



TOWN OF DOVER SHADE TREE COMMISSION

May 8, 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	X	
Non-Voting Members:			
Council Liaison Veronica Velez	X		
Jeff Guevara, Public Works Superintendent		X	
Robin Kline, Shade Tree Commission Secretary	X		

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 10 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Mendez moved to approve the April 10 Regular Meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Garland. 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 April 10 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 has not been adopted. He will follow up with the town’s administrator to discuss the Shade Tree Commission’s 2025 operating budget request.

[This matter remains pending]

2. **1st QUARTER 2025 GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

🌳 **Girl Scout Troop “Tree Dictionary” Silver Award project.** Commissioner Philips reported that the Girl Scouts continue to move forward in completing their “Tree Dictionary” Silver Award project.

[This matter remains pending]

 **Contact Shade Tree Commissions for Networking and “Best Practice” Learning Opportunities.** Commissioner Savoy reported that he continues to perform online research to identify shade tree commissions in Morris County and then will reach out to them for networking opportunities.
[This matter remains pending]

1. **TREE DONATION PROGRAM POLICY & APPLICATION** – Commissioner Philips presented the draft Tree Donation Program policy and application for discussion. The Commissioners thanked Commissioner Philips for drafting a comprehensive policy and application.

Motion

Commissioner Mendez made a motion to approve the Tree Donation Program contingent that section 4. Donations be amended to read (revisions in italic font):

4. **Donations:** All donations should be made payable to Town of Dover Shade Tree Commission.

- a. **Tree Donations:**

The *standard* donation fee will cover: (i) the purchase of the tree; (ii) planting of the tree by DPW (or certified contractor); and (iii) initial care and maintenance.

Optional commemorative plaque is available at an additional cost. All plaque language must be approved by the Shade Tree Commission (STC). Plaques will follow guidelines set by the STC to ensure consistency and appropriateness. No logos of any kind are permitted on plaques.

Complete funding for the donation must be processed before the commencement of any work. *Donations are to be made payable to Town of Dover Shade Tree Commission. These amounts may be adjusted at the discretion of the STC.*

- b. **Monetary Donations:** If you would prefer to make a donation without selecting a specific tree, we are more than happy to accept that as well. Your generous contribution will go towards supporting the overall upkeep and enhancement of our community’s green spaces.

A 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 Tree Donation Program policy and application, as amended, was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Grants Committee

- a.) **Leafing Out Education Grant** – Grant balance is \$3,125.00. The Public Works Department will be using grant funding to attend tree-related training.
- b.) **Green Communities Grant** –Commissioner Philips reported that the maximum grant award is \$20,000 and will provide up to \$15,000 in financial assistance for updating the Shade Tree Commission’s 4th Community Forestry and Management Plan (CFMP) and up to \$5,000 in financial assistance to conduct a Tree Inventory. Letters of support have been solicited from Mayor Dodd, the town’s Supervising Planner, Public Works Superintendent, the Dover School District Board of Education, and the Shade Tree Commission. The town’s grant writing consultant assisted the Shade Tree Grants Committee in finalizing the grant application and will submit the grant application electronically via the state’s SAGE portal.

Arbor Day Program & Shade Tree Plantings Committee

- a.) **Arbor Day Celebration** – Commissioner Susan Savoy reported that 80+ people attended the Arbor Day tree planting program at Hurd Park on Friday, April 25th. Five (5) Kwansan Cherry trees were planted with the girl scouts assisting in planting two of the five trees. Dover firefighters were honored with the dedication of one of

the cherry trees celebrating the Dover Fire Department's 150-year anniversary. Councilman Scarneo read and presented an Arbor Day Proclamation to the Shade Tree Commission.

Commissioner Savoy thanked Commissioner Philips (Public Outreach & Code Enforcement Subcommittee) for creating the Arbor Day program brochure and lastly reported that she would be delivering thank you cards to everyone who made a donation towards the purchase of the five (5) Kwansan Cherry trees.

- b.) Replanting two street trees on N. Sussex Street** (Chase Bank & Peer's Moving Company) – This matter was tabled to the next meeting. It was noted that the sidewalk must be repaired where the former trees once stood. (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 Committee

- a.) Shade Tree Commission Social Media** – Commissioner Philip's reported that social media continues to be active with eight (8) additional posts having been made since the April meeting. She further reported that she will confirm that the Tree Removal Permit Application has been posted to the Department of Code Enforcement.
- b.) 135 Munson Avenue [B1706, L24] Re: M. Acevedo's removal of town trees on 50' x 100' lot** – It was discussed that Mr. Acevedo has not fully complied with the landscaping plan approved by the Shade Tree Commission following the outcome of the public hearing held in this matter and the Commission's final determination requiring 8 trees to be planted and a fee of \$500 payable to the Dover Shade Tree Commission as was offered by Mr. Acevedo's attorney Ira Cohen, Esq. in his letter dated October 3, 2023.

Motion

Commissioner Travis Savoy made a motion authorizing the Public Outreach & Code Enforcement Committee make an appointment with the town administrator seeking assistance from the town's attorney concerning the W. Munson Avenue (B1706 Lot 24) matter and next steps to be taken. Commissioner Philips seconded the motion.

A 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			

Commissioner Philips to send an email to the town administrator requesting a meeting with the town's attorney to discuss the next steps concerning this matter.

[This matter remains pending]

- c.) White Street Re: removal of town trees & encroachment on unimproved section of Bowlby Street** - Secretary Kline provided a brief summary of this matter. The property owner at 2 White Street cut and removed town trees on an unapproved portion of Bowlby Street, expanding their lot front yard and enlarging their lot. In efforts to determine the extent of the loss of town trees, the Code Enforcement Committee last year requested a copy of the survey of Bowlby Street (width and length of the unapproved street) from the Engineering, Code Enforcement and Zoning Department, but none was received. She further reported that there was a consensus from the Commissioners at that time that this matter should be further investigated in an effort to obtain a fair and appropriate resolution on behalf of all Dover taxpayers.

Last August, Commission Acosta (Chair) sent a follow up email to Town Administrator Mr. Cruz, Town Clerk Ms. Pettoni, Chief Code Enforcement Officer Mr. Isselin, and Supervising Town Planner Alex Dougherty requesting a meeting with the Administration and Ward 1 elected officials to discuss next steps with respect to compliance and enforcement. No response had been received, and this matter remains unaddressed by town officials.

There was a consensus from the Commissioners to continue to follow up with town officials and the town

attorney, seeking resolution to this matter.

Motion

Commissioner Philips made a motion authorizing the Shade Tree Commission to send a request to the town administrator requesting a meeting with the town's attorney to discuss the next steps concerning this matter. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken with all in favor; Commissioner Mendez abstained.

Commissioner Philips to send an email to the town administrator requesting a meeting with the town's attorney to discuss the next steps concerning this matter.

[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 had no report.
2. **Public Works Superintendent Jeff Guevara** - Superintendent Guevara was absent. There was no report.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **2nd and 3rd QUARTER 2025 GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The Commissioners concurred on including the followings goals and objectives for the 2nd and 3rd quarters in 2025:

- 1) Continue to Partner and network with other shade tree commissions to learn “best-practices” and programs;
- 2) Apply for Tree Inventory Grant;
- 3) Collaborate with the Dover College Promise to design a “Walk Hurd Park App”;
- 4) Co-host an Open House with the DPW for Shade Tree community outreach;
- 5) Educate the public about the new tree preservation and protection ordinance.

2. **Shade Tree Commission Accreditation & Requirements for Continuing Education**

There was a consensus among all Shade Tree Commissioners that each member should commit to completing a minimum of two (2) CEU's before the end of the year. CEU opportunities may be found listed on the agenda or notification by email from the shade tree commission secretary when a course or webinar is available.

It was reported that Commissioner Garland and Secretary Kline completed the June 7th “introduction to i-Tree” webinar. Enrolling in the *i-Tree Open Academy 2025* earns one (1) continuing education unit for each webinar session attended. All Commissioners were encouraged to register and attend these webinars.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The regular meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM.

The next regular meeting of the Dover Shade Tree Commission will be held on Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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