

Tree Advisory and Education Board

Minutes 7/8/2026

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

The Zoom meeting began at 6:01pm

TAEB Announcements and Updates

- North Coast Forestry Council Conference Cancelled

June Minutes Approved

City Forest Update

- Busy removing dead trees, elevating, watering trees, typical work orders
 - o Trees planted in the spring get watered and data is collected on their general health, etc.
 - o The hawthorns have cedar apple rust – not always fatal for trees
 - o Rita asked if we could add the persimmon tree that was planted during fall demonstrations – Patrick is going to give it a watering bag and add to the list

Spring Tree giveaway follow up:

- Katie gave update on email that went out for watering reminders
- Marco update on survey:

Survey is to be sent out for 2025 Tree Recipients

Survey goals:

- Are there certain species of trees that perform better than others?
- Success rate of our tree giveaway program

Survey Questions

- What type of tree did you receive?
- Did you plant your tree in Lakewood?
- Where did you plant your tree?
- Is your tree alive, with noticeable buds and/or leaves, as we enter the 2025 growing season?
- Do you have any concerns regarding your tree and/or this program?

- How likely would you be to participate in the Tree Giveaway Program again and/or recommend this program to others?
- How did you hear about this program?
- Did you participate in the Tree Planting demo at the Giveaway event?
- Would you like assistance for young tree training?

Fall Tree Giveaway

- Rita received nursery availability and passed around. Can everyone please review the email and provide feedback on the list? Get back to Rita before Friday so we can get back to Arbor Day Foundation by Friday.
- Linda Grandstaff is taking a step back – Katie and Marco take on more responsibility. Everyone to work offline and get roles assigned.
- Sam prefers a Friday delivery (preferably morning) – but Thursday is fine too.

Community Outreach – Friends of Madison Park

- Lakewood Community Festival – we have a booth!
- Rita to reach out to Mary to help with coordination

Tree Stewardship Training / Volunteer Opportunities

- Refer to Rita's email
- Focus on newly planted trees for training
- Recruiting: we can reach out to people at community festival, people that have applied to the board, our networks, etc
 - In November – host event to get group together
 - In spring – start program.
 - Start as tree 'checkers' by walking through community with emphasis on newly planted trees.
 - Equip volunteers with resources to effectively communicate with homeowners.
 - Homeowners should know the value of proper watering and mulching.
- We need to be careful with what our volunteers do. Homeowners are not allowed to prune trees, etc. Some workers in the city are union members.
 - We need to figure out what the boundaries are.
 - Maybe volunteers can work with city forestry people.
 - Obvious place to start is to remove tree stakes when ready / damaged, etc.

- Budget request for 2027 for Tree Steward Program – Rita to work with city staff on how to formally request budget.

City Website

- Marco shared Googledrive with the group. Live editing of the current information on the website.

Cuyahoga County Board of Public Health

- Rita passing around information on the meeting

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm

Submitted by Katie Kelleher