

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION

January 27, 2022

7:30 p.m.

Commissioner Colleen Truppo called this Regular and Reorganization meeting of the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. This was a virtual meeting. All Commissioners and the Recording Secretary were present by way of Zoom.

Names	Present	Absent
Colleen Truppo	X	
Kristy Chmura	X	
Fran Drew		X
George Sweetin	X	
Dean Wilson		X
John Tortorella		X
Patrick Florentino	X	
Beverly Klepper	X	
Council Member Karen Koronkiewicz		X
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Commissioner Truppo read aloud the Mission Statement.

Administration of Oaths of Office

Ms. Holler reported that Dean Wilson has signed his Oath of Office document and has sent it in to the Borough Clerk's Office. She has notarized the document. If Mr. Wilson wants, he can still be sworn in at a future meeting.

Public Comment

There was none.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Ms. Chmura made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021 Shade Tree Commission meeting. Mr. Sweetin seconded the motion. The November 18, 2021 minutes were unanimously approved.

Annual Resolutions for 2022

Resolution #22-01

Resolution of the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission

Establishing the Annual Meeting Schedule for the Year 2022

The Commissioners included the meeting date of August 25, 2022 in the list of meeting dates for 2022. Resolution #22-01 was unanimously approved as amended by the Commission.

Resolution #22-02

Resolution Designating the Official Newspapers for the Publication of Legal Notices for the Year 2022

The Commissioners unanimously approved this Resolution designating the Daily Record as the official newspaper for all their advertisements and notices.

Resolution #22-03

Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Election of Officers for the Year 2022

Mr. Sweetin made a motion that Colleen Truppo remain as Chair of the Shade Tree Commission for 2022, and Kristy Chmura remain as Vice. Ms. Chmura seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Chrmn. Truppo asked Ms. Holler if there could be a resolution officially naming a Chatham Borough arborist, other than John Linson.

Ms. Holler answered that she followed the STC agendas of previous ReOrg meetings. There didn't seem to be any resolutions naming an arborist, but it could probably happen. The Borough Administrator could probably give insight on this suggestion.

Chrmn Truppo brought up the idea of naming George Sweetin as the arborist for STC. John Linson was good; however, some times it was hard to get hold of him.

Ms. Holler said she would ask the Borough Administrator, Mr. Williams, about this possibility.

Mr. Sweetin noted that he has a new job, which will keep him closer to Chatham. If the STC needs advice on a tree situation, they could just call him.

Discussion Items

Chrmn. Truppo reviewed the annual reports that the Shade Tree Commission has to submit this year. One of the reports is to the NJ Department of Forestry. Chrmn. Truppo will be sending the budget paperwork for DPW to fill out. The paperwork for the Arbor Day Foundation also has to be done. The DPW secretary can help with the excel list of the new tree plantings. The Arbor Day report is due on February 15th. Chrmn. Truppo will have the report ready for the next Commission meeting. She and the Commissioners briefly reviewed some of the STC's accomplishments in 2021 which could be included in the Forestry report.

Chrmn. Truppo informed Commissioners that they can now watch for free the Shade Tree Federation's classes that were part of the Federation's annual meeting.

On another matter, Mrs. Klepper brought up an earlier topic: the possibility of increasing the fine for illegally cutting down a tree. Is that an actual option?

Chrmn. Truppo suggested that this topic be re-visited at the February meeting when Council Member Koronkiewicz could give input. Chrmn. Truppo felt the fine for illegally taking down a public tree should be very stiff.

Mrs. Klepper pointed out that these types of tree removals are happening more frequently, she would like to see some kind of deterrent put in place.

Mr. Sweetin advised that, in this situation, the Board should focus on shade trees. Some towns do not feel that strongly about the removal of evergreens. Chrmn. Truppo and Ms. Chmura pointed out that the Borough ordinance protects the shrubbery in the public right-of-way. Ms. Chmura felt that evergreens in the public right-of-way should be protected as well as the shade trees. Chrmn. Truppo and Ms. Chmura pulled up the ordinance on the Zoom screen. The ordinance specified “any living woody” tree or plant in public spaces is to be protected.

Commissioners discussed possible places to plant evergreens. Mr. Sweetin noted that unfortunately evergreens planted at intersections make it unsafe for motorists to see around. Evergreens can be planted in public parks.

Related to this, Mr. Sweetin discussed the Borough’s tree street inventory. There are a couple of streets where no rights-of-way do not exist. The trees on the County roads like Watchung Ave. and Fairmount Ave. can be omitted from the inventory. They are not the Borough’s responsibility. Mr. Sweetin will show Chrmn. Truppo a copy of the inventory.

At 8:30 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission meeting will be held on Thursday, February 24, 2022, 7:30 p.m. It will be a virtual meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary