

Tree Advisory and Education Board

Minutes 4/8/2026

Attendees: Rita Stevens, Allison Welch, Marco Oriella, Sam Bonvissuto, Alex Martin, Patick Costello, Mary Brown, Katie Kelleher

The Zoom meeting began at 6:00pm

TAEB Announcements and Updates

- Welcome Marco!
- We received nice PR from Lakewood Observer with links directly to our page, and advertisements for Arbor Day tree giveaway.
- 190/200 trees claimed as of 6:00pm for the Spring Tree Giveaway
- Plain dealer interviewed Rita, writer of weekly garden column. Article to come!
- Rita to send email about 2026 tree city USA - celebration coming up in Strongsville.
- Great job to Rita on the presentation to City Council on our board!
- Diversity Potluck, May 14 at Cove Community City
 - o If we have any extra trees from giveaway, maybe we can donate one.
- Arbor Day had a call for proposals to highlight tree efforts, maybe something to consider for next year.

Minutes

- We did not meet in March, so moved to approve minutes from February

Spring Tree Giveaway

- Successful roll out! We are on schedule with our pickup event on May 2.
- Linda Grandstaff is organizing volunteering of giveaway day.
- Katie, Allison, Mary and Marco said they are available that day to help facilitate.
- Sam prefers a Thursday tree delivery as opposed to Friday delivery – Rita has made the request. Friday or Thursday could work.
- Is there somewhere that we can plant a demo tree at the park?
- Mary suggested a signup sheet at the tree giveaway for community members to sign up for tree stewardship participation next year when Lakewood is expected to receive a grant for training.

Resources for Planting / Tree Stewardship

- Could we put out a 'first come first serve' offer for assistance, mentioning we have a limited number of slots.
- Marco's understanding is that homeowners need to either be home for the planting or have the planting location staked. Typically, the stewards are aware of the homeowners visiting ahead of the giveaway and then mobilize day of.
- Stewards could maybe expect to help plant 4 trees max. on the day of the giveaway.
- Up to Tom Schreiber to let us know what capacity they have for us this year, since it is our pilot year.
- Marco said that if volunteer stewards don't make appointments, the land conservancy will send out their own staff to assist.
- Marco volunteered to help planting on Sundays for homeowners if needed.
- Once Lakewood has stewards: young tree pruning as a focus to prevent trees growing in non-desirable ways down the road – was on Alex's radar for this year
- Patrick mentioned that they are contracting out help for pruning, so maybe something similar can happen.

Arbnet Arboretum Certification

- Linda Grandstaff and Rita met with contact at Cove and started gathering materials that support the application for level one certification.
- Sam is working towards getting labels for each tree.

City Forest Update

- Forestry started tree planting this week and have plans to start elevating soon.
- Been doing a couple routine removals and work orders.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52

Submitted by Katie Kelleher