. Noted that UFC Co-Chairs were invited to join the “Environment, Sustainability, and Trees” group on 06/04.
- Aaron was the only Co-Chair to attend the 06/04 OPCD interest group, and he provided a high-level recap and his insights about attending. He then opened the floor for questions or comments:
 - Lia: Was this a public meeting?
 - Aaron: This was by invitation only.
 - Lia: What was the response from the Mayor about the highlighting of these recommendations and the interest in UFC guidance?
 - Aaron: Clarified that the Mayor stopped by to give remarks about her goals and vision for this but was not present for the discussion portion. However, OPCD staff was receptive to all ideas and expressed that they are taking note of this input – shared some notes about what was discussed.
 - Melanie: Did anyone voice concerns about how this implementation will be done?
 - Noted that OPCD is working around items that are required by state laws to be completed within a specific time period, and they are exploring how to get those items implemented now rather than later. There were no comments about consequences of moving too quickly.
 - Lauren: Provided context about the state laws (House Bill 14911 and House Bill 1181)
 - Melanie: Were there any gaps surrounding community outreach or education that the UFC can assist with?
 - Aaron: Added that there were stakeholders that objected and opted out of the meeting due to the fact that this was not a public meeting.

Recognized that this process is happening at multiple levels with specific audiences, and there is an intention of public outreach.

- Hannah: Provided note that OPCD is working on a lot of things right now, so community outreach/education currently underworks and confirmed that OPCD mentioned that they will be providing opportunities for public connection – updates will come when available. Also, it is mentioned that OPCD has been invited to attend a future UFC monthly meeting to go more in-dept about this topic and that could be an opportunity to discuss. Likely to happen at the July 8th meeting.
- Aaron summarized what Governance Subcommittee did since the last meeting and provided an update and guidance on what expectations for next steps.
 - Melanie: Highlighted the importance on everyone providing feedback considering that the second phase will include new concepts that have not been discussed before.
 - Lia: Provided feedback about her experience with this process, including confusion at how the governance subcommittee was formed for consideration.
 - Aaron and Drue responded to this with their perspectives/additional notes to consider, and Aaron will follow-up with Lia personally.
- Aaron provided context regarding recent discussions surrounding creating a land acknowledgement for the UFC and brought to everyone's attention what follow-up steps have been established on this.
 - Melanie: Acknowledges that this is still in the beginning phase and provided clarification on what the goal of creating one is.
 - Lia: Added that historical context that land acknowledgements of how the UFC did use land acknowledgements before and the importance of why we should revisit this.

5. Discussion/Potential Vote: iTree Funding Letter

- Drue provided background information on what iTree is and the current defunding situation. Suggested that the UFC consider how they can support this cause.
 - Aaron adds his general endorsement and provides his own experience with this tool.
- Drue suggested that the UFC votes to approve of having Co-Chairs sign a letter of support that becomes available should it align with their values.
 - Lia motions to approve. Maeve seconds.
 - UFC unanimously approves.

6. Discussion: 2026 Workplan Check-in

- Hannah provided an overview of how the workplan has changed from January 2026 to the present and provided context on how the shifts occur.
 - Lauren also provided updates on items on the workplan that may need to be adjusted considering timing of certain projects/deadlines.

- Drue suggested depavement would be a good additional topic to add if there is space in the workplan.
- Drue inquired how the UFC can get involved with Forest week in October and asked if folks are interested in doing so. Suggested idea is to attend public events during this time and connect with City staff and community.
 - Discussion followed with multiple Commissioners on what representation of the UFC would look like at these public events, and the guidelines surrounding that. Will be added for consideration to the Governance Subcommittee to clarify.
 - Lauren added background on what the bylaws state in relation to this topic.
 - Lia added historical context that there used to be a subcommittee that was involved in representing the UFC at public meetings and floated the idea of tabling/outreach at public events as an opportunity to get more involved and to consider how that would look like.

7. Briefing: Duwamish Valley Industrial Greening Project

- Weston provided an overview of and some framing for the project. Also added background and framing for what the OSE's work is and what they do for urban forestry in the City.
 - Approach: Holistic change to landscapes that may not be supportive of trees and brings value to programs like these.
- Provided overview of what will be discussed in this work, including locations, techniques being used, examples of accomplishments and challenges, and what it will look like in the future.
- Delved into context for why Duwamish Valley is the focus of this industrial greening, noting that low tree canopy overlaps with industrial zones and has high need.
- Trees in Seattle
 - Trees in industrial areas do a lot more work – has a bigger impact.
 - Discussed the benefits and positive community impact that trees have in spaces that may not have other natural features.
- Industrial greening programs fill in these important gaps
 - Discuss what a healthy urban forest needs and compared different landscapes to show the consideration of how this program is needed.
 - Need to take a holistic approach to ensure all necessary elements are considered.
- Project Specifics and Partners
 - Went over the different project components involved and emphasized how this work was a suite of efforts that were identified before OSE got involved.
 - Went over core partners involved in this project, and what OSE's involvement is when it comes to supporting these organizations.
 - Noted that trees are not the only greenery involved in this project and there are diverse solutions to make a difference and work with the elements that are necessary for trees in the future.

- Showed before and after examples to illustrate the difference this project makes.
- Provided a list of accomplishments and emphasized the program growth – particularly the work partners have done to get others involved.
 - Reflected on the innovation and coordination that is a part of this process.
- Provided some challenges that are expected in this process
- Discussed what next steps will be
 - Long term goals: Apply what has been learned more broadly and align with foresting Seattle
 - Strong nexus between neighborhood and community scale focus
- Questions/comments:
 - Lia: Commented that her business got to experience some of the work that a partner of this program does, wonders how the larger property owners are considered in this work, and loves the effort in engaging community partners and organizations to support long-term sustainability. Also, thanks Weston for his presentation and sharing about this work.
 - Weston: Regarding larger property owners – other programming at the City is probably a better fit to engage with. However, he acknowledges that this comes up a lot and that this is something that is thought about.
 - Lia: Added that there is a show at Minimart City Park called “Wild River” by Timothy Eagle and recommends Commissioner’s check it out.
 - Melanie: Interested in the pavement process and also asks about the new permitting process that went through SDOT, specifically whether it actually incentivizes new construction project.
 - Weston: This isn’t a part of the process OSE works with as it is more of a policy question. However, mentions specific projects that SDOT and others are doing now to show that there are City efforts taking place to do that.
 - Drue: Thanks Weston and adds that she appreciates the emphasizing of the partnership to make this happen and also looking at it at a community level. Appreciates the new data involved as well. Asks if King County Basin Stewards is also a part of this work around Duwamish.
 - Weston: He in particular hasn’t worked with them and is unaware of them being involved in project implementation, but noted that partners would likely be doing the touchpoint during their engagement.

8. Second Public Comment (if time allows)

- No comments were made as there was not enough time.

9. The meeting adjourned at 5:01pm.

Team Chat:

Drue Epping Arborist #5, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:06 PM

To ensure a respectful and productive meeting for everyone, please keep the following guidelines in mind while using the chat box:

Refrain from Disrupting Presentations & Business Items:

Please refrain from using the chat box during presentations or business proceedings to respect our presenters' time and keep focus on the task at hand.

Public comments should only be made during the designated public comment periods.

Be Respectful:

We ask that all comments remain kind, and respectful of all participants, including presenters, volunteer commissioners, staff, and fellow attendees.

Disrespectful or off-topic messages may lead to changes for chat accessibility in meetings.

Stay On Topic:

Please keep your comments focused on the agenda items and topics being discussed during the meeting. We accept email submissions of other items and topics that can be distributed to UFC commissioners between meetings.

By participating, you agree to follow these guidelines so we can maintain a respectful and effective meeting environment for everyone. Thank you for your cooperation!

Maeve Gillis (pos 10), Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:13 PM

Hi all, flagging to this team that I will have to step away at 4:30p

Lia, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:19 PM

Was that event public?

Lia deleted their own message. 06/10/2026, 3:30 PM

Lia, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:32 PM

Edited

HB1491 [Bill Summary Link](#)

Pascual, Hannah, 06/10/2026, 3:32 PM

UFC Recruitment (Extended Applications Deadline)

Social Media Links:

Climate Action Plan

- Website: [Seattle's Climate Action Plan](#)
- Survey Link: [10-minute survey](#)

- Environmental Justice Fund Social Media Links:

Lia, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:33 PM

HB1181 [Bill Summary Link](#)

Urgenson, Lauren, 06/10/2026, 4:01 PM

Edited

HB 1181 from 2023-2024, which requires comprehensive plans to have a climate element [1181-S2.SL.pdf](#)

Drue Epping Arborist #5, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:48 PM

[iTree Tool Report Link](#)

Drue Epping Arborist #5, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 3:50 PM

<https://www.itreetools.org/usda-fs-funding-lapse>

Sean Watts (He/Him), Unverified, 06/10/2026, 4:18 PM

Hey Weston!

Drue Epping Arborist #5, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 4:18 PM

welcome back, Weston!

Drue Epping Arborist #5, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 4:54 PM

Thank you, Weston! Really love this work!!

Lia Hall #13, Unverified, 06/10/2026, 4:55 PM

Wanted to share w commissioners Artist, Timothy White Eagle has a great show up right now at Mini Mart City Park about the Duwamish River and Valley

<https://www.minimartcitypark.com/once-wild-river> <http://www.whiteeagle.me/wildriver>

Pascual, Hannah, 06/10/2026, 5:01 PM

[OSE UFC Liaison@seattle.gov](#)