

# **FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION**

## **Minutes of the April 24, 2104 Regular Monthly Meeting**

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Jean Ambrose at 7:06 p.m. in accord with the Open Public Meetings Act.

### **2. Roll Call**

#### **Members Attending**

Jean Ambrose, Robert Hudak, Sara Malone, Carol Parker, Arnold Schmidt, Christopher Williams (arrived at 7:46).

#### **Members Absent**

Jeff Baumley, Jason Harkins, Carl Hauck - Municipal Staff

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of the March 27, 2014 meeting were approved as amended.

### **4. Financial Report**

Chris reported that as of March 25, 2014 the balance in the Tree Fund was \$84, 626.09.

### **5. First Opening of the Meeting to the Public**

No public present.

### **6. Discussion on Community Forestry Management Plan (draft)**

Sara Malone, who is the Commission liaison with the CFMP consultants, collected comments on the Plan draft and reported that she will compile the comments and distribute the edited draft electronically in approximately 2 weeks. Discussion will then take place at the May meeting.

### **7. Arbor Day Celebration**

Carol reported that the Arbor Day plantings will take place on Friday, April 25 at Pine Grove and Franklin Park Schools. Chris, and Sara will assist. Each school will receive 50 tree seedlings, soil and containers supplied by Jeff for initial planting since the seedlings are too small to install in the ground. Three bare root trees, 2 October Glory red maples and 1 Sweet Bay magnolia will also be planted at each of the schools. Carol noted that she will have two members of her National Resources Conservation Services staff on site, a soil scientist and a PR woman as well.

## **8. Report on Tree Sale**

The following tree sale information was reported by Chair Christopher Williams:

Tree Species Sold – 16 October Glory Maple, 19 Redbud, 3 Green Vase Zelcova, 16 Sweet Bay Magnolia

Costs Collected - \$1,785

Chris announced that unsold trees would be planted by Public Works in the Memorial Forest off Cedar Grove and Amwell roads.

A discussion of the site at which the sale was held ensued when Carol Parker, who attend the sale, remarked on the unsuitability of the Township dump for the distribution of the trees. Residents picking up the trees had to wait on long lines along with residents carrying in trash and recyclables and had to maneuver in terrible mud. Carol suggested that the Commission identify another location for the sale next year, perhaps the mulch collection center. Sara Malone, who is renting the Hageman House on South Middlebush, a Township property, suggested utilizing the barn on that property, a suggestion that was applauded as another good alternative if the Commission can obtain approvals to change the current site.

There was also discussion of the cost of the trees to residents which might be more expensive than, for example, Home Depot, although the quality of the trees that Jeff obtains is superior to what a Home Depot would offer.

Another suggestion was to sell the trees to residents at cost though not collecting a small extra fee may deprive the Commission of the opportunity of offering residents seminars on pruning, tree selection, etc. if the Commission should decide to do so since the money collected from developers for tree replacement can only be spent on trees per Chapter 222 of the Town Code. Chris believes that the Township does distinguish monies collected from residents in the tree sales from monies collected from developers for tree placements.

Jean Ambrose suggested that the Chair appoint a committee to plan for next year's Tree Sale and several members offered themselves as interested in such a committee: Carol Parker, Robert Hudak, and Jean Ambrose. Jean also suggested that member Jason Harkins be recruited since his special expertise as a landscape architect would be helpful and she thought he very well might be interested in serving. Thinking of next year's sale, Sara and Carol suggested that we post pictures of the trees we are offering for sale on our website for residents' information. Arnie reported that the Environmental Commission's website has links to other relevant websites as something the STC could do. Chris reminded members that planning must begin early, especially for submissions to the Township's newsletter which should be done in October.

Bob suggested advertising the sale with lawn signs as another way to inform residents of the program.

## **Tree Guards**

Chris reported that the tree guards were not distributed this year and he hadn't determined if Carl Hauck had actually purchased them. Chris said that next year we will be sure to distribute them.

## **10. Second Opening of the Meeting to the Public**

No public present.

## **11. Dendrology**

In the absence of Jeff Baumley, our tree specialist, there was no dendrology instruction.

## **12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean L. Ambrose

Secretary, *Pro Tem*