

## CIRCLEVILLE TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES 1/8/2026

The Circleville Tree Commission convened in Council Chambers 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl., 127 South Court Street, on Thursday, January 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. Members present at Roll Call: Chair Beth Kowalski, Alan Gribler, Joe Bradshaw, Christopher Burton, Felicia Speakman, Council Liaison Sheri Theis, City Arborist Tyler Mitten and Sarah Kolesar, Clerk. Invited guests present: Volunteers Doug Baker and Paul Hang. Absent Members: Vice Chair Lisa Wiseman and Matt Fosnaugh.

Kowalski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with Roll Call.

### **Old Business:**

1. Kowalski motioned to approve the meeting minutes from November 13, 2025. Burton seconded. Motion carried.
2. Community Outreach & Visibility Report:  
Burton mentioned that he spent time reviewing the Grant now that he is publicity chair and was unsure if signs are being placed per the Grant requirements as well as press releases that are to be sent out for Arbor Day. Burton also noted reading about tags that are supposed to be used that list plant species and a QR code, highlighting the verbiage says, “tags will be placed on some newly planted trees”. The Commission discussed and collectively agreed to investigate possibilities for using plastic signs and developing a specific design, where to get them done, etc. Burton volunteered to review ideas to further discuss at the next meeting.
3. IRA UCF Planting, Phase 4 plans:  
Kowalski emphasized they need to decide how many trees to plant and the locations. Mitten noted that the larger tree planting spaces are North. Theis identified spaces available on E Mound Street and High Street. Mitten highlighted there are environmental and community benefits in planting the larger trees, especially if the cost for both small and large trees are comparable; Mound Street has approximately 50-60 small-medium tree spaces. Theis noted residents have pointed out that they would also like trees planted on Mound Street. Mitten noted potential larger tree spaces are near the Clark Drive neighborhood and nearby streets, including Lawnwood, Brookhaven, Forestview Court, Meadow Lane, and Garden Parkway which all have 8-foot tree lawns. Mitten said there are also a lot of potential planting spaces North of 188. Kowalski pointed out that watering the trees should also be taken into consideration when deciding where to plant and that clustering trees is beneficial when it comes to watering. Members discussed potential locations and aimed for 150 trees to be planted and agreed to circle back on this at the next meeting after Tyler reviews addresses and further evaluates available spaces.
4. Tree City USA Application:  
Theis noted she and Lisa submitted the Tree City USA application the beginning of December, though have not received a response yet. Theis also noted they qualify to apply for the growth award and a big part of that is due to Tyler’s inventory completed last year; they received 10 points for inventory and 2 points for each new TC member.

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## **New Business:**

1. Arborists' Report:  
Mitten explained evaluating larger trees throughout the City marked as in fair or poor condition and the priority level of those trees from a safety standpoint, pointing out one tree that needs to be removed is a pin oak on Park Place behind the firehouse. Mitten said it's very decayed and a candidate for removal soon. Mitten pointed out he's also been working on a strategic street tree management plan for the Service Department, providing them with information/direction on managing street trees.
2. Communication with the Service Department:  
Kowalski asked for any ideas/suggestions on ways to improve communication with the Service Department, since they recently cut trees down without making the Tree Commission aware. Theis pointed out that they used to attend the TC meetings but have stopped doing that, and that it would be beneficial to know their plans moving forward or any business dealing with trees within the City. Kowalski suggested that since Sarah, the Clerk, reaches out one week in advance for agenda items, that she could also include the Service Department in those emails, should they have anything to share or update the TC about.
3. Arbor Day plans:  
Members discussed planting at Barthalemas Park and a tree giveaway, and including other entities for Arbor Day like soil & water, Rumpke recycling, Parks, a farmer's market, etc. Kowalski suggested that everyone should brainstorm on people to invite and develop a final list next month, including having a point of contact and phone number on hand.
4. Other business:  
Kowalski pointed out that per the Clerk, the other Commissions elect officers in January and asked what the TC would prefer. Kowalski noted the TC has historically held elections in July because that is when new members join, and because the TC doesn't normally meet in January. Kowalski suggested keeping it this way, Member's agreed.

Theis emphasized a new term started for City Council including a new Council member and different members on Boards/Commissions. Theis explained that President Keller initiated a new Council Committee that is solely for overseeing Boards and Commissions, noting that she will be a committee member, but Jeff Hallinin is the Chairperson. Theis said it's still developing and is unsure if she will remain the TC Liaison or if Jeff will be, but she will remain in the TC.

## **Tabled Business:**

1. Approval of Changes to Comprehensive Tree Plan including pruning procedures.
2. Status of IRA UCF Planting, Phases 1 & 2, including possible legal action.

## **Upcoming Events:**

The next Tree Commission meeting is Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Burton motioned to adjourn the Tree Commission meeting at 7:11 p.m. Seconded by Kowalski. Motion carried. Minutes prepared by Sarah Kolesar, Assistant Clerk.