



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
December 17, 2025, 7pm

1. The monthly began at 7:04pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
 - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Uma Parasar, Ben Schmolli; Bill Thorne (virtual),
 - b. Absent: Janet Grote, Emily Hackett; no council liaisons

2. Minutes: JG took minutes November, BT has them and needs to share them so we can review and approve in January
 - a. October minutes were approved

3. Correspondence –
 - a. 9 tree removal permits: This is a disheartening situation that needs to be resolved. In the new year we need to have some new/better method of dealing with these permits because this isn't working in terms of fines, documentation, removing healthy trees, etc.; Do we meet with RC again? Look to new council liaisons and new administrator for more support, guidance? AC will reach out to see if there is a record of permits, removals, etc., and/or work with new council liaisons to do so

4. Treasurer's report —
 - a. Opening/closing balance: \$20,888.29
 - i. This represents previous allocations that have not actually been withdrawn yet (CFMP check to Davey and the county tree removal)
 - ii. BS wants statements, there is missing ~\$160, is it an account fee? BS will reach out to mayor/administrator/CFO/council liaisons
 - iii. AC motions to approve, FG seconds, all in favor

5. Old Business —
 - a. CFMP grant: We are not eligible to receive the grant because the work is already done; there is a lack of clarity around the fact this is a "reimbursement grant," AC requested to talk to or meet with the supervisor and see if there is anyway to work around this as this is a misunderstanding
 - i. If we cannot get this money then we have ~\$500 until our next disbursement from the borough next summer
 - ii. This is why we need clarity around allocations, missing ~\$160, the tree funds (where does that go and shouldn't that cover the county tree removals or to use directly)
 - iii. Can we negotiate a partial payment with Davey while we figure this out? \$10K?



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- iv. AC is reviewing the CFMP and wants to send it back to Davey to finalize before EOY
 - b. CEUs: Recent coursework has met the minimum and we will not lose accreditation
 - c. Tribute Trees: JG has been in contact with previous commission members and will meet with them in January so we can keep that going and understand the process
 - i. Where are applications going, etc.
 - ii. What are outstanding trees? Dead trees? Missing plaques?
 - d. Permit application: AC sent email with updates to RC
6. New Business —
- a. First Avenue inventory: EH took an inventory and photos, etc., and presented that in October and has a report to share
 - i. AC wants to meet with EH to review and compile this to create a deck, etc., because this could be a grant opportunity
 - ii. Other towns have BIDs to help with trees in areas like this, the borough doesn't have the funding; can shops/tenants adopt trees?
 - b. iTree: JG has been looking into this as a way to activate CMFP/Davey investment
 - c. Tree planting: AC has reached out to applicants and said that they are shortlisted for whenever the next planting will be
7. Public Comment — none
8. Adjournment: AC motions to adjourn the meeting; FG seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm; the next meeting is scheduled for January 21, 7pm