

Minutes of Leonia Shade Tree Commission's Regular meeting held April 14, 2021

Present: Christine Healy, Imanta Bergmanis, Bill Ziegler, Kathi Verbeek, Vivian DeMarco, Soo Joung Woo

Absent: Diana Petrella, Julie Ulbrich, Kate Mirbaba, Mark Spiegel

Approval of minutes for March 10, 2021 - approved

The meeting is in compliance with the Open Meeting Act as the date, time, and place of all regular meetings were filed with the Borough Clerk and have been properly publicized.

Public Portion: none

Council Liaison Report:

- 2021 Budget:
 - Operational budget \$15.8million approved, average increase is \$44 per taxpayer. Will be adopted at April M&C meeting.
 - Capital budget is under consideration; STC budget is part of capital budget. STC budget should be fine.
- Municipal Building
 - Two homes (245,247) on Ft Lee Rd have been acquired
 - Bids for new building came in substantially higher for the modular construction than originally projected. Cost of materials, etc. during pandemic have skyrocketed. Researching options
- Recreation Center vaccination program has been going very well
- Environmental Committee project to revamp Highwood Hills
- Community Choice Energy Aggregation – Town to buy renewable energy in bulk which will pass on savings for taxpayers.
- Federal guidance on 880k should be received in the next 30 days
- Contract negotiations for New police chief & new captain

Chairperson Report:

- Minutes need to be posted on STC/Leonia borough website. Imanta & Christine will touch base with Julie to have that completed by David Torres
- Tree USA signs are now on the entrances to Leonia on Grand, Broad and the two ends of Fort Lee Road
- Growth Award
- Leonia Day – currently not planned, possibly rescheduled around July 4th or the Fall. Being evaluated by M&C. Need to determine a date that the proclamation can be read.
- Highwood Hills project – remove cat briar. Imanta to get a quote for the work. Christine, Christoph, Julie, and the boy scouts walked Highwood Hills to review paths, erosion, stair repair and assess effort required for clean-up. 5 yr. plan. Canopy at jeopardy and difficult to improve. Needs dedicate clean up day(s).
- Walkabout end date July 2021 – begin assignments in May
- Spring 2021 Planting – requesting quotes from 5 different companies

- Imanta and Julie will put a list together for 10-15 plantings on private property

- PNC Bank property may be a location for private planting – Kathi to reach out to the bank.
- Proposal Require Development Plans to Identify all Trees with DBH 8” or greater – Initial evaluation.
- Memorial tree to be planted – Rowena
- Memorial tree planting program – Kathi to do some research of other towns and the programs they have in place to develop a recommendation for Leonia.
- Plaques and planting - Christine looking into stone etching memorial stones

Commissioner’s Report

- Tree taken down on Magnolia (316 & 322) with sidewalk issue.
- 305 Park needs reevaluation
- New Ordinance/Community Outreach: Soo was able to get the STC ordinance published in several Korean newspaper/magazines
- Postcard created and it requires approval by the Committee to proceed with mailing
- STC Ordinance process – create a decision tree that reflects current process steps and who is responsible for each component. Kathi will create a draft.

adjourned at 9:10