



West Chester

Tree Commission

I

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting of Wednesday, January 7, 2026

Attendance:

Tree Commission (TC) Members: Chip Horne, Chris Pugliese, Jeff Beitel, Jamie Paxson, Anna Sechrist, Dale Frens

Consulting Borough Arborist (Borough Arborist): John Hosbach

Borough Tree Program Manager: Will Williams

Chip Horne, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Room 232, Borough Hall.

A. Minutes of the December 3, 2025 meeting were approved. The motion was made by Chip Horne, seconded by Jeff Beitel, and approved unanimously (hereinafter, "Motion: Horne/Beitel").

B. Additional Items Requested by Members and Guests

None

C. Tree Commission Vacancy

Chip Horne reported that no one has responded to the Borough's advertisement of a vacancy in the Tree Commission. Members are urged to reach out to potential candidates.

D. Election of Officers

The following current officers were re-elected for 2026: Chip Horne, Chairman; Chris Pugliese, Vice-Chairman, Dale Frens, Secretary.

E. Discussion with John Hosbach, Borough Consulting Arborist

1. Evaluation of trees that have been on hold since late 2025: Chip Horne presented a summary of 5 trees that the Tree Commission placed on hold for evaluation by John Hosbach in January 2026, the effective date of his agreement. John will report on these trees at the February meeting of the TC.

2. Bi-Weekly on-site visits: John will inform the TC of his regular schedule of visits to the Borough.
3. Evaluation of ash trees in Borough parks: Tomorrow, John is scheduled to meet with representatives of Friends of Hoopes Park, the Borough, and Tree Commission members to) provide a second opinion on the recommendations contained in the 2025 assessment prepared by Mike Dunn, and 2) review the condition of 13 trees that are located in the area selected for a new playground. Following this on-site review, he will conduct the same assessment for Everhart Park.
4. Assist with Spring Tree Planting: John is requested to make final tree selections.
5. Assist with finding a summer intern: John will contact Williamson College of the Trades for potential candidates for summer 2026. Will Williams will work with DPW to allow the intern to be hired and managed by DPW as one of its typical summer interns.
6. Tree program processes: John will work with Will Williams and Kathy Brooks to generate a revised work request form as well as other tree program work flow forms, procedures, and protocols.

F. Tree Condemnations

1. The following trees were reviewed for condemnation:
 - a. 426 College Avenue: 3 hemlock trees infested with wooly adelgids, one fallen and two in severe decline. The Tree Commission (TC) unanimously approved condemnation of the three trees and replacement with two suitable canopy trees (Horne/Beitel).
 - b. 225 N. New Street: Crab tree in severe decline. The TC unanimously approved condemnation of the tree and replacement with a suitable understory tree (Beitel/Sechrist).
2. Condemned Tree Report
 - a. Two trees were condemned in November, and no trees were removed during the month, for a net total of 22 condemned trees not removed.

G. 2026 Tree Planting

1. Spring Tree Planting: Our planting goal for Spring 2026 is 100 trees. The Borough schedule for the spring planting is as follows:
 - a. Finalize list of planting locations: Mid-January.
 - b. Determine tree species for each location: Mid-February.
 - c. Send letters to property owners: Mid-February.

H. Status of 2026 Tree Contracts.

1. The tree maintenance contract will be awarded to Tremendous Tree Service LLC, Springfield, PA.
2. The tree planting bid is presently out to bid on PennBID.

I. Next Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, Room 232, Borough Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Minutes prepared by Dale H. Frens, Secretary