

Lower Paxton Township SHADE TREE COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2022

Members in Attendance

Karl Valley
Tim Murphy
Rick Wain
John Whaley
Austin Gee

Members Absent

Also in Attendance

Nick Gehret, Staff Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Valley called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm on the above date in the Conference Room of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg.

MINUTES

Mr. Wain made a motion to approve the February 22, 2022 meeting minutes, as corrected. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

2022 Arbor Day Celebration

Mr. Gehret stated that Arbor Day will be held April 28, 2022 at 6:30 pm at the Stray Winds Park on MacIntosh Road. There doesn't appear to be any practices taking place so there should be no conflict. He ordered 30 Eastern White Pine seedlings and pick up is scheduled for Friday, April 22nd. The Shade Tree members can pot them during the April 26 regular meeting. He marked where the tree can be planted to get feedback from Parks and Rec and the Shade Tree members. Andy Brought is not available to present the flag and proclamation, so one of the Supervisors can present it on behalf of DCNR. He will also make sure to have the portable speaker.

Mr. Gehret will invite the Board of Supervisors and coordinate publicizing it with the Communications Manager to get it on the website and social media and he will let the Stray Winds homeowners' association know. The contact person at the HOA might be able to gauge interest to see how many people are coming.

Mr. Murphy suggested turning the tree give away into some sort of competition, like a scavenger hunt. The scavenger hunt could be simple like find three different types of leaves and you win a free tree to plant. If there isn't enough trees to make the hunt work, the members can bring in some assorted leaves. There are trees along the perimeter but none within the park itself. Mr. Gehret suggested purchasing two trees for Arbor Day just to get some trees started in that park since it is so wide open.

Shade Tree Commissioners' Shirts

Mr. Gehret will order the shirts so they can wear them on arbor Day.

NEW BUSINESS

Spotted Lanternfly

Mr. Gehret asked what information the Township can share with residents about the Spotted Lanternfly problem. Last year there were various methods to catch them, but there are different tactics to use during different life stages. Mr. Gee suggested continuing to pass the Penn State Extension information or direct people to the Extension website. Mr. Gehret is looking for small snapshot style information or graphics to catch people's attention online; it will be ineffective if it is too wordy.

Mr. Wain stated that what needs to be done right now is people should inspect their trees for egg masses and scrape them into rubbing alcohol. Mr. Gehret noticed that the egg masses tend to be very high up in the tree, so finding them and removing them is not something most people will be able to do. Mr. Valley suggested that people look to see if they think they have Tree of Heaven, get it verified and removed. Removing those should remove the problem.

Mr. Gehret stated that he would like to put it on Facebook Instagram and Twitter, and also the website. Printed flyers don't need to be done, since people really don't take them or look at them. He asked for the "nuts and bolts" of the information, and Ms. Urban can add graphics and make it social media friendly.

Shade Tree Commission

Approved Species List

Mr. Whaley reported he has spent some time working on this list and the overall format. He would like them to be grouped by their intended use or location such as in a parking lot island, under power lines, et cetera. There are pieces of advice that should be added that could be helpful to residents or developers. And there are so many varieties but availability may limit the resident's choices. He would like to have a core group of trees to suggest to people, and then add to it as time goes on. He asked how many of each size should be listed in each category. Members suggested the list be similar to an index or basic summary table, then they can refer to the details in the back of the binder. Mr. Whaley noted there is a website for municipal arborists, and they put out a tree of the month where they highlight new cultivars and things that could be interesting.

Mr. Whaley suggested the first step should be selecting a general format or layout, agree to how many trees in each size group, then indicate where they fit best or other criteria. Adding pros and cons may be helpful too. Planting width would be useful so people know if the tree will fit there at a mature height so there aren't problems down the road.

Mr. Wain noted that the old neighborhoods may have decent tree lawns, but the new ones have very small tree lawns if at all, and most of them have utilities buried there now.

Mr. Gehret noted that this list will also be used by commercial or industrial developers, so it will not just be tree lawns in front of homes, it will be a reference document for land developments plans.

Tree Inspections

No inspections were requested this month.

PUBLIC COMMENT & COMMISSIONERS COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

The April meeting will focus on preparing for Arbor Day, and the May meeting can be focused on discussing the list.

Mr. Wain noted the next Shade Tree Commission meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2022, at 4 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner,
Recording Secretary