

**WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023 AT 7:00 PM (IN-PERSON)**

Members Present: Chair Christian Fassbender, Vice-Chair Natalie Borkowski, David D'Amore, Fran Kelly, Vera Kosabutski

Liaisons In-Attendance: BOS Liaison, Jacy Toll; Assistant Township Manager, Craig McAnally; Staff Liaison, Samantha Zrillo

Unable to Attend:

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

PLAN REVIEWS:

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

- Tree Giveaway

Mr. McAnally mentioned that the Giveaway would continue to be pushed on the Township's electronic sign as well as the *Whitemarsh Weekly*. Mr. McAnally and Ms. Zrillo then explained the survey that was sent out to residents and gave an update on the current numbers of trees, mentioning there were only Hornbeams and Elm left.

Mr. D'Amore and Ms. Kelly stated that they were in touch with the High School and the High School Counselor was interested in promoting the event to students. Mr. D'Amore said he would follow up with Ms. Zrillo about contacting the school.

Ms. Kosabutski inquired about the process for the residents that pre-registered for the event. Mr. McAnally explained that he emailed them four times to take the survey before it was available to the rest of the Township. After the residents fill out the survey, they get a confirmation email and eventually will get a confirmation packet with detailed pick-up information, a map, and planting instructions.

Mr. McAnally asked if leaving the trees on the parking lot surface overnight would damage the trees. The Commission said the trees would be alright for one night late in September.

Mr. McAnally mentioned that the wire fencing will be available for cutting during the month

so it was not rushed the day before the event. Ms. Kelly said that one day per week should be sufficient to get the wire cut.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Trees to be planted at Township Building and Koontz Park

Ms. Kabnick, a member of the Environmental Advisory Board, gave an overview of the planting events. Seven out of ten trees to be planted at Koontz Park are from Tree Tenders and they will be planted on November 18, 2023. Twenty-three trees are to be planted at the Township Building. Eight will be planted on September 24, 2023, and the rest will be planted on October 8, 2023.

Mr. Fassbender updated the Commission on the Highlands, mentioning that the tree planting was nixed, but the area is being cleaned up. Additionally, there are several small trees that were identified, tagged, and are being preserved in the area.

Ms. Kabnick mentioned that the planting events should be advertised in the *Whitemarsh Weekly*.

- Community Forestry Workshop on November 3, 2023

Mr. Fassbender announced the Community Forestry Workshop and said that those interested in attending should reach out to Mr. McAnally.

A member of the public mentioned there will be a similar event happening at the Morris Arboretum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

August 1, 2023 Meeting

Mr. D'Amore made a motion to approve the August 1, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kelly. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

In attendance: Environmental Advisory Board members Debra Harris and Karen Kabnick

Ms. Harris announced that the Shade Tree Commission can substitute a Hickory tree for a 3" caliper tree when reviewing plans even though it is smaller because it has a large taproot. Ms. Kabnick questioned if there are any other species that are similar. Mr. Hosbach said not that anyone would plant.

In attendance: Steve Kaufman

Mr. Kaufman gave a comment regarding the fee in lieu in Chapter 55—to consider having the “designee” set a standard fee in lieu that reflects the cost of planting and maintaining canopy

trees. Mr. Kaufman requested this go on the agenda for the next meeting. Ms. Hosbach stated that there is a standard industry formula with labor costs that he uses for determining the fee in lieu. Mr. Fassbender said he will investigate this further and determine if it should go on the agenda.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Mr. D'Amore mentioned that he is proud of the Tree Giveaway—it is a tangible example of helping the environment and connecting with residents of the community.

Mr. Fassbender announced that the next meeting will be held on October 3, 2023 and the November meeting will have to be rescheduled due to the election day conflict.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

October 3, 2023 In Person at 7:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 PM.