

**URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**  
**Monday, 1/12/2026 3:30 p.m.**  
**Executive Sessions Room**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Brantsch, Chairperson      John Berg  
Laura Root      Andrews Boateng  
Joe Kollar

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jeff Napieralski, Urban Forestry      Kari Erdman, Secretary  
Kim Young, Council      Kyle Herman, Council President

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jeff Saltzman

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**CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 3:36 PM, we had technical issues so did not go live until around 3:50pm**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**SWEARING IN OF Laura Root by Mayor Pribonic for her 3<sup>rd</sup> term with Urban Forestry**

**Approval of Minutes: Motion by Joe Kollar to approve the minutes from the 11/10/25 meeting; Seconded by Laura Root, All in favor. Motion passed.**

- 1. Holiday Tree Festival update-** Bob let commission know that the Urban Forestry tree sold for \$600. He spoke with 2 women at the event and asked for input as to how to raise more funds next year. They suggested having trees packed with ornaments and gift cards. Jeff already has a tree for next year that was donated by a resident. Mayor Pribonic suggested doing a Stow tree and he would help with collecting gift cards to contribute to the tree for 2026. He also suggested including the schools/ residents to help provide ornaments.
- 2. Woodland Elementary School- Holiday Tree-** Mayor Pribonic let the commission know that he received great feedback from the collaboration with Woodland Elementary School on the tree displayed at City Hall. This year the commission will pick a different elementary school in Stow to have them decorate the cookies and display for 2026.
- 3. Monthly article update-** Current Monthly articles that have already been decided are below:  
January, Stow Tree Management  
February, Soft landings around trees- Joe  
March, Beech tree disease- Jeff
- 4. Tree Management Plan-** Commission would like to have a working meeting in February to collectively work the tree management plan. This will also be presented at the City Council meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup>. Joe has offered to be the spokesperson for Urban Forestry to present for 2026.
- 5. Cost share tree planting program-** The program is an opt in with the cost share to the resident. Joe would like to have the city be responsible for the cost to replace the tree versus the resident. Bob shared that the cost is very affordable for the residents as they are getting a tree well above the cost that the resident is paying along with care and maintenance through the city if the tree is planted in the tree lawn. Currently the city has a tree dilemma due to the lack of tree lawn space. Jeff shared that it is a job to figure out the right tree for the right spot. Years ago, trees that were planted in the tree lawns were much too large to accommodate the space they were planted in. Kim brought up the sidewalk issues within her neighborhood due to trees that were planted. Now with the guidance of Jeff and the Urban Forestry department they are looking at specie selection and go out to determine if a tree need removed or if the roots can be safely cut to accommodate the sidewalk replacements. The city is responsible for

the inspection of the trees and would be liable if a tree causes damage when they knew it needed to be taken care of. Andy will make a recommendation as to how this impacts the city. Barberton tree has a contract with the city to maintain the tree lawns regarding pruning and clearing the right of way. Jeff shared the clearance for the sidewalk is 9ft and roadway is 13ft. The previous pruning schedule was done approximately every 17 years. Jeff is trying to get the schedule to 6 years.

6. **Tree Academy-** No update from the academy since Joe and Andy attended last year. Joe is going to reach out to the instructor to see if they have a date set for this year. He will report back at the next meeting
7. **Approval of meeting dates and Chair/ Vice Chair-** Bob presented the same meeting day (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month as in years past). Bob was voted for Chair and Andy was selected as vice chair. Motioned for approval on dates and positions by Joe, all in favor.
8. **Young tree training- Jeff said that his entire staff attending and he was really impressed with the training. Bob also attended. Jeff is going to offer the city to host the next training at Adell Durbin as there are lots of young trees that would be ideal for training purposes.**
9. **EarthFest-** Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to 12:00pm. Commission decided they would like to giveaway a white oak for the event. Jeff said these trees would be approximately 1 ft to 18 inches tall. Laura suggested having planting instructions attached to handout with the tree as last year they had questions regarding planting at the event.
10. **NEXT MEETING: Monday, 2/9/2026, 3:30 pm, Stow City Hall Boards & Commissions Room will be a working meeting.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED - 4:36 PM**



Bob Brantsch, Chairperson



Kari Erdman, Secretary