

HORTICULTURE COMMISSION MEETING

March 23, 2022

9:30 a.m.

Veterans' Memorial Auditorium

5825 Florida Boulevard

Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

The hearing was called to order by Todd Parker at 9:31 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Marissa Smith

Members present: Chad Danos, Cole Sims, George Bofinger, Mitch Mayes, Richard Hill, Rebekah O'Quin, Dan Johnson, Gary Bullock, Todd Parker, Dr. Ansel Rankins, Dr. Ed Bush representing Dr. Laborde.

A quorum was present.

Others present: Chimene St. Amant, Paeton Burkett, Tina Peltier, Marsha Dugas, Baleigh Henderson, Marissa Smith.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Mr. Barry made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2021 hearing. This motion was seconded by Mr. Danos and passed unanimously.

SET NEXT HEARING DATE

The next Horticulture Commission meeting will be June 23, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. in the Veterans' Memorial Auditorium.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

REINSTATEMENT REQUEST

Melissa Brossette requested to have her Retail Florist license reinstated.

Motion: Mr. Mayes made a motion to allow reinstatement of Ms. Brossette's Retail Florist license. This motion was seconded by Dr. Rankins and passed unanimously.

ADJUDICATORY HEARING

At 9:35 a.m. the meeting was turned over to the hearing officer, Ms. Chimene St. Amant.

CONTINUED CASES

Scott Sambola

d/b/a Natures Own Landscape

4801 Taft Park

Metairie, Louisiana 70002

Case No.: 21-03

One violation of L.R.S. 3:3804(C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist, landscape architect and landscape irrigation contractor) without a proper license. One violation of L.R.S. 3:3804(C) for engaging in a regulated profession (landscape irrigation contractor) without a valid license.

This case was continued to the next hearing date upon request by Mr. Sambola.

Raphael Brown

Case No.: 22-001

d/b/a Mr. Reliable Lawncare and Mr. Reliable Groundworks
45 Sawgrass Drive
LaPlace, LA 70068

Six violations of L.R.S. 3:3804(C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without a proper license.
Five violations of L.R. S. 3:381(2)A for violating a written stop order dated 08/20/2020.

This case was continued to the next hearing date.

Ted Wayne Anthony Jr.

Case No.: 21-05

d/b/a Anthony's Architectural Landscape Construction
300 L & A Road
Metairie, Louisiana 70001

Two violations of L.R.S. 3:3804(C) for advertising in a regulated profession (landscape architect) without a proper license. One violation of L.R.S. 3:3810(2)A for violating a notice of noncompliance dated 11/26/2019.

Mr. Anthony was present without counsel. **Motion:** Mr. Ruckstuhl made a motion to find Mr. Anthony in violation of all charges. This motion was seconded by Mr. Barry and passed unanimously. The department recommended a penalty of \$500.00 per violation for a total fine of \$1,500.00.

Motion: Mr. Ruckstuhl made a motion to accept the recommended penalty and suspend \$1,500 as long as there are no further violations for advertising in the profession of Landscape Architect without a valid license. This motion was seconded by Mr. Parker and passed unanimously.

April Adams

Case No.: 22-002

d/b/a L & L Tree Service
104 St. Louisa Street
Loreauville, LA 70552

One violation of L.R.S. 3:3804(C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without a proper license.
One violation of L.R. S. 3:3810(2)A for violating a notice of noncompliance dated 12/01/2021.

Ms. Adams was not present, but the department proceeded because service was effected. **Motion:** Mr. Mayes made a motion to find Ms. Adams in violation of all charges. This motion was seconded by Mr. Sims and passed unanimously. The department recommended a penalty of \$1,500.00 per violation for a total fine of \$3,000.00.

Motion: Mr. Sims made a motion to accept the recommended penalty. This motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and passed unanimously.

Alton Dillon

Case No.: 22-004

d/b/a Alton Tree Service
40664 Ranch Road
Slidell, Louisiana 70461

One violation of L.R.S. 3:3804(C) for engaging and advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without a proper license.

Stipulation Received. The department recommended a penalty of \$1,500.00 per violation for a total fine of \$1,500.00. **Motion:** Mr. Sims made a motion to accept the stipulation and recommended penalty. This motion was seconded by Mr. Danos and passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Rule Change requests for LAC 7:29.117F(4):

Motion: Dr. Rankins made a motion to move forward with the Notice of Intent to amend the regulations changing the profession of horticulture service to landscape horticulturist. This motion was seconded by Mr. Danos and passed unanimously.

Director's Report:

Mrs. Peltier gave the following updates:

On June 14th, Michelle Catalanatto was hired as an Administrative Coordinator 3. Michelle is tasked with processing payments for AES, answering the Horticulture phone line and updating licensee information in the Horticulture database. In October, Dr. Rankins, AES Assistant Commissioner, obtained approval to restructure the areas of our district offices. Several parishes were reassigned to different district offices distributing the workload more evenly. A new Hammond district office was created bringing the total number of districts from 7 to 8. The total number of AES inspectors only increased by one. Monique Bilbo, former Supervisor in the Baton Rouge District, was promoted to Manager of the new Hammond District on November 1st.

A total of 6 new AES inspectors have been hired to fill vacant positions: Meredith Williams-Mautemps, Hammond, Cody Kollath, Baton Rouge, Kelsey Brewer, Shreveport, David-Scott Fontenot, Opelousas, Mallory Thibodaux, Crowley, and Hailee Price, Alexandria. Alexander Sabo, Baton Rouge district inspector, has been promoted to Supervisor, the position left vacant by Monique Bilbo.

March 21, 2022, Mark Earl was promoted to the AES Administrative Coordinator of the Nursery and Apiary Programs. Mark has been with LDAF for 21 years as an AES inspector in the Alexandria district. Please help me welcome him to our team.

As of last week, we are more than 80% complete with license renewals and over 90% complete with permit renewals. I would like to give the Horticulture staff a big thank you for a job well done this renewal season. Our licensee and CEU administrative coordinator resigned at the beginning of the renewal season, and we are still in the process of finding a replacement. The staff performed an excellent job keeping up with the extra work required of them and did not fall behind with issuing licenses and permits.

Citrus Updates: Citrus canker was detected at a residence in St. Martin parish (Jan. 2020) by USDA. This is a new parish find for CC. A delimiting survey was completed within the 2 mile radius of the find and no additional citrus canker was detected. We will continue to monitor the property and surrounding area for any new CC symptoms.

In June of 2021 a citrus greening suspect sample was taken as part of the annual CAPS Citrus Commodity survey, from a residence in St. Rose, LA. The sample was confirmed positive for CG in July of 2021. St. Rose is located in St. Charles parish and this is a new parish find for CG. A one mile and two-mile delimiting survey was conducted by PPQ in July and August resulting in 10 additional positives.

We implemented an emergency rule adding a portion of St. Martin parish to the current CC quarantine and the entire parish of St. Charles to the current CG quarantine. The permanent rule will be finalized in April.

Currently, Orleans, Washington, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, and Jefferson are the 5 parishes within the citrus greening quarantine area. Orleans, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, and St. John are the 8 parishes quarantined for citrus canker.

In February of 2022, citrus canker was confirmed in a nursery in South Carolina. The nursery sells nursery stock to consumers online. APHIS and state personnel are working to collect and destroy all citrus plants that were shipped to 11 states including Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas and Washington. LDAF was notified on March 2, 2022 that 3 locations in Louisiana received citrus plants from the nursery. The locations included Slidell, Benton and Shreveport. All the locations are located outside of our current CC quarantine area. Inspectors from the Shreveport district have confiscated and destroyed the two citrus trees in Benton and Shreveport. PPQ was charged with handling the destruction of the tree in Slidell. (clementine and mandarin)

P. Ramorum Positive Nursery: In 2021, two compliance inspections were performed at the nursery in Forest Hill that was found positive for *P. ramorum* in 2020. The protocol requires sampling the nursery once in the spring and again in the fall when weather conditions were most favorable for *P. ramorum*. A total of 332 samples were collected from host material at each compliance sampling. During the fall sampling in October, two water samples were also collected from the nursery's retention pond. All samples were reported negative for *p. ramorum*. The second year of the protocol will consist of the same sampling protocol. The spring inspection is set for April 22. LDAF and USDA personnel collaborate to collect all the samples in a single day as not to disrupt the nursery's business activities. The nursery is required to remain under a compliance agreement for 3 years.

GRKN: We are still receiving pre-shipment notifications from the nursery in Florida that shipped foxtail ferns containing GRKN in March of 2021. Our inspectors are routinely sampling host plants and all samples have been negative.

CAPS Program: The 2021 Solanaceous survey consisted of deploying 60 traps at 20 locations where tomato production occurs. No suspect pests were found.

The 2021 Citrus Commodity survey consisted of spring and fall inspections targeting 13 different citrus pests. 51 samples were submitted to LSU, with 7 being positive for citrus canker and 23 being positive for citrus greening. The survey resulted in one new parish testing positive for citrus greening, which was St. Charles. All other positive samples were collected with the current quarantine areas.

The 2021 SOD survey resulted in 60 tissue samples being collected from 32 locations. All samples were reported negative for *p. ramorum*. Five locations were sampled during the water baiting portion of the survey and all water samples were reported negative for *p. ramorum*.

The 2021 Forest Pest survey was completed in November. There were 42 traps deployed at 14 high risk pathway locations for forest pests. Samples were collected from the traps monthly and sent to USDA for identification. No suspect pests were found.

The Solanaceous, Citrus Commodity, Sudden Oak Death and Forest Pests surveys will be performed again in 2022. SCS-May; CCS, SOD-April; FPS-July

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Mr. Parker made a motion to adjourn at 11:34 a.m. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mayes and passed unanimously.