

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Tree Commission  
Held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building  
On Wednesday, September 13, 2023  
At 7:30 P.M.**

The Chairman, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Councilman Anthony Moore, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT:

Commission Members: Alex Boccabella; Shannon Laurenzi; Matt Smith; John Traxler; Anthony Moore;  
Certified Arborist, Richard Varga (Non-Voting Member)

ABSENT:

Mary Berges; Liesa Wetzig (Ms. Wetzig arrived after Roll Call)

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE AVON TREE COMMISSION HELD WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2023

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Moore to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Avon Tree Commission held Wednesday, August 9, 2023, and to approve said minutes as published, and the vote was: Mr. Boccabella, "yes"; Ms. Laurenzi, "yes"; Mr. Smith, "yes"; Mr. Traxler, "yes"; Mr. Moore, "yes".

The vote was 5 for and 0 against and the Chairman declared the motion passed.

DISCUSSION OF THE 2023 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION – Ms. Laurenzi

Ms. Laurenzi asked for updates on Arbor Day and Mr. Smith reported that he spoke with Mayor Jensen regarding when the Mayor will speak to the public on Arbor Day. He said that they agreed that we will have the Avon High School choir members sing before he talks. Last year we had them sing the National Anthem and then the Mayor spoke. This year the choir will sing four songs and the fourth one will be the National Anthem, then the Mayor will speak.

Note: Ms. Wetzig arrived at the meeting at this time.

Mr. Moore said that he talked to Safety Director Duane Streater about the electrical box and Mr. Smith added that he stopped up at the Aquatic Center today and Streets Supt. Tim Loeser was there with people working on that. They told him that there is a chance they will be done with the electrical work but they said, better get the mats to lay down over a cord, so he will call H&B Mat Rental. He thought it is \$64 for a dozen 3x10 mats. Mr. Moore said that was fine, just work through either Ms. Laurenzi or Finance Director Steve Presley so we can run that through the City. Mr. Smith asked if we needed to get a purchase order and Mr. Moore said, yes. Mr. Smith said that he would take care of that if Ms. Laurenzi wanted him to do so and she said that she would.

Ms. Laurenzi asked if they had gotten the beer permit and Ms. Wetzig said that her husband had applied for that through the Lions Club. He sent it in but has not gotten it back yet. Ms. Laurenzi then asked about the food permit for City Barbeque. Mr. Moore said that we have the permit so we should be good to go. Ms. Laurenzi said, so they are not bringing in a vehicle and Mr. Moore said, no, we are going to do like

what we did last year where we put the food tent in between the two tents, and then City Barbeque also has their own small stand that they will put together.

Ms. Laurenzi said, so City Barbeque is going to provide a variety of food for Arbor Day and she has a list of things that she was going to submit for the City to purchase tax free such as water, apple cider, cups, napkins, tablecloths, etc. If there is anything that anybody thinks we need, please let her know. Mr. Smith stated that, as far as cups, when he was at the Railroad Brewery this past week, they actually donated about 200 plastic cups for the beer. Ms. Laurenzi said, so she will just get smaller cups for the cider and also get bottles of water.

Ms. Laurenzi asked about the acorns for the guessing game. Mr. Varga noted that he has a ton of hickory nuts and we might want to use those. Ms. Wetzig asked if they were going to be doing the matching of nuts to the trees and have pictures, and also do the scavenger hunt with the leaves and nuts. Mr. Varga said, yes, and he will bring the leaves for everything. Mr. Traxler listed the different trees that they had chosen.

Ms. Laurenzi asked Mr. Moore if we know if State Representative Gayle Manning was going to want to speak. Mr. Moore said that he did not think that she was planning on saying anything but he can reach out to her office and ask about that.

Ms. Laurenzi wondered if we had an ad for Arbor Day in the paper like we did last year. Mr. Moore stated that he placed something on social media on a couple Avon sites but did not know if Ms. Berges contacted the newspapers. If she did not, he could do that; just let him know.

Ms. Laurenzi asked how many sponsors are going to need a table at Arbor Day? Mr. Varga said as far as he knew, just the Wine Room and Bartlett Tree. Bartlett Tree wants a table because they want to hand out information about trees also in conjunction with the information that we have about trees.

Ms. Laurenzi stated that at the tree sales, a few others expressed interest in tables to her: Minuteman Press, a landscape company called Blades of Grass, and Pinspiration. So we need to reach out to them in a day or so. Mr. Moore asked if we had space for the Village Project. This is a non-profit, serving five communities, Avon being one of them. If somebody is in active cancer treatment they will feed that person's family for so many days while the person is in treatment. They have never turned anyone away. They serve our community and we want to raise some more awareness for their cause for our residents. They do a phenomenal job and are privately funded. The City actually did partner with them to help with the cost of food because it is free.

Ms. Laurenzi asked if the Lorain Metroparks was going to bring a table and Mr. Varga responded that the Metroparks employees from Miller Nature Preserve will be at Arbor Day.

Ms. Laurenzi asked Mr. Varga if he was getting as many donations as he did last year. She said that she knew that City Barbeque was going to donate a basket. Mr. Varga stated that he has been collecting the certificates and donations and Ms. Laurenzi said that after the meeting, they could go through those and she can put them on her sheet so she knows how many we have, etc. Mr. Varga said that he has some on hand but he told the donors that he would start picking them up after our meeting tonight and they all said to just stop by and they would have them all ready for him.

Ms. Laurenzi asked Ms. Wetzig about volunteers from the Leo's Club and Ms. Wetzig said that she does not have anybody from the Leo's Club. It is Homecoming that weekend of October 7<sup>th</sup> so the students are busy getting ready for that. Mr. Traxler noted that they do have volunteers from the Garden Club and Ms. Wetzig said yes, and there was a group of younger students who helped at the Willoway event. She did not know if they would be able to help out at Arbor Day as they were a lot younger than the high school kids. She said she thought she would check with the Boy Scouts and Ms. Laurenzi suggested that maybe students from the Middle School could volunteer as they would not be involved in Homecoming.

Ms. Laurenzi said that she thought that everything was in place for the tree saplings and she asked Mr. Traxler how many they had. Mr. Traxler answered, they had 100. Mr. Moore asked if that would be enough and Mr. Traxler said, yes, they had plenty last year. Mr. Varga added that Ron Larson, who owns The Strip, had told Mr. Varga that he had a lot of seedlings to donate so Mr. Varga will stop to see him and see exactly what he has.

Ms. Laurenzi stated that she knows that they have the entertainment wrapped up. The High School Choir will sing and Curt Vigg will be there and she asked Mr. Smith if that would be similar to last year and Mr. Smith said, yes.

Mr. Smith asked how many tents they will be having this year and Mr. Boccabella responded that last year they had two tents that were 20 ft. x 30 ft. This year we have added a third tent. Tents are scheduled to be set up on Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and taken down either Sunday night or Monday morning. Mr. Moore asked Mr. Boccabella to let him know Thursday when that is going to happen because he needs to let the City know. Mr. Boccabella said that he would and he was assuming that the tents are going in generally the same area as last year. Ms. Laurenzi said that was correct. Mr. Boccabella said that they may want to meet there the week before and just do a final site survey and Ms. Laurenzi agreed.

Ms. Laurenzi stated that everyone was good with the tree instructions and with tying trees up for the saplings, etc. and she asked if they had decided what they were going to do with the tree planting? Mr. Varga stated that he and Recreation Coordinator Clare Harasimchuk had selected a couple areas for the plantings and they were thinking about doing two trees this year, one that is balled and burlapped and one that is in a container, just to show people the difference in the planting techniques. And they separated the timing so if people come early they can see a tree planting or if they come later, they can see another tree planting. Mr. Moore asked if they were all set with the microphone and Mr. Boccabella said that there was a microphone at the stage; it is portable and battery-operated and there is a 25 ft. cord to it.

Ms. Laurenzi said lastly, she will double check with Ms. Berges to make sure that there would be newspaper reporters at Arbor Day.

#### MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Boccabella advised that he will be at Arbor Day but that he will have to leave about 2:30 p.m. after the event is over as he has to be at his niece's wedding.

Ms. Wetzig asked if they were going to have a banner at Arbor Day and Mr. Moore said that he was trying to work it out with Law Director John Gasior on paying for that program so that we can remove the watermarks. Ms. Wetzig stated that they had talked about the design of the sign and Mr. Moore said he did not want to design anything in the program if we cannot use it to print. Ms. Wetzig said, wasn't

somebody going to get it for us? Mr. Moore said that Councilman Brian Fischer was going to do the sign for us for free but if we take that to him, it has a watermark so he cannot print that. So we have to buy the program and then the watermark comes off and we will own the rights to it and then he can print it. Mr. Moore said so he needs until the end of the week with Mr. Gasior and then we will know.

Mr. Varga stated that he believed they are going to get a banner next Wednesday when they get their Tree City USA award so we will have that.

Mr. Varga reported that Willoway was really excited about the sale on Saturday; they said that it turned out to be a great event and it looks like they are going to do it again next year.

Mr. Varga stated that it is time to recertify their Tree City USA designation, so he has been working on this with Michelle Morahan in the Service Dept. and Recreation Coordinator Clare Harasimchuk who have been keeping our statistics. We have to have the application for recertification in by December 31<sup>st</sup>. The only thing we have to do is we have to meet with the Urban Foresters so we have to set up a meeting sometime in October or November. We need a couple people from the Tree Commission to go over the whole process of being a Tree City USA going forward. And the Urban Foresters want to meet with us and go over our tree plan for the City. We really do not have a complete tree plan. He has outlined a tentative plan but the whole idea of the Urban Foresters meeting here is to go over what we should detail with our tree plan. So should the Law Director be at this meeting? There has to be some Council members because part of this tree plan eventually is going to be in conjunction with the Tree Ordinance that we have to work on also. So all of this is involved in being a Tree City USA.

Mr. Moore suggested having the Urban Foresters come to the Tree Commission meeting in December and Mr. Varga said that they want to have a private meeting with only four or five people. Mr. Moore said he would actually insist that they come to our meeting so all of our Tree Commission members can meet with them. He does not understand why they would not want to come and meet with the Commission. Is he off base on that? Mr. Varga responded, no, he was not off base; he was just indicating what the Urban Foresters told him. They are going to be at the awards ceremony in Beachwood so we will talk to them then about this and clarify everything. Mr. Moore said yes, he will talk to them.

Mr. Moore stated that he just wanted to thank everybody for all the work they have done on Arbor Day. And the Commission has done a lot in the first year so he said again that he just wanted to thank everyone for their hard work.

Mr. Moore asked Mr. Varga about the pruning program throughout the City. He said that he knows that we have a certain amount in our budget for pruning and he thought that Mr. Varga had mentioned that he was going to try to identify trees throughout the City that needed to be pruned. Was that for our Tree City USA designation? Mr. Varga said, yes, and we have done that already. He said that he goes out continually with the Streets Dept. to look at trees. The problem is that the City does not own the tree lawn trees, the residents own them. The City has the right in the Ordinance to prune for the right of way so what he proposed to the Streets Dept. was sending out a letter and the ordinance to residents who have trees that need to be pruned, telling them that the City is going to prune their tree because it is in the right of way. But since it is their tree, we preface that by saying that, if they wish to prune it themselves, that is fine with us, just let us know. If not, the City is going to come through and prune the tree. So that is the way we set it up right now.

### AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Marge Flannery, 3816 Jaycox Road, asked if the Tree Commission had ever contacted the Ohio Native Habitat Nursery. They are on Jaycox Road, almost to Mills Road. Davey Tree and North Coast Repairs are there and if you go down that driveway, Ohio Native Habitat Nursery is there. They rented the property from KMU and have just moved there. They have two greenhouses up and are growing all these plants in there that are native to this area. They have a really nice website and they are promoting trees and plants native to the area. They would probably love to be invited to something like Arbor Day.

### ADJOURN

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Laurenzi to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Avon Tree Commission and the vote was: Mr. Smith, "yes"; Mr. Boccabella, "yes"; Ms. Laurenzi, "yes"; Ms. Wetzig, "yes"; Mr. Traxler, "yes"; Mr. Moore, "yes".

The vote was 6 for and 0 against and the Chairman declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council