



Tree Board

MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting – February 20, 2025, 6:00pm

Amherst Town Hall – Room across from Supervisors Office – Council Room 2(CR2)

- I. Call to Order – W. Wilson – 6:10pm
- II. Roll Call – E. Graczyk:

Wendy Wilson, Chair – Present
Dan Delano, Member - Absent
Barbara Burke, Member - Present
Kyle Townsend, Member - Present
Jeff Szatkowski, Town of Amherst Landscape Architect -Present
Dominic Creamer, Town of Amherst Forester - Present
Shawn Lavin, Town Board Liaison - Absent
Elizabeth Graczyk, Resource Coordinator - Present

- III. Approval of minutes from January meeting – *W. Wilson motion to approve minutes. B. Burke seconds. Motion approved.*

- IV. Agenda Items

- a. Administrative Items – *W. Wilson. No response from liaison regarding meeting invitation.*
 - b. Current Business

- i. *CFMP Status/Resolution status–J. Szatkowski. B. Burke motions to approve resolution acknowledging CFMP plan. W. Wilson seconds. Motion passes. J. Szatkowski will send resolution to S. Lavin to present to Town Board for approval. Note: this action fulfills, in part, the board’s mission to “advise on the development of a Community Forestry Management Plan”.*

- ii. Community Education & Outreach – Continued discussion –

- 1. Speakers’ Bureau/Community outreach and education – B.Burke. Presentation on latest slides compiled.

- Establishment of Tree Board – Mission Statement and Summary – Wendy Wilson*
 - Activities and outreach – Wendy Wilson*

- Tree City USA and Community Forestry Management Plan – Jeff Szatkowski and Dan Delano – Completed and added to group presentation.*

- Loss of Tree Canopy – October Storm – Barbara Burke*

- Native Trees – Kyle Townsend - Completed and added to group presentation.*

Group members will continue to send slides for their assigned topics with a due date by March 20, 2025. Board will review compiled slides on that date and set the April 17th meeting as a partial work session to finalize the presentation slides and identify additional speaking/presentation opportunities.

- a. Partnership with Buffalo State College Arboretum speaker series – W. Wilson will continue to engage and maintain this relationship. Annual planting event is in October.
- iii. 2025 Initiatives – Seedling giveaway
(30 White Birch, 30 Quaking Aspen, 30 Pin Oak, and 30 Tulip) – E. Graczyk sent communication to confirm councilmember continued investment in program. No response as of 2/20/2025. W. Wilson will resend request. Deadline to order seedling is February 28, 2025.
Amherst Tree Seekers – E. Graczyk – tabled until May 15, 2025.
Tree Board Social Media Page – Group members may initiate an informational-only page. E. Graczyk and W. Wilson will establish informational page prior to the March 20, 2025 meeting.
Additional Member Outreach - Members request to ask D. Creamer to invite Jeff from AJ Trees to attend next meeting. D. Creamer will reach out to Jeff and ask about interest as an ex-officio member.
- iv. Meet your treat board press release: Document is 90% complete. Waiting on one additional bio. Once bio is received, E. Graczyk will send complete press release for board approval.
- v. Tree City USA Status– J. Szatkowski – Approved for 2024.
- vi. 2025 Grant Initiatives – E. Graczyk – tabled until May 15, 2025.
- vii. Amherst State Park – Master plan and fruit tree grant program. Opportunity for Tree Board to work with State – tabled until May 15, 2025.
- viii. Brush-off stations – Discussion on invasive species in parks and effect on trees – K. Townsend. E. Graczyk applied for station to be installed at Walton Woods Park. When/if approval is granted, Tree Board members will install and maintain station. D. Creamer will assist minimally, if necessary.
- ix. Conversation about non-native Bradford Pear trees in the Town of Amherst – K. Townsend. D. Creamer noted only Cleveland Pears are being planted, mostly in right of ways. Cleveland Pears are a hybrid and do not carry the same traits as the Bradford Pear. D. Creamer will include the Tree Board in discussions about native tree planting and selection of tree species.
- x. Scheduling a park cleanup day at Walton Woods Park – public cleanup day, volunteer requirements, etc. – E. Graczyk and K. Townsend. Group commitment to participating in “Love my Park” day with Town. Group will host a park cleanup (trash collection) at Walton Woods Park on May 3, 12pm. E. Graczyk will provide registration for volunteers as well as any necessary supplies for volunteers to collect trash.
- xi. 4-H Maple Tapping Demonstration – E. Graczyk and D. Creamer. With permission from D. Creamer, E. Graczyk has assisted the Amherst 4-H group with coordination of a maple tapping demonstration at Bassett Park. 4-H has invited tree board members to attend this event on March 1 at 11am.

- xii. K. Townsend – K. Townsend. Support from the Highway Dept (forestry) and Parks with allowing Swiftwater to procure native tree seeds (w/ provenance - so not planted by humans) in areas with old growth trees. Walton Woods, Canal, and possibly a few others. WW would be the most ideal and done sustainably in areas that are not DEC wetland zones, nor HOA property - interest of Red Oaks, Black Oaks, Maples ssp., Black Gum, and Tulip Trees. These trees would be grown for The Nature Conservancy and allocated for reforestation efforts in NYS. If approved, we would like to see if there is volunteer interest from the Tree Board, and 4H to be a ground crew for seed collection. This would be a great opportunity I feel for tree board community and state wide engagement K. Townsend motions for board to support this reforestation project. W. Wilson seconds. Motion approved to pursue future involvement.
 - xiii. K. Townsend. Discussion on native pollinator garden w/ Dominic on N. Forest. Grant funding would be necessary to fund this project. If the board fully approves that native plants should be something we are also concerned with. I reached out to Ecos, and our grant writing team might want to attend next meeting to explain more of what we can do, and possibly funding options
- F. New Business: K. Townsend. Walton Woods - Another grant funded activity - Ecos Cooperative would love to have the chance to eradicate invasive species that are within the woods, and proliferating. The second prong would be reestablishing these zones with native places that already grow there. I'm not fully sure about how the funding on this would work, but it is something the group may want to explore.
- G. Public Expression (3 minutes per speaker)
- H. Upcoming Meetings – *March 20, 6pm*
- I. Motion to adjourn – Adjourned 7:50pm.

