

Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission

January 10, 2024

Call to Order at 7:00 PM

Roll Call:

- Present: Randy Santoro, Al Werner, Jack Gray, Kate Creegan, Gregory Axt, AJ Laferrera, Nick Fetchko, Tom Nicoletti, Ana Duarte McCarthy
- Absent: Madhu Anna

Introductions

Election of 2024 Officers & Committee Assignments

- Re-elected Randy as Chair, Al as Vice-Chair and assigned Al to the Tree Protection Committee

Public Comments:

- none.

Previous Month's Minutes

- November and December minutes approved by attendees.

Bills/Correspondence

- None.

Arbor Day / Charter Day

- Next Charter Day will be May 18, 2024

Education Report

- Randy discussed the Shade Tree Commission mission and responsibilities, the Annual Report, The Community Forestry Plan. We will discuss annual goals at February meeting.
- Randy will apply for the Tree Recovery Program for 2024 Arbor Day trees. Plan is to distribute on April 26 in conjunction with the Environmental Center.
- Randy mentioned the CEU credit requirements for Tree City USA annual application.
- Al will be attending "Turf" seminars, and he and Nick will attend the NJAISA conference in March.

Tree Removals/Prunings/Plantings

- Tom reported that his folks are busy with storm cleanups, haven't started any pruning.
- Roughly 245 trees were removed in 2023, over 1000 pruned. Somerset County will have their arborist checking trees on County roads.
- 18 trees were planted, 10 Shade Trees and 8 Memorial Trees.

- We will plant the 10 Oak trees in Pleasant Valley Park in the Spring (project with Garden Club).
- JCP&L has Nelson Tree Service working in the Township.

New Business

- Randy shared the zone map, each Commissioner will be assigned a zone.
- Discussed the DEP Grant pertaining to the Spotted Lantern Fly – Jack felt it was not worth applying for since the SLF cannot be controlled without removing their host trees/plants from our town and the surrounding area.
- Randy mentioned the DEP has recommended changes to current tree ordinances, we will discuss at future meetings.
- Randy also reminded all Commissioners to track all volunteer hours for end of year reporting.
- Our 2023 Annual report, Tree City USA application, etc will be sent by Judy for the 1/23 Township Committee meeting.

Adjournment – 8:30 PM
 Next meeting – February 14, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy O’Connell
Secretary

Current Zone Assignments:

Randy	3&2
Al	1&5
Greg	8
Kate	2
Nick	7
Jack	4&6
AJ	5
Madhu	1