

Tree Advisory and Education Board

Minutes 2/11/2026

Attendees: Rita Stevens, Allison Welch, Sam Bonvssuto, Patrick Costello, Alex Martin, Katie Kelleher

The Zoom meeting began at 6:02 pm

After a motion by Rita and second by Katie, the January meeting minutes were approved.

TAEB Board Member Updates

- Bryan Evans is still actively interviewing candidates - could be into March before someone is appointed.

City Council Presentation

- Board to present to city council on Tuesday, 2/17
- Rita shared out a draft presentation last week and got comments from everyone incorporated.
- The forestry group confirmed that public works typically does their own presentation and covers their updates for the year.

Spring Tree Giveaway

- 200 total trees from Woody Warehouse
 - 155 small trees: flowering dogwood, witchhazel, pawpaw, redbud and sericeberry
 - 25 medium trees: sweetbay magnolia and ohio buckeye
 - conversation on whether buckeye trees should be categorized as a large tree, but they are slow growing so may be appropriate. Rita to double check with ODNR or similar resource on mature size.
 - 10 large trees: bur oak
- The portal for tree ordering is set up and ready to open on Wednesday, 4/8 at 10:00 am.
 - Rita to see if we can include some clarifying information for residents on where to and where not to plant trees (avoiding buildings and utilities)
 - Katie to work with Rita on social media / advertising. Matt left a lot of good resources for how to do this.
 - Western reserve tree stewards available to help with planting - Rita thinks we may not want to include this information on the portal and instead on our own social media.

Arboretum Certification

- Level 1 arboretum certification in progress. Rita, Linda Grandstaff and Laura (CCC) to meet on 2/20 to discuss application.
- May need someone from the city to submit application.

Forestry Department Update

- Team as been out trimming oaks in between snow storms
- Getting ready for spring planting which is supposed to happen through the county (normally 200 trees - majority small trees because they are running out of spots for planting)
- Some stump grinding and pickup to get done
- Patrick commented that it would be nice to invest a little more on maintenance for what is already established in the inventory. Spend more on maintenance than just on planting more trees.

City of Lakewood Zoning Code Updates

- The city is making updates to their zoning code. Can TAEB weigh in on certain items that ensure best practices for tree planting, maintenance, etc.?

TAEB Related Ideas

- Update tree related content on the city's website
 - Can TAEB take a stab at looking at the information online and suggest edits.
 - Introduce a 'Find an Arborist' feature
- It is Lakewood's 50th year as Tree City USA! What kind of advertising can we do?
 - Include some PR during tree giveaway / marketing

Meeting adjourned 6:42 pm

Submitted by Katie Kelleher