

The Minutes of the **Shade Tree Commission** of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **March 18th, 2024** at 7:00 p.m.in Room 108.

THIS MEETING IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE "OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT" AS ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY E-MAILING THE ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS TO THE WESTFIELD LEADER, THE UNION COUNTY LOCAL SOURCE, THE STAR LEDGER, AND TAP INTO CRANFORD, BY POSTING SUCH ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE ON A BULLETIN BOARD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING RESERVED FOR SUCH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THE FILING OF SAID NOTICE WITH THE TOWNSHIP CLERK OF CRANFORD. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING.

Present: Jim Nichnadowicz
Mylissa Bauman
Ben Cohen
Deputy Mayor Terrance Curran
Superintendent Erik Hastrup
Gail M. Rodney
Michael Venditti
Patricia Vogler
John Zebrowski

Absent: Eileen Martines

Other: Denise Alvarez arrived at 7:04 p.m.

DISCUSSION

Shade Tree Commission Chair, John Zebrowski executed Rollcall, establishing a quorum, meaning anything voted on, would be able to be approved. John mentioned that missing would be Eileen Martines and wasn't sure if Denise Alvarez would be able to make it, based on an email he received.

John asked for approval of the February 19th meeting minutes, which were sent out electronically to everyone by Superintendent Erik Hastrup, Commission Member, Ben Cohen, asked about the cost of \$1600.00 for crane rental explanation, of what that included. Superintendent Hastrup, explained that the cost was for the crane, crane operator and climber. DPW cleans up what is brought down to the ground. John then called for a motion to accept the minutes, Commission Member Jim Nichnadowicz accepted the motion, and Commission Member Mylissa, Bauman seconded

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Bauman, Cohen, Deputy Mayor Curran, Superintendent Hastrup, Venditti, Vogler, Zebrowski, Rodney, Nichnadowicz

Nay: None Abstained: None Absent: Alvarez, Martines

John, then discussed in house Commission Guidance, or internal housekeeping. In regard to future absenteeism, Commission members should notify either John or Superintendent Hastrup, if they will not be present, at future meetings. He talked about sending out e-mails to the commission in the future, by using Action or No Action in the subject line. And that emails be of professional nature, and that they can be made public. He also talked about a question that was brought up about sub committees having authority to make financial decisions, and if any future sub committees are formed, that will be discussed.

Sub Committee Reporting- Electronic Communications- Denise Alvarez and Pat Vogler presented their report about getting together with the Townships Information officer, making changes to the web page, to educate the public better. Get the word out. They both mentioned about getting a banner made, after the students at CHS came up with a suitable logo for the STC. This banner would then be used at street fairs, possibly hung at the gazebo across from the Municipal Bldg. Question was asked about how and where to purchase the banner, when

the time comes. Superintendent Hastrup recommended Weaver Printing as a vendor in the town Edmunds system. John and Erik both spoke about that Floraphile Group, exhibit at that Library starting April 1st. John and Erik were both going to be providing material the next day to the group for display. The 3x5 display cabinet will be available the whole month, and will include the info about the webpage, the STC, tree of the month etc. Discussion took place regarding purchasing and how the STC can do so in between meetings. Mike Venditti and Ben Cohen talked about other commissions (DMC, Environmental) being able to spend on smaller purchases. Erik closed out this discussion, by mentioning that the bulletin board inside the Municipal Bldg., has information posted about STC agenda, Lantern Flys., and Emerald Ash Borer.

Sub Committee Tree Nursey- Mylissa Bauman spoke about the costs involved to get the nursely up and running, both short and long term. Erik Hastrup then talked about the quotes he received to install a 40 x 40 ft fence and a water supply source, for the nursery. Discussion continued among the members, about the size needed for a path inside, a place for tools, and spacing of trees. Jim Nichnadowicz felt that this was more of a "long Term" process, and that temporary fencing might do the trick for the time being. He mentioned that Paramus has a tree nursery that is 2 acres big, and has people dedicated to it operation. The consensus was that a temporary fence was the way to go, at this time. John recapped the discussion, by reminding everyone Dreyers will hold the trees for us, as we plant. A temporary fence was a cheaper option, considering the budget that is in place, which should allow for more trees to be planted.

Sub Committee Tree Sourcing- Pat Vogler spoke about a realistic goal for tree planting in 2024. With the 32 trees going to be planted in the spring, if STC goal is 100 trees, then it may be tough to "Tie In" the DPW to assist with planting in the Fall of 2024, with their workload. The other challenge is paying for a crane to remove trees that require outside help. John then mentioned based on the Core Training classes he is taking, having a tree planting plan down the road. Denise mentioned about having a Google form for residents to fill out, so their request can go to the bottom of the list. Ben Cohen talked about the form that is on the webpage. A discussion continued among everyone about the planting of the 32 spring trees, who gets what, where, wires, ornamental. The list of trees that are being purchased was to be distributed to all the members. Arborist John Linson was asked about the cost of inventory of trees in town. He indicated a rough cost of \$3.50/ tree which based on 5,000 trees, could be \$18k or more. John reiterated that a tree nursely is difficult to maintain. He talked about tree planting vendors, and mentioned SJC in Cranford as one of the best. Bare root most cost effective way, but time sensitive.

Sub Committee Finances- Erik Hastrup spoke about the temporary budget, that is currently in place, which is \$5000.00. The current balance is approximately \$4100.00. The trees purchased through Dreyers will come out of DPW line item of \$10,000.00. Deputy Mayor Curran explained the Township should have the Budget in place for the first meeting in April. The STC final budget number for 2024 is \$47,700.00.

Tree Management Flow Diagram- John presented a diagram for something to work off of in the future, to help with process of logging the tree history/location. Stimulate something the STC can work on over the next 6 months.

Arbor Day Preparations

Discussion began about planning for Arbor Day preparation for April 26th or 27th. Planting of at least 1 tree in a Township park either day. Location and tree selection to be decided upon before that day. Photo shoot and a press release about that day. John asked for someone to work with Erik on the preparations, Gail Rodney volunteered. Ben Cohen and Denise Alvarez asked about getting Girl Scouts involved. Jim Nichnadowicz mentioned it could be the day after, that Saturday. Proclamation to be read at Township meeting on April 23rd.

Shade Tree Metrics- A.K.A Key Performance Indicators, John talked about it being similar to Tree Management Flow Diagram. Automating future tree removals, tree plantings, tree trimmings. Discussion continued about tying everything into a central data. Tree Inventory report from 2016/2017 was brought up about getting it on a google drive/drop box/shared point site, to have access.

750 Walnut- Erik mentioned that Hartz Mountain was to present plans soon about the replacement of the trees that were removed. The Planning Board rep will notify Erik when that plan comes in. John mentioned based on the training he is taking, that the STC will need to come up with penalties for future violators of removing trees without going through proper channels.

2023 Tier A MS4 DEP ST Ordinance Requirements-Arborist John Linson spoke about the DEP requirements that need to be incorporated into the Townships Shade Tree Ordinance, which he made the necessary changes for consideration. He referred to setting up a tree fund for violations, that can be used to buy trees in the future. Its also going to expand the STC responsibilities. Talked about sending it to the State 1st for approval, before it would be adopted. Follow up will occur with Deputy Mayor Curran after consulting with the Township Attorney.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Michael Astone of 23 Berkeley Place – Recognizes that the STC has a full plate. The STC needs permitting, mentioned John Linson is very knowledgeable, and important to have on board, for assistance, for the town over 20 years. Mentioned he will provide a list of old trees in town that he has noticed during his walks.

Mr. Mike Bauman of 515 Gallows Hill Road- Temporary fencing makes more sense at this time for the nursery. Overthinking the mandate that the State has required to be part of Ordinances.

PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS

Superintendent Hastrup brought up the cost for a crane each time for use is \$1600.00, and that at least 6 times it will be needed, not including emergencies. That money will come out of the \$47,700.00.

Chair Zebrowski mentioned that the minutes will not be posted on the website, until after each meeting, when they are approved.

ADJORN

On motion of Chair Zebrowski, seconded by Pat Vogler and passed, the Shade Tree Commission adjourned at 900p.m.