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# CITY OF HYATTSVILLE SHADE TREE BOARD

## MINUTES | FEBRUARY 7, 2024

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**PRESENT:** Taylor Johnson, Gloria Felix-Thompson, Randy Fletcher,  
Zack Dorner, Kathryn Kutzner, Deborah Taylor

**ABSENT:**

**STAFF:** Dawn Taft

**VISITOR(s):** Dawn Bohls

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 pm.

There was no January 2024 Shade Tree Board Meeting

**1) Approval of the December 2023 Minutes**

Zack motioned to approve the minutes. Gloria and Taylor seconded the motion and the December minutes were unanimously approved.

**2) Brief report on approved permits, denials, and illegal removals (Dawn Taft)**

There were 60 permit requests in 2023, which is fewer than in previous years. 52 were approved, 2 were denied, and 6 not applicable, but may be in the future. There were 5 illegal removals, and 23 hazard trees reported.

*Kathryn asked how hazard trees get reported. Dawn explained that there are a number of ways these trees get reported, such as SeeClickFix and calls made to the city by concerned residents who may notice a tree that poses a potential threat. Dawn is automatically notified about anything having to do with trees. She will inspect all trees that are reported and will determine/declare if it is a hazard. The owners are then notified by letter and are under code compliance to mitigate the issue.*

There are three 3 permit applications in 2024. Two were approved and one is outstanding.

**3) Election of Officers for the 2024 calendar year**

Chair—Zack Dorner, candidate  
Vice-Chair, Taylor Johnson, candidate  
Secretary, Randy Fletcher, candidate

*Zach Dorner was voted in as Chair.  
Taylor Johnson was voted in as Vice-Chair.*

*Randy Fletcher was voted in as Secretary.*

4) **New Business**

Taylor asked if there are plans to plant trees along the Trolley Trail to provide shade. Dawn will look into it. She hopes to plant trees where ever she can. Gloria recalls an email stating that Parks and Planning may own part of the trail and may have a say in what is planted. Dawn will let us know next month.

Dawn will send a link for training to new board members. There are no more official training classes for tree stewardships.

Taylor asked if removal of invasives involves digging up the roots. No, it's just cutting them back....Invasives triage. There is an educational video in the works to help train residents. Dawn mentioned that you can use a black plastic bag and zip tie it over a vine to help deprive it of sunlight, which will eventually kill it. This process could take a couple years.

Kathryn offered to let anyone who wants to tag along with her to do tree stewardship/invasive removal. Orientation training has to occur first for someone wanting to do this, and the program ends at the end of April 2024.

Kathryn asked about trees being planted in the right of way. When a potential planting spot is identified, the city sends out a letter to the resident stating that there may be a tree planted in the right of way, which is city owned. The resident has an opportunity to say "no" if they don't want one planted there. Dawn stated that it is so much easier for residents to ask for a tree to be planted in the right of way. There have been 121 letters sent and 230 are going out this spring.

There will be 90 trees planted at the duckpond in University Hills. Randy asked if trees could be planted between the pond and University Boulevard. That part of the park was clear cut when work on the purple line began.

Zack asked about updates on the tree ordinance...what are next steps? The ordinance is in review with Leslie Riddle, will go to committees, and then up to Legal. Dawn will send us a clean copy, without track changes, of the ordinance as it was submitted.

Part of Healthy trees Hyattsville is stalled in Legal. The educational and tree care portion will be moving forward with Casey Trees this coming fall.

30% of the Hyattsville tree canopy has been lost due to a combination of construction, climate, and disease. We need to educate people on the value of planting more trees.

Please submit agenda items to be discussed at the next meeting.

The link for the meetings comes from the city clerk. Please copy and paste it into your calendar. The link is the same for each meeting in 2024. The link on the agenda is for attendees, not panelists.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm

The next meeting will be held on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6TH, AT **7:30** PM.