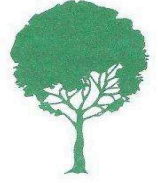




Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission



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

Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC)

Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall

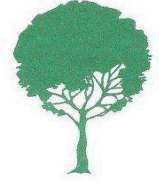
December 11, 2024, 7pm

1. The monthly began at 7:05 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
 - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Bill Thorne (virtual); Vito Colasurdo, James Murphy (tardy) (council liaisons)
 - b. Guests: Shari Spero, AH tree expert/consultant (virtual)
 - c. Laura Redman declined the position
2. Minutes – FG motions to approve November meeting minutes; JG seconds; all in favor
3. Correspondence –
 - a. Two removal requests (for two trees (using the old form), and for four trees)
4. Treasurer's Report –
 - a. \$19,798.99 is opening balance
 - b. Expense of \$2,332.00 (for mulch and public tree planting)
 - c. Deposit of \$385.00 for a resident tree planting request through Fernbrook
 - d. \$17,851.99 is closing balance
 - e. JG motions to approve; BT seconds; all in favor
5. Old Business –
 - a. Shari Spero (SS) introduces herself, she is our liaison tree expert working with AH, worked on updating and revising tree ordinance
 - i. She will advise on future tree removal requests that need additional insight (she has reviewed two thus far (confirming dead tree status and another that was more about reviewing/auditing the process)
 - ii. It isn't feasible for her to come out and invoice AH every time a permit needs review
 - b. Community Forestry Plan:
 - a. We asked SS about the Green Communities Grant
 - i. It is available to and handled by STCs via SAGE (The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) SAGE system for submitting grants for the New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry Program (NJUCF)



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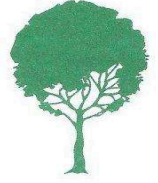


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- ii. Maximum grant is \$20K and town must match 25% of the grant, if AH receives a grant of \$20K the borough will pay \$5K out of STC budget
- iii. Deadlines are rolling and the state hopes to fund everyone that applies
- iv. The borough must pay the full amount upfront and the grant reimburses
- v. SS doesn't believe that you need to have a finalized contract ready to apply
- vi. FG will look into grant applications and work with AC
- b. We have three proposals for the CFP, SS infers that Bill Brash will not be as good as Paul Cowhie) but is more positive about the other two companies; SS recommends using a company who can both complete the inventory and create the CFP
 - i. Richview did original inventory and is president of NJSTC
 - ii. AC is circling back to Davey: Adjust scope/pricing to inventorying public land only as well as hazard trees (should lower estimate)
 - iii. AC is following up with Bartlett about their available services
 - iv. We will need to explain to the borough why we will want to go with a more expensive provider
- c. Most of mapping you can get from websites
- d. History section has changed: The state wants more on the history of STCs (volunteers, annual accomplishment reports)
- e. Previous CFPs were a bit more esoteric, required goals and objectives without budgets being factored in; the new requirements are about real inventory, real costs, real data (not wishlists)
- f. Focus on areas the borough manages and the trees in those spaces
- c. Species List and First Avenue upgrades:
 - a. BT is working on the list and shared a draft; FG will create a draft of a finished version for the next meeting
 - b. AC looking at other regional lists and reached out to county commissioner (Sue Kiley) for any new county lists
 - i. There have been no meetings since 2020
 - ii. Heard back from Elias at the county's tree division and had a conversation about First Avenue tree replacement and soil volume; he was receptive and wants to see a plan and meet
 - iii. He said they will work on a plan and approval with us
 - iv. A new county list is awaiting final signatures and should be available soon
- d. Summer Tree Watering: VC talked to Rob and we are waiting for an update/confirmation as Rob is concerned that Jim Phillips/Public works is over extended



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- a. Year in Review!
 - i. 1,900 newsletters distributed
 - ii. 25.5 CEUs attained (only 20 are required)
 - iii. 3 CORE trained members (AC, BT, JG)
 - iv. 200 saplings distributed
 - v. 22 trees planted
 - vi. 1 ordinance passed
 - vii. We need more core trained members, AC/BT are checking for seminars and will keep FG and BS posted
 1. FG, as paid secretary, could be the required borough employee w/ CORE training,
 2. Should Rich Colangelo get CORE training? He plans to join our meeting in January or February to discuss the process and experience with tree requests and the new ordinance
 - b. 2025: CFP is a heavy lift and will need a lot of volunteer effort, all hands on deck, delegation
 - i. We need to improve our community outreach/involvement (should we partner with the elementary school)
 - ii. Talk to Blake about the development of the ERI (Environmental Resources Index) for the Environmental Commission about their process
 - iii. The new master plan is coming in two years so the ERI and the CFP being up to date is essential
 - iv. Laura Redman decided not to join the STC and we should have more members: Does anyone know anyone? Should we put out a post on Facebook inviting residents to check us out (the borough repost and we can individually share)
 - c. Monthly Meeting Date Change: Council meetings may be moving to second and fourth Wednesdays, VC will confirm soon; either way we will move our meetings to every third Wednesday (next meeting 01/15/2025), all present voted in favor of this change)we need to let BS know)
6. Public comment (none)
7. Adjournment: JG motions to adjourn the meeting; AC seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:01pm; the next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 7pm