

Minutes

Village of Kirkland Tree Advisory Commission

04-14-2026

I. Call to Order - at 7:00 PM

II. **Roll Call** - Present were Brian Benes, Jim Stark, Jeff Miller, Michelle Chambers, Melinda Quigley, Matt Felix and guest Josh Dodge; absent was Dawn Darling.

III. Old Business

A. The minutes of 11-18-2025 were approved.

B. School Partnership- Josh Dodge (Haiwatha High School Agriculture Teacher, FFA Advisor and Greenhouse Manager) reported that he had bought, with Greenhouse funds, 475 one-year-old saplings from the Mason State Nursery (see attached list). These are trees that are a) native to Illinois b) good for wildlife and c) have landscaping value. The trees were bare-root saplings that were potted by students. 20-30 percent will not emerge from dormancy (leaf out), especially the pecan, hickory and oak. Mr Dodge said the trees were to be given away to residents, without concern for remuneration. The main questions that Mr Dodge posed were a) **Who will care for the trees?** and b) **How can we make sure they get to the right places to be planted?** Mr. Dodge said the trees would be distributed from the high school greenhouse, which will open to the public on May 1. On May 10, it will be safe to place the trees outside the greenhouse. On May 22 the greenhouse will be cleaned out and closed, so ideally, Mr. Dodge suggested, all the trees should be taken and planted by then.

Discussion:

Jeff suggested the Village of Kirkland do something similar to what the DeKalb Township is doing, a free tree distribution to residents called "Trees for Tomorrow" in honor of our nation's 250th anniversary. Jeff offered to design a flyer to go out with the next water bill, if the idea is approved.

Brian said he would talk to Village Clerk Leslie about putting out a message to residents about the trees; we will also put the message on Facebook; we should also post it to the Village Forum FB page. Brian suggested each tree come with a card with care instructions; Mr. Dodge said his students could probably create such cards.

Matt suggested we reach out to the DeKalb County Forest Preserve to see if it would want to take any saplings that are left over.

Jim said there is a Public Works spot of land that is opening up that could be suitable for planting any remaining saplings, to start a sapling nursery for future transplantings.

Melinda said she would post news of the free tree distribution on the Garden Club Facebook page.

Jeff asked if a fall planting was out of the question, in the event there are trees that have not been adopted by residents by the May 22 deadline. Mr Dodge said it was

not out of the question, provided care for the saplings could be arranged over the summer (keeping them watered). It was felt that the Tree Commission could arrange this.

C. Arbor Day- It was agreed to hold an Arbor Day celebration on Friday, April 24 at 7 PM and to plant a Siberian Spruce tree on the north side of the Bull Run pond. The tree will be purchased from St. Aubin for \$125. At the Arbor Day celebration, we will read a proclamation signed by the Village President.

D. Tree City Status - Brian reported that the Village of Kirkland has been accepted again as a "Tree City", and we should receive our materials soon from the Arbor Day Foundation.

IV. New Business

A. We need to find a nursery to replace St. Aubin, as it is closing in June. We should look into getting clearance prices or even donated trees for our 50-50 parkway tree planting program. There are many other nurseries, but the problem is that they do not plant the trees; we have to hire a landscaper. We will discuss this problem further in an upcoming meeting.

V. Next Meeting- Tuesday, May 12 at 7 PM

VI. Adjournment at 7:50 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeff Miller

Mason State Nursery Order #16259

Items:

Shagbark Hickory- Quantity: 25, Price: \$30.00

Red Maple- Quantity: 100, Price: \$65.00

Bald Cypress- Quantity: 100, Price: \$65.00

Sycamore- Quantity: 100, Price: \$65.00

Swamp White Oak- Quantity: 100, Price: \$65.00

Pecan- Quantity: 25, Price: \$30.00

Elderberry- Quantity: 25, Price: \$15.00

Order Total: **\$335.00**

Shipping Charge: **\$152.00**

Amount Paid: **\$487.00**

Tree total - 475

Expect 20-30% to not emerge from dormancy. Particularly pecan, hickory and oak.

May 22nd - Greenhouse cleanout

Not concerned about financial reimbursement.

Primary concern is getting plants to Kirkland residents who will plant and care for them.

Any educational component is a bonus.