

Tree Advisory and Education Board

Minutes 6/10/2026

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

The Zoom meeting began at 6:03pm

TAEB Announcements and Updates

- Great press for Trees – especially Lakewood trees!
 - o NPR Marketplace featuring our tree giveaway initiative.
- Staff at Strongsville Tree City Awards – Patrick, Alex and whole crew was there. It was a chance to talk to the other communities.
- News on 2026 Forestry Conference on July 23 from 8:30-2:30 at Mandel Theater at Tri C at Highland Hills. Rita is speaking on growing tree canopy in Philadelphia!
- Cuyahoga County Tree Summit, September 25.

May Minutes Approved

Spring Tree giveaway follow up:

- Offer watering reminders. Arbor Day does not have the capability to include that in their outreach right now.
- Cleveland Tree Coalition has a weekly watering alert. Rita proposes that we send an email out to people from giveaways and give them an option to opt into a tree watering alert that would come from the coalition.
 - o Seems like a good idea so we don't need to reinvent the wheel.
 - o What email domain do we want this coming from? Could we use lakewood.canopy or set up a new one? Maybe: lakewoodtreeboard – katie to set up email and pass around login credentials.
 - Rita to work with Katie to get emails of giveaway members.
 - We should be providing a contact email on the website for community members.
 - o We should think more broadly about what additional questions we may want to ask for a survey.
 - Marco will take a stab at this.

Fall Tree Giveaway

- Rita passed around a list of trees and large native shrubs to the group, and to Arbor Day Foundation to see what the nursery availability is.
 - o Please add to the list if anyone thinks of additional options.
- Tentative date: October 3
 - o Rita to 'map out' the roll out of the giveaway by selective tentative dates for posting online, receiving trees, etc.

Community Outreach – Friends of Madison Park

- Saturday, Sept 12.
- Do we want to participate in any events this year?
 - o Mary to check into how to get involved.
- Not sure what degree of participation we would receive from the public.
- Maybe we piggyback with another group and have material to hand out.
- How can we make it more valuable and worthwhile?
- Great way to grow volunteer / stewardship base.
- Let's think of fun and interactive ways – especially to engage kids. Reach out to Mary to brainstorm!

Tree Stewardship Training / Volunteer Opportunities

- We may not have immediate access to WRLC training – but they are willing to share their information / resources / curriculum with us that we might be able to use to conduct our own training.
 - o Young tree training
 - o Street tree training
- NAI – National Association of Interpreters – resource that Cleveland Metroparks uses to train their volunteers.
 - o Maybe this is a resource we can utilize for training. – is this to train the trainer or the trainee.
- Rita and Marco had conversations with Sherwood Tree Stewards Initiative and Heights Tree Group

Comments from Patrick: Ohio Chapter ISA usually has a young tree training event and Tree Commission Academy – one coming up in July.

Comments from Rita: Association of Community Trees – might be a way to connect with other municipalities.

Comments from Tom Bullock: going to investigate what financial resources there are available for us (training and community events). Wants us to put together some considerations about what options we'd like, what it might cost, and be actionable.

Arbnet arboretum certification for Cove Community Center

- Tree labels – Sam and Patrick think they have maybe ¾ of them made. None have gone up yet.
- Part of the certification is that we offer one event a year- hopefully will have more information next month.
- In a holding pattern until we get the two notes above accomplished.

City Website

- Rita asks that we give the streets and forestry page a test drive and start thinking about what kind of things we want to provide to residents. How can we provide a clearer message?
- Rita learned that the city is in the process of updating this page. Sam is responsible for some content. We can send things along to Kevin, Melissa and Sam for content that we'd like to see there.
- Rita to put out a question to Kevin to ask what things he might be looking for from us / provide some structure.
- Comments from group (maybe we share them into the google drive)
 - o More clearly define the difference between city forestry and TAEB
 - o Include data on things we've done as a group
 - Number and type and location of trees
 - Interactive map
 - General inventory
 - Canopy cover
 - o More information on the groups process of what we do – how does forestry department and TAEB work together on initiative.
 - o Fix broken links / duplicate information.
 - o Provide educational tools.

Cuyahoga County Board of Public Health

- Approached by John Mills – he received a tree at the giveaway and asked if we were aware that the county was developing a model tree ordinance. Rita linked a research paper.
 - o Asked if they could present to our group.
 - o Available August 12 if we want them to come to monthly meeting – can maybe use city council room.

City Forest Update

- Addressing work orders (summer 2025 is oldest one) – about 120 currently.

- Working with construction companies with all their projects and providing tree protection where possible and elevating to avoid damage.
- Catching up on dead trees from the winter. Zelkova's took a hit.

Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm

Submitted by Katie Kelleher