

Allentown Shade Tree Meeting Minutes – August 24, 2023

Prior month's Meeting Minutes will be approved at the September Meeting

**In Attendance**

Lisa Strovinsky  
Terry Brown  
Suzanne Valpreda  
Bob Mayer  
Rob Strovinsky

**Excused**

Kristine Hyer  
Michael Sullivan

**Hours:**

Lisa 12 hours April/May/June/July  
Terry 11 hours June/July  
Suzanne 2 hours June/July  
Bob 6 hours June/July  
Rob 7 hours June/July



**Old Business:**

Stormwater Tree Ordinance: The state has made significant changes to the example resolution and is still actively adjusting. As of now, each town is still required to have a resolution in place by the end of the year. The state's example no longer applies to residential homeowners. We decided to keep our proposed resolution "as is" and present it to the Town Council. We felt the council should decide how the town moved forward with the resolution. Terry will present at a September Council meeting.

2023 Budget: Terry believes the remaining budget is about \$5,000, he will check. We discussed using most of the remaining budget for the removal of the Hazardous trees identified in our training.

- Two in Farmer Park
- One across from the park in the cemetery

In addition, there is another tree that needs to be removed on the corner of Gordon St near Wycoff house. There may also be a broken branch in Sensi Park which will need to be removed. Rob will ask Nick to work with Terry to mark out the trees for estimates.

Lisa will contact Fernbrook Nursery to see if they are offering again their Fall Tree Buying program to Allentown Residents. The Commission discussed the possibility of using \$1000 to subsidize the cost of trees to encourage homeowners to plant more. One offer per household, first come basis for 10 trees.

**New Business:**

Pruning in the Parks: The next park pruning/clean-up will be Wednesday 9/6 @ 5PM at Ashby. Rob will get the stakes from DPW.

Future Tree Planting, Watering and Maintenance & working with DPW: Rob will discuss the following with Laurie/DPW:

- How will the town plans to do proper tree watering in the future. Will the water bags be filled in the future? Can they be reused now that there is access to water that Ashby Park?
- When Shade Tree and other groups do park clean-ups/pruning can the brush be picked up within a few days.
- How do we ensure new planting (shrubs/perennials) are watered regularly.
- Can mulch be spread around planted trees so tree trunks will not be injured by the mowers/weed whackers?
- Loosening of the metal straps in the trees that are used for the holiday lights. They are cutting into the trees and permanently damaging the trees.

We discussed the need to do something about how tree pruning is done by the PSE&G contractors. How do we hold utility companies accountable for damaging trees during pruning. Many of the trees are topped or mutilated; some will most likely die because of their aggressive pruning. If a tree declines, becomes hazardous or dies because of the pruning, who is responsible for the cost of removal?

Dead Pine trees on Probasco Dr.: Rob will contact Laurie to identify the issue and Ron Gafghan (spelling?) can then contact the homeowner for their removal.

Discussed the dead tree on South Main St and High St.: Laurie was recently contacted and told Terry that the tree will be removed before the start of the school year.

**ACTION ITEM:** We discussed installing two more street gardens this fall to help promote planting. Installation would be on North/South Main St and/or Church St. Each member should bring two locations/suggestions to the September meeting.

Adjournment 8:15 PM