



Pittsburgh Shade Tree Commission

September 21st, 2023

Minutes

Members in Attendance							
x	Kristen Spirl (Chair)	x	Lisa Ceoffe	x	Nazin Bagherynejad	x	Jim Barry
x	Marti Battistone		Raqueeb Bey		Roy Blankenship	x	Matthew Erb
	Jayme Holloway	x	Andrea Ketzal		Angie Martinez	x	Zinna Scott
	James Stitt	x	Brian Wolyniak		<i>vacant</i>		
x	<i>Guest: Mike Kelley</i>	x	<i>Guest: Zachary Spodek</i>			x	<i>Guest: Carlos Thomas</i>
x	<i>Guest: Danielle Crumrine Tree Pittsburgh</i>	x	<i>Guest: Nsai Temko Tree Pittsburgh</i>	x	<i>Guest: Jeff Bergman Western PA Conservancy</i>	x	<i>Guest: Friends of Riverfront Alex Toner</i>

Kristen opened the meeting with a roll call and formal introductions.

Kristen noted the commission needed to review past May minutes.

Subcommittee Updates:

Remarkable Trees:

Trees submitted for nomination were looked at. Nominated Tree in Frick Park was posing a risk and recommended to be removed

Related to such, Lisa suggests inspection before nomination process.

Kristen asks if motion needed to extend the work of the remarkable tree subcommittee.

Lisa suggests discussion on that matter on next meeting. Andrea says she can take a contract to OMB for review.

Kristen wants to get the remarkable tree subcommittee together to formulate a plan regarding the use of contractors to investigate trees

Kristen says subcommittee emails will be sent to everyone, so that it is open for all members to join.

No updates regarding Tree Equity Subcommittee meetings

Mike Kelly says Homewood will be finished for review for the tree planting pilot program this week, and that Beltzhoover will be next

Kristen reminds members that Jim Barry was recently voted in as Treasurer, and that a meeting was held with OMB discussing funds.

2 roles are still open: Co-chair and Secretary

Reports in Community Partners:

Lisa Ceoffe gave an update regarding Forestry Operations.

Lisa says there is an influx of 311s, going back to 2021. She says Forestry is still working on the Tree Equity Plan as well. Additionally, she says the city applied for a \$2,000,000 program regarding lots, and Forestry was tasked with an approximate 800 lot backlog from another department. They are taking care of the highest priorities and received \$1,000,000 in funding as part of the Equitable Tree Investment Plan.

She also appreciates the Shade Tree Commission for funding the travel costs of attending the conference to DC, where she and Mike Kelly will be talking about the Equitable Tree Investment Plan.

Lisa mentions Forestry still does not have a clerk. The position is approved, but not filled.

Michael Kelly says that in Hays Woods, PWSA started the replacement process for a tower on the landslide site. Michael inspected the site, and 8-10 trees were removed, but they will be made up for with the alternative compliance plan. They will come out net positive with the new utility corridor being built.

Nazin asks about the plan for vacant lots. Lisa says the focus is connecting with neighborhood groups to determine their needs.

Michael says they are looking to hire a project manager to manage vacant lot program due to the amount of community outreach involved.

Canopy Impacts:

Tree Pittsburgh:

Danielle from Tree Pittsburgh mentions they got a \$8,000,000 federal grant. Proposal has 9 partners and 30 boroughs involved. They are planning a launch for October, in the McKeesport area.

Tree Pittsburgh also mentions a Give and Grow Program was launched for the Pittsburgh Area, which involves a \$75,000 grant to start the program.

Tree Vitalize Pittsburgh:

Hitting the 44,000 mark for tree plantings

Carlos discusses tree planting in Homewood, and how to manage vacant lots that are not under community ownership, but rather the City's. Lisa says this would be a part of the Vacant Lot Program. She also mentions related legislation passed by Councilwoman Deborah Gross regarding Food Farms.

Old Business:

October Meeting will involve the Mayor; It will be a closed meeting

Kristen goes over priority draft of topics to discuss with Mayor: Topics include

- Managing Support of Tree Equity Investment Plan - Money was used as a match for DCNR
- Shade Tree Support Specialist Position for Equity Plan
- Prioritizing Areas that have gone underinvested
- Tree Protection
- Supporting Public Works Forestry Division
- Supporting Shade Tree Trust Fund – Fund and Spend Tracking Software
- Supporting Shade Tree Public Awareness
- Recruiting Membership that will take Active Role
- Increasing Tree Canopy and Support Existing Tree Canopy

New Business:

Online Voting will be used going forward via a multi-day Q&A period followed by a 7-8 hour window for voting

Andrea motions to approve May minutes with typo changed. Unanimous second. Nobody said neigh and Matthew abstained. Motion Passed.

Lisa motions to end the meeting 10:33. Nobody said neigh and nobody abstained. Motion Passed.