

Shade Tree Commission Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2025

Commission Chairman Scott Nichols called the regular meeting to order at 8:32AM in the Council Meeting Room of the Borough Office at 14 Crafton Street. The pledge of allegiance was recited by all.

Attending were Commission Members Brian Kennedy, Vicki Fox, Tim Morey, Borough Manager Louis Rachiele, Administrative Assistant Tiffany Thomas, Parks & Recreation crew Brett Mengee, and Mr. George Loughery from 15 King St.

Commission Member Brian Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 8th, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Vicki Fox and carried.

Public Comments on Agenda Items – None

Fall Planting Plan – 20 trees have been approved for ordering and planting. Date TBD for delivery. Commission Member Brian Kennedy stated trees should be ready for pick up by the 1st part of November. Council hopes to have students from Wellsboro Area School District aid in the planting of the trees.

Wrap up of September 24th education sessions – Commission Member Brian Kennedy said the sessions had a good turnout. The first session for Municipalities had Mansfield, Laporte, Athens, and Wellsboro in attendance for the meeting. The evening session was less people but still a good turnout. Commission Member Tim Morey advised there was a scheduled education session this Thursday, October 16th, 2025, hosted by DCNR. It's a Pruning Clinic and will be held at Leonard Harrison State Park.

Tree Inventory - According to Commission Member Brian Kennedy we have no update from Ethan West and Allen Reed, who are working on google mapping the tree inventory in the Borough. Match for grant is associated with this project.

DCNR Canopy Grant – Commission Member Brian Kennedy stated the assessments have been completed. There are 16 trees to be removed and 4-5 trees that need to be pruned. A bid document has been prepared to meet DCNR regulations. Once this document is approved it can be advertised for bids. The awardee must have job done by April 1st, 2025, to be ready to plant in the spring.

Main Street Sidewalk Project – Parks & Recreation crew member Brett Mengee stated that Council was looking to the future of sidewalks and not solely the mess the trees make. This goes with the Sophora trees currently on Main St. After much research it was deemed the Sophora is the best tree for this type of planting and the crew did find some in NJ and Commission Member Brian Kennedy and Parks & Recreation crew member Brett Mengee went and visited. Jake West offered to go and get trees to save on the cost of shipping them. The trees chosen will be planted at the beginning of November, however, spots have not been finalized. Along with Sophora's three different types of Elms: Princeton, Lacebark, and Triumph will be planted.

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Any extra trees will be temporarily planted at the Meade Street Ball Field until they are ready to be planted.

There was success in cutting tree roots for the Sidewalk Project. Commission members will utilize this strategy for future trees near the sidewalks.

A quote from Mike White from Tree Masters was brought up by Commission Member Brian Kennedy. The quote is for pruning trees on Main Street. Commission Member Vicki Fox felt the quote was high and would prefer a second quote from Dincher & Dincher. Commission Member Tim Morey motioned to use up to \$2000 of available funds for this pruning project. No one seconded the motion. It was suggested that Commission Member Brian Kennedy get the second quote and email Commission with both quotes and the decision who to hire would be made through email.

Commission Member Brian Kennedy also addressed the possibility of purchasing a stump grinder to go on the borough's mini excavator. This purchase would offset the cost of hiring a company to do the stump grinding and give the depth needed (48 inches) to be able to grind the stump fully. Most local stump grinding companies don't have the equipment to go as deep as needed to get the whole stump. The decision on this purchase was also requested to send quotes by email, and it would be decided on by Commission via email.

Hazard Tree Requests – None

Public Comment – Mr. George Loughery from 15 King Street asked if Sephora's were a native species. Commission Member Brian Kennedy stated they are not native but were planted for their hardiness when it comes to salt on the roads and the capability of planting them in cramped spaces. Mr. Loughery then presented Commission with a piece of concrete to show the current problem with his sidewalk. He would really like to keep the Hickory tree on his property and would be willing to install a bridge to go over the roots to save the tree at his expense. There are two trees on his property in question: A Maple on the corner of the property which has been assessed to see if Commission could cut the dead from the tree and if it would survive this. If it doesn't it will need to be removed. The Hickory tree is the tree upheaving the sidewalk and Borough Council decided to prioritize the sidewalk ordinance. If damage to the tree causes decline, the tree will need to be removed. Mr. Loughery is against this and would like to do whatever it takes to save the tree. He brought up cutting the roots like other trees on Main Street; however, Commission Member Brian Kennedy checked into this, and this can't be done without killing the tree due to the nature of the root ball and the roots needing cut. Mr. Loughery plans on doing an email, suggested by Borough Manager Louis Rachiele, addressing his concerns and what he'd like to do to save the tree. This email will be forwarded to Borough Council and the Safety Committee for review.

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Adjourn – Commission Member Tim Morey made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Vicki Fox. The next Shade Tree Commission Meeting is on November 17th, 2025 @ 8:30AM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by _____.
Administrative Assistant