



Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission



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

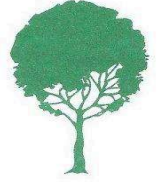
Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC)
Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall
May 8, 2024, 7pm

1. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
 - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Ben Schmoll, Bill Thorne; Vito Colasurdo (council liaison)
 - b. Not present: Ed Kenney; James Murphy (council liaison)
 - c. Ben Schmoll made a motion to elect Frank Gargione secretary as Mary Trank is stepping down; Janet Grote seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
 - d. Bill Thorne made a motion to elect Janet Grote a backup/substitute secretary if Frank Gargione is unable to attend; Ashley Cruz seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
2. Bill Thorne made a motion to accept the April 2024 minutes; Ashley Cruz seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
3. Correspondence: Ashley Cruz noted the Monmouth County Parks mailer; several copies of tree removal permits were received; several five requests to plant a tree were received (two were on handouts from the sapling giveaway and require followup paperwork); copies of many tree removal permits were received
4. Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was presented by Ben Schmoll; Bill Thorne made a motion to accept the treasurer's report; Bill Thorne seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
 - a. Opening balance: \$13,691.37 (April 10, 2024)
 - b. Expenses: \$300.00 (Speaking fee for Mary Charlotte for 04/27 event)
 - c. Deposits: \$0.00
 - d. Closing balance \$13,391.37 (May 8, 2024)
 - e. Pending: \$250.00 to renew AH Arts Council membership
 - i. Membership in lieu of event hosting fee for 04/27 event
 - ii. Previous membership fee was in April-May 2023
 - iii. Bill Thorne made a motion to approve this expense; Ashley Cruz seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
 - f. Question of newsletter expense still pending or not? (Note: Bill Thorne sent an email explaining what was and was not paid for on 05/09)
5. Old Business
 - a. Shade Tree Ordinance update: Ashley Cruz submitted the ordinance to the Mayor and Council along with revised tree removal permit form and notes on criteria used in surveying trees for removal; the mayor has reviewed the documents and they are being reviewed against state and borough guidelines and will be reviewed by



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the borough attorney; it has not gone to council yet and it is not yet on the agenda; after that it will be open to public comment; to be continued at the next meeting

- b. Earth Month event recap:
 - i. Very good turnout for sapling giveaway, perhaps thanks to social media posts; “consumers” were well informed and came up knowing which trees they wanted and Frank Gargione and Ben Schmoll gave away ~200 of ~250 trees; remaining trees were set up outside Jaspan’s or brought to the AH Arts Council for the speaker event; Jaspan’s is happy to have us set up outside the store next year; saplings were healthier, larger, and better packaged this year so Bartlett Tree Experts should be reached out to again next year
 - ii. Bill Thorne reported that the lecture was not well attended (~10-15 people); perhaps a later afternoon slot (with wine?) will be better attended next year; also, going forward other Shade Tree Commissions should be invited
- c. Poster Contest: Janet Grote managed the entries and has all winner information; far fewer entries than usual as this is now optional and no longer a part of the curriculum; full commission voted on winners; all entrants will receive giftcards to Nicholas Creamery — \$20 for first place, \$15 for second place, \$10 for honorable mentions (all others) (Note: This took place after New Business as Janet Grote was setting up the artwork)

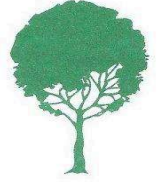
6. New Business

- a. Watering schedule: All new plantings from 2023 and 2024 on borough property should be watered
 - i. Gator bags and troughs should be with Jim (don’t have last name); Vito Colasurdo will check in with him and see if he still has materials and is willing to take on watering with brining truck
 - ii. Alternately, Mary Trank has a volunteer schedule template that Ashley Cruz will reach out to her about — if Jim cannot manage watering the Commission will need to set up a system
 - iii. A Google map plotting tree locations should be created
 - iv. Related: Ken and Fred (don’t have last names) have added a plaque to one of the new Serviceberries at Center Avenue Park, these trees look good, a third with another plaque looks less healthy — should the plaque be moved? Will any of these trees survive the park renovation?
- b. Tree planting
 - i. DOT approved planting in the jug handle and included a list of approved, mostly smaller trees and other requirements like setbacks for visibility, etc.; the Commission needs to review the site for placement and consider planting more than one tree; DPW will handle installation as they are the only division who may work on the plot; street closures will need to be arranged; Ashley Cruz will share the email regarding this and we can vote/finalize choices/timelines over email so the tree(s) can be installed before too late in the season



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- ii. Other locations to consider: Jimmy Phillips suggested along Henessey Blvd.; South Avenue Park along Many Minds Creek; along Many Minds creek near SeaStreak parking; trees along the creek can fill in gaps and remediate the ecosystem — is there a grant for this work? Someone mentioned talking to Blake (don't have last name)
 - iii. Species List: An effort should be made to winnow down the [Monmouth County list](#) of recommended trees into an AH-specific list something like the one shared by [Fair Haven](#); think about trees that are healthy and beneficial in our area; conversation to be continued
 - c. Big Tree Hunt: Bill Thorne added this to the Facebook page; the Commission should consider local trees for inclusion; as an aside — should we encourage residents to share photos/stories of their favorite trees or updates on trees procured at past AH sapling giveaways to share on Facebook or in newsletters?
 - d. Community Forestry Master Plan: Needs review, Bill will reach out to Paul Cowhie who wrote the previous plan
 - e. Trees in Veteran's Park: At least one oak tree needs to be removed and some need trimming, especially as farmer's market is slated to begin soon and it could be dangerous; the sickest oaks will not be treated but some on the east side may be worth treating; in addition, a new sweet gum with a broken leader can be replaced; the \$750 budget could also be used to replace this sweet gum. Ben Schmoll made a motion to do so; Bill Thorne seconded the motion; all others voted in favor — could the sweet gum with the broken leader be moved to the jug handle?
7. Public comment
8. Adjournment: Ashley Cruz made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ben Schmoll seconded the motion; all voted in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm; the next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 7pm

Items not always taken in order