

BOARD OF SHADE TREE & PARKS COMMISSION MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

February 12, 2025

Present: K. Raschen, W.R. Comery, B. Goggin, M. Ivanicki, A. Hios, F. Elhers, V. Piccinich, J. Weber, R. Kaiser

Absent: F. Rizzo, A. Antonio

W.R. Comery called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and stated that this meeting of the Shade Tree & Parks Commission, as required, has been made public and posted at Borough Hall. Roll call was taken.

Public:

Superintendent's Report:

Motion to approve last month's minutes made by A. Hios, seconded by F. Elhers. All in favor.

K. Raschen updated the commission on the stormwater management plan coming from the state of NJ – a lot of towns have an issue with it. We also don't think it's a good idea to send borough employees onto private property to enforce tree removals. Minimal info from the state on possible issues with this plan – still working on getting something in place that works for Paramus. Many other towns do not have it in place yet either. This plan is not beneficial to the towns or to the town's residents.

F. Elhers asked if we can use the left over wood from removals – K. Raschen explained how we use this wood to make mulch. This mulch is given out for free to residents, and used in our parks and other locations. This saves the borough money by not having to pay for wood disposal, and not having to purchase large quantities of mulch for parks.

Tree Preservation Release – 604 Mazur Avenue- K. Raschen explained tree preservation to the new commissioners -Kr. Recommended the release of tree preservation for 604 Mazur Ave – the trees have no issues. motion made by B. Goggin, seconded by V. Piccinich. All in favor.

Shade Tree Bid- We were advised the bid would be published within the next two weeks. This is for 166 trees to be planted. We have many re-planting locations due to the removal of infested ash trees.

Winter Removals- The department trims spring, summer, and fall. Winter is when we focus on our scheduled removals while other trees are in their dormant season. There are very few remaining ash trees to be removed – the most severely infected have all been removed.

F. Ehlers inquired about the creek behind his home – K.R. stated he would look over the tax map with him to discuss the area. This area is not maintained by Shade Tree and Parks.

Authorization to Pay Bills- Motion made by B. Goggin, seconded F. Ehlers. All in favor.

Chairman's Report-

W.R. Comery welcomed our two new members to the commission which was established in 1952. He introduced himself and the Vice Chairman M. Ivanicki, and urged the new members to go on a tour with K. Raschen to see our locations and what our department does/takes care of throughout the borough. A. Hios stated he went on the tour and said it was definitely worth it, and learned a lot about the department. W.R. Comery explained policies and procedures to the new commissioners – a copy of our policy manual was provided to all new members.

W.R. Comery shared our various annual accomplishment reports with the commission – including the Annual Accomplishment report to Administration, Community Forestry Management Plan, Tree City USA, Tree Cities of the World, and Growth Award.

W.R. Comery expressed concern to the commission regarding the borough's denying of out of title pay (7.5%) for the work they have been doing while we have been without an Assistant Superintendent for over a year. A. Hios made a motion to support both foreman getting out of title pay for their additional work due to a lack of assistant superintendent, seconded by B. Goggin. All in favor.

New Business-

K. Raschen updated the commission on the upcoming Petruska Park upgrade.

Old Business-

We still have not received a response to the letter sent to Borough Attorney Giblin's office in regard to issuing the checks he received on our behalf almost a year ago. A Letter from Mr. Giblin Sr stating we should not pursue action regarding the trees removed without authorization at 39 Sycamore Street was provided to J. Weber and R. Kaiser for review.

We will have not been able to get a meeting with the CFO/Finance regarding the trust account balances.

Land Use-

Motion to adjourn meeting made by B. Goggin, seconded by A. Hios. All in favor