

Tree Advisory and Education Board Minutes 10/8/2025

Attendees: Linda Grandstaff, Rita Stevens, Matt Bixenstine, Mary Kennedy, Allison Welch, Sam Bonvisutto, Alex Martin, Brian Dawson, Bryan Evans

The Zoom meeting began at 6:02 p.m.

After a motion by Rita and second by Allison, the September meeting minutes were approved.

Fall Tree Giveaway – Pickup Event

- The trees will be arriving to Sam on Thursday, October 9.
- Sam will bring the trees to Bernice Pyke Park on Saturday (October 11) at 9 am. TAEB members are encouraged to help unload trees.
- Linda has lined up several volunteers from the Lakewood Garden Club and NeoGraf Solutions to assist us during the Pickup Event.
- Rita and Glen will handle the tree planting demonstration. We'll remove the dead dogwood and replace it with a redbud.
- Residents who wish to receive an extra tree need to show up at noon to see what's leftover following this event.

Fall Tree Giveaway – Online Portal

- We experienced much greater demand this fall compared to last spring, with all 200 trees being claimed in under 48 hours.
- We believe this increased demand is due largely to altering our tree allocation to lean more heavily into understory tree offerings. Another factor could be our presence at the Lakewood Community Festival prior to our online portal launch.
- Another community event we have been targeting, 'Welcome to Lakewood,' likely won't take place until spring, as the group that orchestrates this event is being reconstituted.

Healthy Lakewood Foundation Grant

- We submitted out HLF grant in mid-September. We should receive notification regarding whether our request has been funded by the end of November.

Cove Community Center – Outdoor Intergenerational Learning Spaces

- The current tree inventory has been identified, with the exception of two trees in the front.
- Linda will resend a list of trees we wish to have planted to Sam.
- Sam is going to work on informational signs, and TAEB will need to work on helping to develop educational programming.

Lakewood Arboretum

- Now that our mission statement has been flushed out, our next step will be to create a planning/guiding document.
- Could we build out an urban tree seed collection of trees uniquely adapted to our conditions?

Tree Board Networking Zoom Session

- This is taking place at 7 pm on Thursday, November 20 and will involve tree boards from throughout Cuyahoga County.
- Following the most recent Cuyahoga Tree Summit, the Euclid Shade Tree Commission and the Shaker Heights Tree Advisory Board initiated this effort.
- All Lakewood TAEB members are welcome to participate

Cuyahoga Tree Summit Takeaways

- One of the presenters has aerial coverage showing quality/quantity of coverage of the Lakewood tree canopy. Rita will pursue getting this information.
- There was significant discussion regarding how our tree canopy can adjust to a warming climate. This consideration could be useful in determining future Tree Giveaway Program and street tree selection.

Zoo Mini-Forest Tour Opportunity

- Cleveland Metroparks Zoo would be happy to welcome us for a tour if we'd like to schedule one.
- Could we experiment with a mini-forest in Lakewood?

Tree Board Opening

- There has been significant interest from applicants for our TAEB opening, since Linda is leaving us at the end of the year.

Presentation to City Council

- Bryan recently provided an update to Lakewood City Council regarding Tree Board happenings. He would like to have TAEB present to council soon. We suggested January/February and will have to coordinate with the Clerk of Council.

Forestry Department Update

- Letters of street tree notification will go out this week.
- Fall tree plantings start in early November. They will coincide with leaf pickup and tree water bag removal.

Meeting adjourned at 7:01

Respectfully submitted
Matt Bixenstine, Secretary