
CITY OF HYATTSVILLE SHADE TREE BOARD

MINUTES | APRIL 3, 2024

PRESENT: Randy Fletcher, Zack Dorner, Kathryn Kutzner, Deborah Taylor

ABSENT: Taylor Johnson, Gloria Felix-Thompson

STAFF: Dawn Taft

VISITOR(s): Kyla Gallagher, Dawn Bohls

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

1) **Approval of the February 2024 Minutes**

Dawn made suggestions to one paragraph and spotted a typo. With these changes, Randy motioned to approve the minutes, Zach seconded the motion and the February minutes were unanimously approved.

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

TP24-005 and TP24-006 were outstanding last month and were recently approved. There were six additional permits approved this month (TP24-007 through 0013), and three permits that are outstanding (014-16). Three trees were illegally removed, but only one was of the size that needed a permit. IL-001 was 88 inches. The vendor was stopped by Dawn but came back the next day to illegally “finish the job.” They did not have a license to work in MD. The shade tree board voted unanimously to fine the homeowner the maximum \$950 dollar fine.

*A discussion pursued about guidelines for replacement trees if there was no permit. We couldn't find the language in the ordinance, but it may be there. Zack pointed out 112-6a-3. We may need to add or clarify language, and we should **add this as a discussion/agenda item for the May meeting.***

Kathryn asked about the timeline for replacement? Dawn Bohls mentioned in the chat that “the timeline is 180 days for replacement, but Dawn T. is right that the replacement only applies when there's a permit.”

Zack mentioned that volunteers had removed invasive vines at his neighbor's house. Dawn encouraged him to take photos so we can see what the vines look like in a few months as they die.

3) **Potential Activities**

Dawn spoke to Lesley and as an advisory board we can plan an event if it doesn't require city funds/using staff or tax payer money. If we want to hold an event that would cost money, we need to plan early in January and propose while the budget is being worked on. It's now too late for anything in 2024.

Dawn has a conference call with Jared to see how he may be of help to the tree board. She provided Tayler the name of the Urban Forrester for DC.

When the county comes up with a plan/DSP, they have to make certain requirements. We need to know what the guidelines are and how they could be changed.

The board should develop a list of questions about things that we want to learn about such as the county requirements relating to tree planting.

Gloria sent information for the champion tree project, but we tabled this until 2025, since no funds have been set aside for it. We could get staff training on how to measure so we can help out when we need to inspect for champion trees.

Dawn recommended going on a tree tour.

Zack talked about the meet and greet at Street car 82. We could have a table and chat with people on a Wednesday evening in the summer. We can keep our options open. Kathryn suggested Earth Day, which is a couple weeks away....a simple happy hour. Goal is engagement and informing people about the board. Zack will email Mark at Streetcar to see if something near earth week is possible. Kyla mention that June 5 is *World Environment Day*, and Dawn Bohls mentioned that it is *Love a Tree Day* on May 16th. We decided to target a time on the 15th or 16th for the activity.

Randy spoke about an event at Hitching Post Hill...a Tree tour and discussion with Horticulturalist Joe Luebke. It would be a nice way to get people acquainted with the tree board and could be a nice event. No costs would be involved.

4) **Discuss idea of a tree ordinance document in real estate contracts**

We briefly talked about inserting the ordinance in real estate packages. Taylor has brought this up in the past. Takoma park has this. When you buy a house the information about tree permits is there. Perhaps we could discuss this idea again with Danny Scaible or someone else on the council. We all think it's a good idea

5) **New Business**

Kathryn asked if trees are being planted at youth center. Yes, there is a design plan and there will be trees planted.

Dawn looked into planting trees along the trolley trail. Both sides will be filled in with trees if possible

Dawn talked about planting trees May 4th at the duck pond. She is holding openings to help plant trees for Hyattsville residents. It's a great family activity. Registration will be coming.

There are several Healthy Trees Hyattsville events in the works for Fall (Sept, Oct, Nov). All about trees, tree pruning, and a tree care. Let's help spread the word to get good attendance.

We should all visit the Emerson Food Forest.

6) **Public Comment**

Kyla introduced herself and said "hello."

Dawn also said "hello." And wants to represent ward 5 on the tree board.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 pm

The next meeting will be held on **WEDNESDAY, MAY 1ST, AT 7:30 PM.**