



Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission



100 First Avenue • Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716
 Tel: (732) 291-1444 • Fax: (732) 291-9725

**Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission
 Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall
 January 11, 2023 - 7:00 PM**

1. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ken Grasso at 7 p.m. in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law.

Present: Ashley Cruz, Fred Callis, Ken Grasso, Janet Grote, Angus Rennie, Bill Thorne, Mary Trank; Vito Colasurdo, Lori Hohenleitner (council liaisons).

Not present: Ben Schmoll, Edward Kenney.

2. Angus Rennie made a motion to accept the December 2022 minutes. Fred Callis seconded the motion. Ashley Cruz abstained and all others voted in favor.

3. Correspondence: none.

4. The treasurer's report was presented by Bill Thorne. Fred Callis made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Janet Grote seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Opening balance:		\$24,896.35 (December 15, 2022)
Expenses	tree seedlings	\$540.00
Total deposits		
Closing balance		\$24,356.35 (January 11, 2023)

5. Old Business:

a. Fall Planting Update: The fall planting project has come to a close after more than a year of planning, with 34 trees planted in December. Though one tree was removed by the homeowner shortly after it was planted, the group is pleased to have made Atlantic Highlands home to 33 new shade trees.

Councilwoman Hohenleitner said that at the next night's (January 12) mayor and council meeting, she and Councilman Colasurdo would report the project as complete. Fred Callis asked the councilwoman to include in the report the contributions of Shade Tree commissioners Ken Grasso and Bill Thorne and resident Ashley Cruz. He said, "This has been a major effort, with Ken and Ashley driving it, and with the help of Bill Thorne... this would not have gotten done without them."

b. Councilwoman Hohenleitner said that she and Councilman Brian Dougherty called Randi Zamkotowicz on December 23rd to tell her that the tribute tree in honor of her husband Brian had been planted.

c. Tribute Tree Plaque Modernization Update: The updated borough website is now live and Fred Callis continues to work with the web designer to plan for the upcoming tribute tree pages. Mr. Callis said he would like the group to begin thinking about how to publicize the project when it launches. He said he would like our efforts to also include recognition of the municipality's other "green" organizations.



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d. 256 E. Highland: Councilwoman Hohenleitner said there is no information from the borough to report to the Shade Tree Commission at this time.

e. 2023 Ideas, Projects, etc:

i. Councilwoman Hohenleitner said the borough attorney is addressing the question of whether there can be a “green summit” of various borough commission/committee members hosted by the “green team” in February to discuss “Earth Month” (April). At issue is the Open Public Meetings Act, and avoiding violating it. Details still to be worked out.

ii. Angus Rennie said that the Atlantic Highlands Arts Council is going to be supporting Earth Month and offered the venue as a neutral meeting space.

iii. Regarding Earth Month, Ken Grasso said that the Shade Tree Commission would distribute seedlings, plant an Arbor Day tree, provide a speaker, and hold a poster contest.

6. New Business:

a. Reorganization:

Ashley Cruz nominated Bill Thorne for Shade Tree Commission treasurer. Ken Grasso seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ken Grasso nominated Mary Trank for Shade Tree Commission secretary. Janet Grote seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Bill Thorne nominated Fred Callis and Ken Grasso as Shade Tree Commission co-chairs. Janet Grote seconded the motion. They were voted for individually. All voted in favor of Fred; all voted in favor of Ken.

b. Arbor Day Poster Contest:

Caroline Northrup, art teacher at Atlantic Highlands Elementary School, contacted the commission about selecting a theme for the Arbor Day poster contest.

“Wild About Atlantic Highlands,” is a group of residents who have organized to encourage residents to provide “Certified Wildlife Habitats” through the National Wildlife Federation.

“Trees are Wild About Atlantic Highlands” will be the 2023 Arbor Day poster theme. With Arbor Day 2023 during Atlantic Highland’s Earth Month, we hope this particular tree theme will be fun for children (wild about!) but also might provide an opportunity to educate children and families about Certified Wildlife Habitats and specifically, the role trees play in providing shelter for wildlife.

c. The 2023 Seedlings are ordered. A decision has not been made about the distribution date.

d. Website review: Ken Grasso asked the members to review what is currently posted on the borough website on the Shade Tree Commission page. Should something be added; should something be deleted? He will forward all requests to Councilwoman Hohenleitner.

e. Email: Going forward, all group emails should be “bcc” in order to avoid establishing a quorum during email exchanges.



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f. Bill Thorne said he spoke with Jimmy Phillips, Director of DPW. Mr. Phillips offered to either attend a meeting to talk to the group about DPW's work with trees in town and/or host the commission to view DPW's equipment.

7. Public Comment: No public comment.

8. Ken Grasso made a motion to end the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Fred Callis seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Minutes submitted by Mary Trank
February 8, 2023