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## 100-2023

Report

### Appoint and reappoint members to the Urban Forestry Commission

Accepted

REPORT TO COUNCIL

DATE: February 1, 2023

TO: City Council

FROM: Jenn Cairo, City Forester

SUBJECT: Appoint Derily Bechtold, Casey Clap, JR Lilly, and Justin Misner and reappoint Bruce Nelson to the Urban Forestry Commission (Report)

I am pleased to submit Derily Bechtold, Casey Clapp, JR Lilly, and Justin Misner for appointment to the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC), and Bruce Nelson for reappointment to a second term.

The UFC serves in an important advisory role to the City and is a valuable partner in preserving and expanding Portland's urban forest. These appointments are made as a result of a selection process that sought to value and reflect the diversity of the Portland community.

I look forward to working closely with all of them and the rest of the UFC.

Sincerely,

Jenn Cairo  
City Forester

#### JR Lilly

*Bio:* JR Lilly was born in Fort Defiance, Ariz., as a citizen of the Diné (Navajo) Nation. As part of a new generation that straddles a cultural chasm, he leads efforts to further the conversation around defining the role of our generation for both Native and Non-Native communities. Born and raised amongst a rich culture of generosity, he learned the beauty that comes from centuries of resilience. With the help of his community, he survived poverty, domestic

#### Introduced by

[Mayor Ted Wheeler;](#)

[Commissioner Dan Ryan](#)

#### Bureau

[Parks & Recreation](#)

#### Contact

Brian Landoe

✉ [Brian.Landoe@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Brian.Landoe@portlandoregon.gov)

#### Requested Agenda Type

Regular

#### Date and Time Information

##### Requested Council Date

February 1, 2023

##### Time Requested

10 minutes

violence, and other harsh realities during his childhood. It is this life experience that has created his passion and desire to do as others have done for him.

Since an early age he has enjoyed participating in various volunteer and leadership roles that have taught him the value of service. Most recently he has had the pleasure to serve on several nonprofit Board of Directors and Public Advisory Committees, providing him with the opportunity to use his skills and talents to address the issues he is most passionate about.

As a member of the Native American Community Advisory Council, East Portland Parks Coalition, and Board Member for the Portland Parks Foundation, JR has advocated for shade equity and culturally specific programming in our public parks over the past decade. His love for the outdoors guides his decision to serve on the Portland Parks & Recreation Budget Advisory Board and co-lead the Natives In Nature Hiking Group. As a Portland Tree Steward he continues to learn about the important policies needed to help our communities thrive.

*Interest Statement:* Mother Earth needs an advocate. She takes care of us in so many ways it is our responsibility to mutually care for her as well. Growing up, parks were always a safe place for me and my siblings when we had some violence going on in our home. I remember being able to step away from the craziness of life to enjoy the playground, running in an open field, or just sitting on the bench with my grandma. They hold such a sacred space for me to this day in such a way that it only makes sense that I do everything I can to keep them healthy. Not to mention this board shares the same values and loves to have fun just like I do.

The best words that sum up my inspiration for service to the outdoors are #LandBack. Which is the stewardship of our natural areas and park spaces back to the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom of the local Tribal Communities. Beyond a Land Acknowledgement and listening to our elders for guidance on planting, harvesting medicine, and ceremony. There is so much we can learn from this viewpoint that will benefit our Plant Relatives, heal all our communities, and bring us back to what my people call "Walking In Beauty".

## **Casey Clapp**

*Bio:* Casey Clapp is a professional arborist based in Portland with a unique and thorough knowledge of trees and their impact on and relationship with people. Focused on the study and practice of managing trees in the urban area for 15 years, Casey earned a bachelor's degree in Forest Management focused in Urban Forestry and a Master of Science degree in Environmental Conservation focused in Forest Resources and Arboriculture before embarking on a professional career as an arboricultural consultant in Seattle and Portland. Following this consulting work, Casey worked as a Tree Inspector with Urban Forestry and focused his time applying Title 11, the Tree Code, to development across the west side of the city, working to maintain and improve the urban canopy. Casey is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist, Municipal Specialist, and Qualified Tree Risk Assessor, and now works as the head content creator, producer, and co-host of the science

education podcast Completely Arbortrary. He brings not only a deep experiential and educational background to his work with trees, but also an enthusiasm and critical eye for bringing people and trees together in an intentional way.

*Interest Statement:* As a professional arborist and educator in Portland with a background working for the City of Portland as an Urban Forestry Inspector and a consultant prior to that, I am pleased to offer my expertise and enthusiasm in a new capacity as an Urban Forestry Commissioner. I hope to serve the commission to the best of my ability and provide a novel yet experienced perspective that will help push the city forward as a leader in urban forestry.

### **Justin Misner**

*Bio:* Justin is a life-long North Portland resident with both government and finance experience. Justin graduated from Portland State University in 2018 with a B.S. in Economics. Currently, he works in public accounting as an auditor at Deloitte LLP, focusing on the manufacturing and the public utility industries. He has passed all four sections of the CPA exam and is set to earn his license in two years once he acquires the required hours of experience. Prior to his work as an auditor, Justin was a financial statement analyst in U.S. Bank's Corporate and Commercial Division and specialized in the analysis of government financial statements. Additionally, Justin served in the Marine Corp Reserves as a Chemical, Biological, Radiation & Nuclear Defense Specialist and earned several HAZMAT certifications. Justin is a lifelong learner, who enjoys reading and taking college classes in his spare time.

*Interest Statement:* Trees have important roles in our city that often get overlooked. From their natural beauty to their ability to help keep us cool during heat waves, trees provide many essential benefits. Having lived in both North Portland and East Portland, I have seen how trees are inequitably distributed across our city. My interest in serving on the Urban Forestry Commission stems from my desire to create equitable tree coverage across our city, so all residents can have the benefits that trees provide. I am excited to learn more about trees, their uses, and different ways our city can grow and maintain our urban forest so all residents can benefit. It would be an utmost honor to serve the city as a commission member; and bring my experience, skills, and knowledge to the commission.

### **Derily Bechtold**

*Bio:* Derily is in-house counsel at Portland General Electric Company (PGE) where she advises on labor, employment, vegetation management, and wildfire matters and oversees the Ethics department. Prior to PGE, Derily served in the Portland City Attorney's Office as a Deputy City Attorney where she provided guidance to bureaus such as the Portland Police Bureau, Portland Parks & Recreation, and Office of Community & Civic Life on a broad spectrum of labor and employment matters. In addition to her work as a legal advisor, Derily is also a stalwart champion for equity and inclusion within Oregon's legal community. Derily has demonstrated sustained support for advancing diversity and inclusion, including volunteering countless hours with Oregon law schools, affinity bar associations, and the Oregon State Bar to help

ensure that these organizations direct resources and support to underrepresented groups. Derily has served as the Oregon Minority Law Association's (OMLA) chair and fundraising chair, participant on the Oregon Judicial Diversity Coalition (OJDC), President of the Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association (OAPABA), member of Opportunities for Law in Oregon (OLIO), co-chair of the Oregon Filipino American Lawyers Association's (OFALA) Gala Committee, member of the National Asian Pacific Bar Association (NAPABA), and was the 2016 Oregon State Bar President's Award for Diversity & Inclusion recipient. In 2012, the Daily Journal of Commerce named her as an "Up and Coming Lawyer Honoree" and in 2022, Derily received the Multnomah Bar Association's Diversity Award.

*Interest Statement:* I am a life-long resident of the Pacific Northwest and have a deep appreciation for our natural environment and urban green spaces. During my time as a legal advisor for Portland Parks & Recreation, I grew to appreciate the important role parks and vegetation play in our communities. As our environment evolves due to the impacts of climate change, I want to help our city evolve with it and provide a perspective that balances the need for appropriate vegetation management to minimize the risk of wildfires, tree cover to help combat rising temperatures especially in underserved communities, and our love of heritage trees. I am honored to serve on the Commission and to give back to the community I call home.

### **Bruce Nelson**

*Bio:* I am a long-time Portland resident who discovered my passion for trees while living and working in Portland. Work with landscape maintenance companies introduced me to the wide variety of trees growing in Portland landscapes. Twelve years of work for Collier Arbor Care, over twenty years of volunteer work with Friends of Trees, 18 years as a full-time Horticulture instructor at Clackamas Community College, 15 years of stewardship of trees at Rigler School and 40 years of fussing around in my home landscape all contributed to knowledge, concern, sweat and passion for trees in Portland and the vital roles these trees play in improving the health of our city and all its residents, including myself.

*Interest Statement:* The Urban Forestry Commission plays an important advisory role for Portland Parks and Recreation - Urban Forestry as Urban Forestry works to deliver meaningful stewardship of the urban canopy in a rapidly changing Portland. I believe strongly in the importance of volunteering to help others in ways that 1) I am able, 2) I enjoy doing and 3) provide benefits to those served. As a volunteer member of the Urban Forestry Commission, my hope is to help Portland develop in a manner that maximizes the use of trees as essential green infrastructure. Through assertive individual and group efforts, creative public policies and a knowledgeable public; Portland can grow enough healthy, appropriate trees to serve all Portland citizens.

## Impact Statement

### Purpose of Proposed Legislation and Background Information

Appoint four community members and reappoint one to the Urban Forestry Commission.

### Financial and Budgetary Impacts

None

### Community Impacts and Community Involvement

The Urban Forestry Commission serves an advocacy, advisory, and community engagement role in persevering and expanding the city's urban forest. These appointments are made as a result of a selection process that sought to value and reflect the diversity of the Portland community.

### 100% Renewable Goal

N/A

### Budget Office Financial Impact Analysis

No fiscal impact.

## Agenda Items

### 100 Regular Agenda in [February 1-2, 2023 Council Agenda](#)

Confirmed

Motion to accept the report: Moved by Mapps and seconded by Rubio.

Commissioner Carmen Rubio Yea

Commissioner Rene Gonzalez Yea

Commissioner Mingus Mapps Yea

Commissioner Dan Ryan Yea

Mayor Ted Wheeler Absent