

Avon Lake Citizens Tree Commission
March 8, 2023, 7pm , Old Firehouse

Roll Call:

- **Voting Members:** Amanda Byrnes; Terry Robison; Councilperson Jennifer Fenderbosch, Urban Forester (Vacant); Public Works Director Kevin Brubaker
- **Absent:** Michael Thain (excused due to illness)
- **Guests:** Susan Dewhist, Holly Kowalski, Marty Lastovja

Quorum: Yes

Minutes of Prior Meetings:

- Minutes from February 8, 2023
 - Motion to accept Jennifer Fenderbosch 1st; Amanda Brynes 2nd: passed 4-0

City Council Report: Urban Forester position will be reconsidered in April/May when the tax revenues are evaluated by the Finance Committee

Urban Forester Report: Position not yet filled.

Old Business

- **Arbor Day 2023 (4/28)** – Terry Robison provided an update. There was discussion about the process to receive a donation from Petitti’s for the tree that will be planted at St. Joseph Roman Catholic School. Last year an Arbor Day tree was planted at Troy Intermediate School. St. Joseph’s School plans to celebrate Arbor Day with an outdoor ceremony on April 28th at 9:45am with Mayor Zilka providing a Proclamation. Jennifer Fenderbosch will coordinate the writing of the Proclamation and Mayor Zilka’s invitation to present. Jen Miller with the Communications and Technology Department will coordinate Public Relations about the event. Kevin Brubaker confirmed that the seedlings were ordered with delivery expected at the Service Garage on April 26th. The bio-bags were already delivered to the Service Department. Lubrizol donated funding that was received by Finance. Jennifer Fenderbosch will print the tree identification/how to plant and care cards, hole punch, and thread them with twine prior to April 27th when volunteers will arrive at the Service Department to prepare the Seedlings for distribution. Jennifer Fenderbosch will contact the Garden Club for volunteers. Terry will contact the EAAB, and Key Club through Marty Paton. Volunteers will arrive at the South Service Garage at 2pm to tag, fill bags, and fill buckets in preparation for the next day’s Arbor Day event. Kevin Brubaker will have Jeff Smith in charge of setting up tables, providing the needed buckets that were used last year to distribute the seedlings to the schools, and water to hydrate the seedlings. They will be stored at the Service Department overnight until delivered the next day to the schools by the start of school. Seedlings will be given to all 5th graders in Avon Lake with 262 students at Troy and 32students at St. Joe’s Any leftover seedlings will be handed out for free at the Garden Club’s May 13th Plant Sale at Goddard School.
- **Public Outreach** – The Tree Commission shall provide a speaker at the Avon Lake Public Library, July 11, 7:00 pm. Robert Brand, CCBOH shall present “The Importance of Trees” aka “Trees: Evolution, Ecosystems, Health and Climate Change”.
- **2023 North Coast Urban Forest Conference** – summary/discussion
 - **Redlining:** Can still see the effects throughout the USA including Ohio where properties that suffured from Redlining people due to race/poverty still today have less urban trees.
 - **Tree Equity score:** [Tree Equity Score](#) A map of tree cover in any city in the United States is too often a map of race and income that goes back to the days of Redlining.

- **Tree Lawns were designed for trees and not grass or snow when early planners provided shade, coolness, and beauty for a City**
- **Trees are the only public infrastructure that appreciates with age**
- **Mark Bays:** Oklahoma Forestry Services Urban Forestry Coordinator Mark Bays is the 2022 recipient of the Larry Kotchman Lifetime Achievement Award as presented by the National Association of State Foresters. In addition to introducing thousands of Oklahomans to forestry principles and forest management tools, Bays has worked closely with the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum for decades to share the story of the Survivor Tree, the American elm that miraculously survived the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. An Elm Tree Survivor Tree's seeds were cultured over time and are flourishing. Families of victims, survivors, and first responders were the first to receive seedlings from seeds from the Survivor Tree. Now people worldwide can plant seedlings from the Survivor Tree to honor those who survive life's difficulties. The National Memorial Museum searched worldwide for a designer for the memorial plaza. Forester Bays was at the table as the urban forester to how to manage and preserve the tree with protection around tree during construction, protect the tree roots, and oversee the selection, site preparation for the additional trees that were added to the plaza.
- **MOTION:** Use the funds in the Education Fund that were not used for the 2023 North Coast Conference to purchase a Survivor Tree seedling to be planted in Avon Lake. Amanda Byrne 1st and Terry Robison 2nd. Voted 3 – 0 Passed.
- **Guest Marty Lastovja stated that in 1980 the city removed trees in tree lawns because they dropped leaves.** It was stated that they were getting in the Stormwater Sewer while the Sewer was on the opposite side of the street. Today the City is striving to follow Urban Forestry and ANSI standards. Policies have changed since Mr. Lastovja's experience.

New Business:

- **Tree Commission Ordinance (1018.04) change recommendations. See the attached draft that will be forwarded to Law Director Ebert who will review and prepare it for submission to the Public Service Committee of Council.**
- **MOTION:** Recommend the revised draft Tree Commission Ordinance 1018.04 to the Public Service Committee for passage: Kevin Brubaker 1st and Terry Robison 2nd. Voted 3-0 passed.
- **MOTION:** Recommend to the Public Service Committee that a language change from "City Arborist" to "Urban Forester" be made in the City Ordinances to bring the City Ordinances up to industry standards. An Arborist is a Laborer versus an Urban Forester is someone with a college degree in Forestry and has a Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ). Terry Robison 1st and Amanda Byrne 2nd. Voted 3-0 passed.

Questions from Guests: Marty Lastovja stated that Trees in the Zoning Code states that dead trees on private property should be removed.

Motion to adjourn: Kevin Brubaker 1st and Amanda Byrne 2nd. Voted 3-0 passed.

Next meeting: April 12, 2023, 7:00 pm, Old Firehouse.