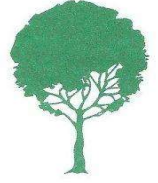




Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission



100 First Avenue • Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716
 Tel: (732) 291-1444 • Fax: (732) 291-9725

September 14, 2022 - 7:00 PM

Meeting Held at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall

1. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ken Grasso at 7 p.m. in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law.

Present: Fred Callis, Ken Grasso, Angus Rennie, Mary Trank, Janet Grote, Ellen O’Dwyer; Lori Hohenleitner (council liaison), Brian Dougherty (council liaison).

Not present: Bill Thorne

2. The July minutes were approved. Fred Callis made a motion to accept the July minutes; Ellen O’Dwyer seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

3. Correspondence: none.

4. Treasurer's report was presented by Ken Grasso as submitted by Bill Thorne.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Opening balance: | \$16,055.35 (June 14, 2022) |
| Expenses | 0 |
| Total deposits | \$10,020.00 (Borough (\$10,000)/resident (\$20 donation) |
| Closing balance | \$26,075.35 (September 14, 2022) |

5. Approval of Treasurer’s report: Mary Trank made a motion to accept the July treasurer’s report; Ken Grasso seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

6. Old Business:

a. With resident Ashley Cruz’s input, Ken Grasso has updated the Fall Planting list. Ms. Cruz is a landscape architect and has been invaluable during this process. During a discussion of the Fall planting project, Mr. Grasso expressed thanks to Superintendent of Public Works Jimmy Phillips and the department employees who watered the existing trees throughout the summer. He proposed buying lunch for the crew who did the watering. Councilwoman Hohenleitner suggested buying lunch for the entire public works department and leaving it to Mr. Phillips to manage the details.

Mr. Grasso made a motion to provide lunch to the Atlantic Highlands Department of Public Works employees in recognition of their work this summer and continuing assistance in helping Shade Tree complete its many projects; Angus Rennie seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

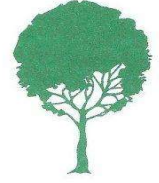
b. Fred Callis provided an update on the Tribute Tree Plaque Modernization project with Ken Grasso contributing information about the biographies in progress and those still to be written.

c. Shade Tree Commission members were present at FilmOneFest along with members of other borough environmental groups, including the Environmental Commission and Atlantic Highlands Gardening for Wildlife, whose ambassador, resident Marilyn Sherfen, encouraged attendees to educate themselves about how to certify



Borough of Atlantic Highlands

Shade Tree Commission



100 First Avenue • Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716
Tel: (732) 291-1444 • Fax: (732) 291-9725

their gardens as National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitats. We discussed how Shade Tree Commission supports this and the various “green” initiatives in town. Ellen O’Dwyer, coordinator for Atlantic Highlands’ participation in the “Sustainable New Jersey” program, discussed the hard work of the municipality’s “green team” in working toward recertification.

d. Ellen O’Dwyer said she had done further research on possible expansion of the number of members of the Shade Tree Commission. The number of members on Shade Tree Commissions vary from one municipality to another. In some cases, the secretary is a commissioner; in other cases, the secretary is not a commissioner. Ms. O’Dwyer suggested adopting language similar to that used in Colts Neck: “The Commission should consist of no less than five and no more than seven members” plus alternates. She explained this would give the mayor flexibility in appointments. The group discussed again the rationale in requesting the addition of more members: the commission is an active one, with substantial field work. Ms. O’Dwyer is going to follow up in writing with the council liaisons on proposed language to bring to Mayor and Council to request a change in the current ordinance.

New Business:

a. An August 30th meeting with Borough Administrator Rob Ferragina and others occurred. Ken Grasso reported that he, Councilwoman Hohenleitner, and resident Ashley Cruz attended a meeting called by Mr. Ferragina in response to Ms. Cruz’s public comment to the Mayor and Council that residents would benefit from education about maintenance and preservation of trees on their properties.

Mr. Grasso recounted that earlier this year Ms. Cruz told Shade Trade about her dismay at coming upon the removal of a healthy tree from a resident’s property. After bringing her concern to Shade Tree, Ms. Cruz attended a Mayor and Council meeting, repeated her concern, and called for enhanced education for residents. Mr. Ferragina organized the August 30th roundtable.

Mr. Grasso reported that those present at the meeting included representatives of several borough departments: public works, code enforcement, building, and zoning as well as the borough clerk and the borough engineer. Councilwoman Hohenleitner reported a discussion occurred about the possibility of a hazardous tree survey. Tree removal permits that call for replacement with a new tree(s) for each tree removed were discussed. Also discussed was a review of existing “tree ordinances” to determine if they need to be updated.

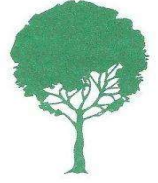
b. A discussion occurred about the Spotted Lanternfly. Shade Tree is going to recommend that the borough post an updated link with educational information for residents. As the Spotted Lanternfly will return next summer, we will revisit this topic prior to then.

c. A discussion occurred about the Many Mind Creek remediation project, specifically, the site’s newly planted trees. Ken Grasso said New Jersey Natural Gas is fully responsible for the property for five years. He asked Councilman Dougherty for an update on the borough’s perspective on its - and specifically Shade Tree’s - relationship with NJNG vis-a-vis the health of the trees on the property. Councilman Dougherty said that while NJNG has no obligation to respond to Shade Tree’s questions, we might consider sending a letter from the chairpersons of Shade Tree acknowledging that with the excessive heat it was a difficult summer to keep young trees alive, and include a request for information about their plan to remove trees that have died and their plan to plant replacements.

d. Portable watering tanks - Ken Grasso reported that Bill Thorne researched portable watering tanks and found additional options to add to those discussed at previous meetings. We are concerned about the Tribute trees and the Fall planting trees scheduled to be planted, and the watering necessary to help keep these trees alive next year. While residents will be responsible for watering new trees planted on their properties, young trees on municipal property will need watering. With the installation and replenishment of tree watering rings at the base of trees on



Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission



100 First Avenue • Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716
Tel: (732) 291-1444 • Fax: (732) 291-9725

municipal property, DPW worked to keep young trees alive during this past summer with weeks of extremely high temperature and little rain. As more young trees will require care next summer, Mr. Grasso said we would return to the question of watering tanks. Councilwoman Hohlenheitner said Colts Neck has a watering truck that we may be able to enter into a shared services agreement with. She said perhaps Atlantic Highlands could supply the water and Colts Neck could supply the truck. She said it is unclear if the need is great enough for a shared services agreement, but that is a possibility. Mr. Grasso said that Mr. Thorne said he was aware of a town that hired a college student to water trees for the summer at a cost to the town of \$4,000.

e. CEUs - Ellen O'Dwyer asked whether members of the commission need to complete a certain number of CEUs by the end of 2022. Ken Grasso said yes, and Bill Thorne will send out additional information about CEUs.

f. Councilman Dougherty said that the Planning Board has voted in favor of requiring digital copies of applications before they come before the board. These will be available for review by the members of Shade Tree.

Public Comment: None at this time. Resident Ashley Cruz's comments have been incorporated above.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. Angus Rennie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fred Callis seconded the motion. All voted in favor.