

TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG
SHADE TREE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

June 9th, 2022

The Shade Tree Commission meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Robyn George. A moment of silence was offered followed by an Oath of Allegiance.

Chairwoman George stated “adequate notice of this meeting has been provided indicating the time and place of the meeting in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975 by advertising a Notice in The Star Ledger and The Express-Times Warren County Zone and by posting a copy on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building”.

Roll Call:

Present: Chairwoman Robyn George, Vice-Chairman Ben George and Member Gregory Blackwood.

Absent: Member Tammy Pita

Old Business:

1. The approval of April 14th, 2022 minutes have been postponed and to be placed on next month’s meeting agenda for approval.
2. Plaque for Salem Oak sapling.

Chairwoman George explains that Secretary Marconi had done some pricing and online research for an outdoor plaque to be placed near the sapling. Chairwoman George mentions that there is approximately \$300.00 remaining in the budget for the year. Clerk Beth Dilts interjects and explains that she had discussed with the finance office that the money spent for the Earth Day clean-up signs should not have been charged under the Shade Tree Commission’s budget due to the fact that Mr. Michael Sazanov had approached the Council previously with the idea of this event and requested to be granted permission to run the clean-up. Clerk Dilts then mentions how after the fact, The Shade Tree Commission had offered to help with the clean-up. Clerk Dilts further speaks on how she is working with the finance department to figure out a solution to not have the charge against the Commission’s budget. Chairwoman George expresses her appreciation for looking into the matter. After discussion of the plaque/stone for the sapling, Chairwoman George makes a motion to follow through with purchase of the plaque.

Motion by: Chairwoman George

Seconded by: Vice-Chairman George.

Roll call

AYES: Chairwoman George, Vice-Chairman George, Member Blackwood.

NAYS: None

3. Arbor Day sapling planting.

Chairwoman George explains that she has checked on the tree recently and it is doing fabulously. She also mentions that the Brownies had attended the planting and it was a very nice educational event.

4. Earth Day clean-up.

Chairwoman George speaks about how all of the signs that were placed out for the clean-up have now been removed. She mentions that she received a lovely thank you letter from the Township for their participation, that was very much appreciated. She also mentions that she personally sent out thank you letters to LMR Disposal, Home Depot, and The Lopatcong Creek Association for their participation and sponsorship during the clean-up. Discussion continues on how well the event went and she would like to plan another clean-up in the fall focusing on the stormwater creek, storm water basins and the Lopatcong Creek.

5. Member Terms.

Clerk Beth Dilts begins speaking about having a set of terms for the members and had sent them to attorney Katrina Campbell for approval. Clerk Dilts indicated that Katrina had further given the approval.

Chairwoman George asks the members if there is anything pertaining to old business that needs discussion. Vice-Chairman George mentions that the next fall clean-up event should be on placed on the next July meeting agenda to be further discussed.

New Business:

1. Filing for 2023 NJUCF grant.

Chairwoman George, speaks on the proposal of the grant, mentioning that the three members attended a call that took place on June 2nd and that the final proposal is due July 8th . Chairwoman speaks about how they plan to submit for the tree resiliency grant which offers up to \$50,000.00 dollars. Chairwoman George says, the grant will cover a town tree inventory, the

acquisition of GIS software to document it, as well as help maintain the tree inventory going forward. Chairwoman George then mentions that Brian Week's participation is critically required in this process due to needing to partner with the DPW. Chairwoman further explains how beneficial the tree inventory and GIS software will be to the DPW in the future for maintenance purposes. Brian Week's agrees to participate and meet with Chairwoman to further discuss the details. Chairwoman George extends the invitation of the meeting to Member Gregory Blackwood as well. She then continues to mention that in preparation of the meeting she will put together a list of things she will need from Mr. Weeks. Chairwoman George explains that with this grant, the Commission will need to prove and provide a 25% in-kind matching, which will come from volunteer hours, secretary hours, engineer hours, as well as DPW participation hours. Chairwoman George then notes that an RFP would be necessary to contract with a company to perform the work. Chairwoman George mentions she has been in contact with two companies thus far, Davey and Arbor Pro USA. She has contacted them in order to have an idea what the cost will be for proposal submission purposes.

Further explanation continues from Chairwoman George about the submission of the grant application. She hands out packets to the members and Brian Weeks. The Packet contains information of what she has gathered for the application thus far. She mentions all the information that will be necessary for the application that needs to be submitted by July 8th. Chairwoman George then asks member Gregory Blackwood if he is interested in being the project manager for this project and that she is required to designate a project manager. She explains that this is a two-year project and continues to extend the offer to Mr. Blackwood if he is willing to commit himself to the position and if so, she would like to nominate him. Member Blackwood replies by saying he is all for it. Chairwoman George explains a bit further into the details and expectations of the position. The Commission members continue conversation on how they will work together during this two-year project along with working with the DPW. They also discuss the many benefits that the tree inventory and project will offer to the town, residents and employees. Discussion continues between the Commission, Brian weeks and Clerk Dilts about future areas that need tree maintenance and possible ways of community outreach, education and other efficient ways to work together to keep areas maintained.

Chairwoman George concludes the meeting by saying that all new business has been covered.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Chairwoman Robyn George, seconded by Member Gregory Blackwood, All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayla Marconi
Commission Secretary

