

BOARD OF SHADE TREE & PARKS COMMISSION MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

September 10, 2025

Present: Ken Raschen, Steven Campbell, F. Ehlers, F. Rizzo, V. Piccinich, M. Ivanicki

Absent: W.R. Comery, A. Hios, B. Goggin

M. Ivanicki called the meeting to order at 7:07 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. No need for closed session.

Public: Mr. Savoia – 324 Briarcliff Lane

Expressed concern over carpenter ants coming into his home, disturbing his family – he hired an exterminator and the exterminator stated they could be coming from the town trees. Mr. Savoia explained he doesn't want the trees to be removed, but would like them inspected to see if they are the cause of the ants. Photos of the town trees were provided to commission members. He has been treating the house for ants, and asked if the trees could be treated as well. KR explained we will have our tree foreman do an inspection from the bucket truck to get a full view and probe the older cuts on the tree. Our office will then reach out with their findings. Mr. Savoia thanked the commission for their time.

Superintendent's Report

Tree Preservation Releases- 313 Budd Road- 2 ash removed, remaining tree in good condition - No issues with the tree at this location. Motion to release made by F. Rizzo, seconded by F. Ehlers. All in favor. **673 Cambridge Road-** No issues at this location. Motion to release made by V. Piccinich, seconded by F. Ehlers. All in favor. **368 Bullard Avenue-** The builder is appealing denial of release for the tree that is declining after construction. Commission asked if anything changed – no, just requesting an appeal. Motion to uphold original vote to deny made by F. Ehlers, seconded by F. Rizzo. All in favor.

Leafsite- K. Raschen explained this location is about 7 acres and under control of the DPW, but also used by Shade Tree. NJDEP conducted an inspection, and determined various issues in need of remediation, including drainage. The grade had to be raised by 2 feet, and adjusted to allow for better drainage. All the work has been completed, and NJDEP has conducted their inspections. No issues are outstanding and we have been approved. This avoids a number of large fines they would be issuing if not remediated.

Library Irrigation – The irrigation at the main library was tied to a well and the well no longer provides water. A wall is also supposed to be installed where the grade change is. We are working to complete landscaping as quickly as possible.

Firemans Park- Re-dedication ceremony is the first week of October. Crews are working to correct the large grade drop off, re-plant, and mulch the area. A wall is being installed as well, and all irrigation damaged during construction has been repaired.

Capital – Yearly requests are submitted for capital requests. Our inventory is very aged, some equipment from the 1980's and 1990's. Capital requests are for the upcoming 5 years – trying to plan ahead to replace outdated equipment. Average amount requested is \$660,000.00 per year – we were given 10% of that amount. We cannot replace any equipment listed on the request with the amount of money allotted. Thankfully we work very well with the Board of Education and lend each other any equipment we may need.

Authorization to Pay Bills- motion made by F. Rizzo, seconded by V. Piccinich. All in favor.

Motion to approve last month's minutes made by F. Ehlers, seconded by F. Rizzo. All in favor.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Stumps- We have two crews out daily removing stumps. Small stumps we can complete about 20 a day, larger stumps about 10 a day. We are centralizing crews to tackle areas with stumps, to get as many done as we can without having to pack up and move equipment to new locations.

Sidewalk Program- Bid was last awarded in 2021 for this program – our department was advised to tell residents the program is on hold. Last year, we were told the program is not on hold. We have reached out regarding the bid process and are awaiting a response. We do not have access to the capital accounts to see if there is any capital remaining from 2021, etc.

Ash Tree Survey- Ash removals are coming to an end, all ash trees have been surveyed, and untreated trees marked for removal. We are going to tackle the remaining ash trees along with our winter removals.

Park Improvements- Crews cleared trees at Petruska for the pickle ball court project, also pruned by Little League and throughout the park as needed. Construction has also begun at O'Neil field for park improvements – being done by an outside contractor.

Chairman's Report

Council Report

New Business

Old Business

Land Use-

Motion to adjourn meeting made by F. Rizzo, seconded by V. Piccinich . All in favor