

Minutes

Village of Kirkland Tree Advisory Commission

06-17-2025

I. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM

II. Roll Call—Present were Brian Benes, Jim Stark, Jeff Miller and Dawn Darling; absent were Michelle Chambers, Melinda Quigley and Matt Felix.

III. Old Business

A. The minutes of 05-13-2025 were read and approved.

B. Urban Forestry Plan—The UFP is finished. It is a living document and will need to be updated with new goals and timelines from time to time. Dawn and Jeff proposed to print copies of the plan for the Village Board to review and vote on.

C. Recommended Tree List- Jeff will contact Mindy to work to get a revised and updated Tree List ready for residents in July.

D. Wilson Nursery- no updates.

E. Sapling Planting-Brian talked to Hiawatha H.S. Agriculture teacher Mr. Dodge, who agreed the Ag program could take on the planting and growing of tree saplings, which would later be bought by the Village (at their replacement cost) and grown in buckets in the Public Works area until big enough to be transplanted onto the Village's parkways and open spaces.

F. Village Website Link- Brian reported that he had spoken to Village Clerk Leslie about what we are envisioning: a link on the Village's community links page that would link to the Tree Commission's Facebook page and also a link under village committees where tree regulations and Tree Commission minutes could be posted. We are waiting to hear about whether IT will be able to do this.

G. Status of the 25 Oak Saplings Planted in Behnke Park-Jim reported that Public Works installed stakes and tubes to support and protect the saplings. Brain reported that two Kindergarten families have signed up to adopt trees. Hiawatha Elementary Principal Katelyn Benes has said she will expand the program to offer the adoption program at more grade levels

H. Budget—The Public Works line item for forestry was reduced from \$12 thousand to \$10 thousand. The rationale for the reduction included a) that not all of the 12K was spent last year and b) several thousand dollars went to pay for clean up of trees downed by storms, and we do not anticipate that same storm damage this year. Jim reported that we should have sufficient funds to pay for 10-12 new trees under the 50-50 program. Dawn will mention in a new Facebook post the diminished funding as a way to motivate residents to apply early for parkway trees under the 50-50 program.

I. Trees Forever Grant—The Village of Kirkland does not qualify for a grant under this program, as we are not classified as an economically disadvantaged area of the state.

J. Rain Barrel for Behnke Park Pavilion- The rain barrel is ready to install, and Dawn and her husband will undertake to do it soon.

IV. New Business

A. The 50-50 Program for Summer/Fall 2025—Jeff will work with Mindy to get the new Recommended Tree List ready for residents; the permit application will stay the same. Jeff will revise and give to Leslie a flyer to include in the July water bill that explains the 2025 "50-50" program to residents; in August we will put out the tree signs to promote interest in the program

B. Planting Ideas—It was suggested that we set aside one tree from the Fall planting to install behind the war memorial at the corner of Main Street (Hwy 72) and 6th Street; Dawn suggested we consider a program where residents adopt planters to be placed on the sidewalk along Main Street. The planters would have an inscription that says, "Donated and planted by____(name of the resident)" and could include flowers and shrubs.

V. Next Meeting—The next meeting was set for Tuesday, August 12 at 7 PM

VI. Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeff Miller