



TOWN OF DOVER SHADE TREE COMMISSION

April 10, 2025, 7:00PM

MINUTES



CALL MEETING TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Adams called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and led everyone in attendance to the Pledge of Allegiance.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE [Sunshine Law Compliance]

Notice of the Reorganization and Regular meetings of the Shade Tree Commission of the Town of Dover was sent to the Daily Record and the Citizen newspapers on December 19, 2024 for publication; such notice was posted in the municipal building and was filed in the Office of the Municipal Clerk in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Formal action may be taken at this Meeting.

ROLL CALL <i>[alphabetical order]</i>	Present	Excused Absence	Absent
Commissioner Antonio Acosta	X		
Commissioner Craig Adams, Chair	X		
Commissioner Maribel Garland	X		
Commissioner Daniella Mendez [Alt. 1]	X		
Commissioner Kim Philips [Alt. 2]	X		
Commissioner Susan Savoy	X		
Commissioner Travis Savoy, Vice Chair		X	
Non-Voting Members:			
Council Liaison Veronica Velez			X
Jeff Guevara, Public Works Superintendent		X	
Robin Kline, Shade Tree Commission Secretary	X		

Commissioner Acosta opened a brief discussion on the importance of the town council's liaison to the Shade Tree Commission to attend the meetings. There was a unanimous agreement. Commissioner Adams, chair, was requested to send an email to Council Member Velez, copy to Mayor Dodd and Secretary Kline, asking her to attend the shade tree commission meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 13 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Mendez moved to approve the March 13 Regular Meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Philips. The following roll call vote was taken:

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Commissioner Antonio Acosta	X			
Commissioner Craig Adams, Chair	X			
Commissioner Maribel Garland	X			
Commissioner Daniella Mendez [Alt. 1]	X			
Commissioner Kim Philips [Alt. 2]	X			
Commissioner Susan Savoy	X			
Commissioner Travis Savoy, Vice Chair				X

The March 13 Regular Meeting minutes were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **2025 OPERATING BUDGET** –Commissioner Antonio Acosta reported that the municipal budget is being finalized and that he will follow up with the town's administrator and chief financial officer to discuss the Shade Tree Commission's 2025 operating budget request.

[This matter remains pending]

2. 1st QUARTER 2025 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Commissioner Antonio Acosta:

1. **Welcoming signage for Hurd Park.** Commissioner Acosta confirmed three double-sided lawn signs will be printed and placed in key areas in Hurd Park. The Commissioners again thanked Commissioner Acosta for donating the signage.

Commissioner Kim Philips:

1. **Dover School District “Tree Appreciation” Art Project.** Commissioner Philips reported that Superintendent Jaime advised her that the school district’s curriculum includes a student art show in May and, therefore, there may not be enough time for teachers and staff to plan for an Arbor Day art program. After a brief discussion, there was a consensus to forgo the Arbor Day tree art program in grades K-12 this year and instead plan to do it next year as the Arbor Day celebration in our schools. Commissioner Philips will notify Superintendent Jaime accordingly.
2. **Girl Scout Troop “Tree Dictionary” Silver Award project.** Commissioner Philips reported that the Girl Scouts continue to move forward with their “Tree Dictionary” Silver Award project. The Dover Shade Tree Commission offered any assistance in collaborating and sponsoring their efforts.
[This matter remains pending]

Commissioner Travis Savoy:

1. **Contact other shade tree commissions for networking and “best practices” opportunities.** Commissioner Savoy was absent. There was no report.
[This matter remains pending]

3. TREE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

- a) **Tree Removal Application** – Secretary Kline reported that a hard copy and electronic copy of the new Tree Removal Application has been received by the Code Enforcement Department for their use. She further reported that Bill Isselin thanked the Shade Tree Commission for preparing the application.
- b) **Council Liaison Role & Responsibilities** –The Commissioners reviewed the draft document (attached and made a part to these minutes) enumerating the roles and responsibilities of a Council Liaison to the Shade Tree Commission. Secretary Kline confirmed that Dover Town Code Chapter 84, *Shade Tree Commission*, sets forth that a member of the governing body is appointed by the mayor to act as liaison between the Shade Tree Commission and the governing body.

Motion:

Commissioner Mendez made a motion to accept and approve the document entitled, *Roles and Responsibilities, Council Liaison to the Shade Tree Commission*, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Adams. Five Commissioners voted in favor; Commissioner Susan Savoy abstained.

- c) **Public Outreach** – There was a consensus to refer public outreach recommendations concerning the Tree Protection and Preservation Ordinance to the Public Outreach and Code Enforcement Subcommittee for further exploration and recommendations.

4. **TREE DONATION PROGRAM** – Commissioner Philips will present a draft Tree Donation Program at May’s meeting.
[This matter remains pending]

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Grants Subcommittee

- a.) **Leafing Out Education Grant** – Secretary Kline reported the grant balance remains at \$3,125.00. The Public Works Department will be using the grant to register for and attend tree-related training.
- b.) **Green Communities Grant** –Commissioner Philips brought this grant to Secretary Kline’s attention. The grant will provide financial assistance for updating the Shade Tree Commission’s Community Forestry and Management Plan (CFMP) and for Tree Inventory & Planning. The maximum grant award is \$20,000. Secretary Kline reported that the town’s grant writing consultant will be assisting the Shade Tree Grants Subcommittee in the writing and submission of the grant application.

Arbor Day Program & Shade Tree Plantings Subcommittee

- a.) **Arbor Day Celebration** – Commissioner Susan Savoy reported that she collected \$2,175.00 from local businesses to purchase five (5) Kwansan Cherry trees to be planted in Hurd Park on Arbor Day. Great job!

Commissioner Susan Savoy further reported that the Arbor Day tree planting program will take place at Hurd Park on Arbor Day, Friday, April 25th at 5:00PM. The girl scouts will be taking part in the Arbor Day program and will assist in planting two of the five trees. In addition, Dover firefighters will be honored with the dedication of a cherry tree in celebration of the Dover Fire Department's 150-year anniversary.

Commissioner Philips (Public Outreach & Code Enforcement Subcommittee) presented a copy of the draft Arbor Day program brochure for the Shade Tree Commission's review. There was unanimous approval contingent that the program brochure will include an updated list all donors.

- b.) **Replanting two street trees on N. Sussex Street** (Chase Bank & Peer's Moving Company) – This matter was tabled to the May meeting for discussion. At the March meeting, Public Works Superintendent Guevara confirmed there is no suitable area to relocate and plant two trees that were removed from this block on N. Sussex Street. As an alternative, he recommended two planting containers with shrubs and flowers could be considered.

[This matter remains pending]

Public Outreach & Code Enforcement Subcommittee

- a.) **Shade Tree Commission Social Media** – Commissioner Philip's presented Shade Tree Commission information and tree-related content that will be posted on the Shade Tree Commission's Facebook and IG accounts for the period of March 31 through April 22.

- b.) **135 Munson Avenue [B1706, L24] Re: M. Acevedo's removal of town trees on 50' x 100' lot** – Commissioner Antonio Acosta reported that he spoke with chief code enforcement officer Bill Isselin and the town's engineer, Dave Hoyt concerning this matter. He was advised that the town attorney will prepare the necessary public notices and advertisements to schedule Lot 24 for public auction. A date has not been set.

It was discussed that Mr. Acevedo has not fully complied with the landscaping plan approved by the Shade Tree Commission following the public hearing and the Commission's final determination. Secretary Kline was asked to redistribute the documentation concerning this matter so that all members can review and refresh their knowledge for discussion at the May meeting.

[This matter remains pending]

- c.) **2 White Street Re: removal of town trees & encroachment on unimproved section of Bowlby Street.** This matter was tabled to the May meeting.

[This matter remains pending]

SITE PLAN FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION

None.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISON AND PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT

1. **Council Member STC Liaison** – Council Member Velez was absent. There was no report.

2. **Public Works Superintendent Jeff Guevara**

Superintendent Guevara was absent but provided the following summary of his monthly report:

Two trees that have aged out were removed at the DPW yard. Replacement trees will be planted. One tree at Crescent Field and five trees at Overlook Park have been confirmed to be in a hazardous condition. Arrangements will be made to remove them.

The order to purchase five Kwansan cherry trees has been submitted to Gardens of the World. Planting holes for the trees have been marked out and will be dug in advance of Arbor Day with top soil and mulch available on site.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Susan Savoy reported that Superintendent Guevara has been employed with the Dover Public Works Department for 32 years. She suggested that the Shade Tree Commission consider planting a tree to honor his years of service partnering with the Shade Tree Commission.

Secretary Kline confirmed that the Arbor Day Foundation accepted the Dover Shade Tree Commission's Tree City USA® application and recognizes Dover Shade Tree Commission's 38th year as a Tree City USA® community. The Arbor Day Foundation sent a new Tree City USA® flag, which will be flown on the flag pole located adjacent to the parking area at Hurd Park.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to conduct, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Susan Savoy. Motion seconded by Commissioner Antonio Acosta. A voice vote was taken with all Commissioners voting in favor.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:51 PM.

The next regular meeting of the Dover Shade Tree Commission will be held on Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin R. Kline, Secretary
TOWN OF DOVER SHADE TREE COMMISSION



Roles and Responsibilities Council Liaison to the Shade Tree Commission

The Council Liaison (“Liaison”) to the Shade Tree Commission (“Commission”) serves as a bridge between the municipal governing body and the Commission, which is responsible for managing, maintaining, and preserving trees in public spaces such as streets, parks and other municipal properties.

Liaison’s primary role is to ensure that the Commission’s activities and programs enhance our community’s urban forest while aligning with broader objectives of the governing body and fostering cooperation for the successful management of public trees.

Below are some key roles and responsibilities that might be assigned to the Council Liaison:

1. Attend Meetings

The Liaison regularly attends both Council meetings and Shade Tree Commission meetings to stay informed about ongoing activities, projects, issues and decisions on both sides, ensuring effective communication and alignment related to tree planting, removal, maintenance, protection and preservation.

2. Reporting on the Shade Tree Commission’s Activities

The Liaison provides updates to the mayor and council on the Commission’s activities, decisions, and any matters requiring governing body attention or approval.

3. Communicating Council Policies

The Liaison is the primary point of contact between the municipal governing body (mayor and council) and the Commission and provides input and feedback to the Commission about relevant council policies, decisions, or initiatives that may impact their work, ensuring clear and consistent communication of municipal goals.

4. Budget Coordination

Liaison assists the Commission in securing necessary budget funding requests in the municipal budget process, ensuring that tree-related projects and operations are adequately resourced.

5. Advocating for the Commission and Facilitating Interdepartmental Coordination

The Liaison represents the interests of the Shade Tree Commission and needs, advocating for funding, policy support, or resources needed to maintain or expand tree-related initiatives.

Liaison fosters collaboration between the Commission and other municipal departments, including the municipal attorney and town administrator to help address and mediate any disputes or misunderstandings between the Shade Tree Commission, property owners, and residents regarding tree-related decisions.

6. Promoting Public Awareness and Community Engagement

Liaison helps raise public awareness, understanding, and supports programs such as Arbor Day celebrations and aids in addressing residents’ concerns about trees on public or private property.

7. Collaborating on Strategic Planning

The Liaison works with the Commission to develop short-and long-term plans for tree planting and management that align with the governing body’s urban development, tree inventories, public outreach efforts, and responses to environmental concerns (e.g. storm damage, pest infestations like the emerald ash borer and spotted lanternfly).