

HARTFORD TREE BOARD MINUTES

*Date August 15, 2023 | time 5 pm | Meeting called to order by Jeff Arnold*_____

Commission Members In Attendance

Jeff Arnold, Chair, David Barrell, Clare Forseth, Alan Haehnel, Gaal Shepherd Crowl, Leif Smedman

Commission Members Absent

None

Others in Attendance

Jim Henderson, Hartford Tree Warden, Scott Hausler, Director of Parks and Recreation Department

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Alan Haehnel. Seconded by: David Barrell_____

In Favor All _____ Opposed None_____

The motion was Approved or Disapproved? Approved_____

Citizen Comments

None

Commission Member Comments

None

Directors Report

None

Old Business

Mission: The Tree Board's mission is to plant and maintain public trees and advocate community tree stewardship.

Vision: The Tree Board's vision is to support an energetic community tree stewardship program to promote education, tree planting, maintenance, ecological awareness, and to influence the visual beauty of the Town of Hartford through the redevelopment of an historic tree canopy. (reviewed/updated 2017)

1) Review how poison ivy removal along riparian buffer went and whether to treat the remaining amount of ivy growing in the buffer west of the Porta-Potties.

Much of the poison ivy has been removed by first spraying with a vinegar/salt/dawn mixture and then pulling by hand. We will leave the rest of the poison ivy to be dealt with at a later date.

2) Review how the community invasive shrub removal day unfolded and what to do next in this area such as when and where to plant the 40+ indigenous shrubs currently growing in our nursery.

With all the advertising for community help in removing the invasive plants, we had 11 people help. Lee Michaelides and Tom Kahl from the Conservation Commission, two partner's of Tree Board members, six Tree Board members and John Heath from the public. The group was able to make great headway in removing a good share of the invasive honeysuckle, vines and buckthorn. A view of the White River began to appear. A good deal of follow-up will be needed to keep the invasive plants from continuing to grow.

3) Discuss when (September) and where to apply the 10 ml plastic that has arrived and the possibility of having some Recreation Department employees help us. Should we plant some of our indigenous species on the eastern end of our project area through the plastic. Answer as to whether this plastic will prevent rain from reaching the root systems of the cottonwoods and the Sycamore that we have planted there.

A date to plant the indigenous bushes was not made. It was decided to use the plastic over the knotweed to smother the plants, but to leave room around the trees so water can get to the roots. Maybe tree-gators can be used around the trees to help keep the knotweed from growing near the tree trunks. Some of the plastic could be used at Watson Park around the horse chestnut and catalpa that the Board planted there..

4) Review the characteristics of the 7 trees planted by Jim Lamontagne on Main St, Hartford Avenue (Rt 5) and Pine St.

The sycamore, swamp oak and katsura planted on Pine Street look good, except maybe leaf wind damage in transporting the katsura tree. The ginkgo tree on Main St and the newly planted one by Phnom Penh have leaf spots. Jim Lamontagne recommended that we remove the leaves from the site and insured us that they should be fine. The two Regal Prince Oaks along Main St will have a tight columnar shape. The two yellowwood trees planted at 649 Hartford Avenue in front of Body Works are smaller in diameter than those that Clare and Jeff picked out at Northern Nurseries

5) Consider locations for an October tree ID walk.

The fall tree walk will be at Jeff's house. The property has a number of interesting trees as well as an interesting history.

6) Discuss how the Tree Warden responded to our inquiry about his continuation.

Jim is thinking about resigning since he feels he cannot devote the time needed to perform a tree warden's responsibilities but he is interested in continuing to be active in a broader mission to get the Town to be more active in maintaining an exceptional landscape. A discussion ensued with the Tree Board members supporting the idea of a paid position (maybe shared with Park and Recreation and Department of Public Works) in coordination with the Tree Board, the Town Merchant Committee and other interested entities to support a beautification and maintenance program. It was discussed that a Community driven platform needs to be presented to the Selectboard where we voice our concerns about neglected properties/trees/gardens in town and the effects of climate change on a community. A continued discussion was advised with possibly inviting DPW to a meeting.

7) Nursery Status- Japanese beetles on Serviceberries and Birches were treated with Neem oil.

8) Do we want to use our current \$1500 budget to purchase and plant a tree this Fall? Where and what species?

Lyman Point Park was mentioned as a planting place.

9) Discuss Scott's request for us to not to email a quorum of Board Members. Are there any exceptions?

The main issue is that board decisions need to be made in a public forum and emails are not public. He recommended that when a notice or description of an activity goes out to all the members that it contain the notice that members should not "reply all" to the email.

10) Should the autumn olive on Pine Street be removed because it is considered invasive? Are there any circumstances where invasive plants can be left alone. The mature buckthorn within our riparian buffer has beautiful petal shaped leaves and the Norway Maples in front of Dothan Brook Elementary School are very attractive.

Time did not allow a discussion of this topic. To be discussed at the next meeting.

11) Tree of the Month report.

August Tree of the month highlighted the invasive buckthorn at the Maxfield Sports Complex.

New Business

Agenda Items for Next Commission Meeting

Discussion of invasive species.

Next Meeting

September 19, 2023 at 5 pm

Adjourn

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by: Clare Forseth No Quorum _____

Seconded by: Gaal Crowl _____

All in Favor: all _____ Opposed: None _____

Respectfully submitted by: Clare Forseth _____

Signature: _____



Date: August 16, 2023 _____

Hartford Tree Board Commission Members

- Jeff Arnold, Chair (03/07/2025)
- Clare Forseth, Secretary (11/15/2024)
- David Barrell, Treasurer (06/01/2023)
- Leif Smedman, Member (06/01/2023)
- Gaal Shepherd Cowl (10/1/25)
- Jim Henderson, Tree Warden
- Vacant (2 positions)