

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Tree Commission  
Held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building  
On Wednesday, October 12, 2022  
At 7:30 P.M.**

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

**PRESENT:**

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

Others in Attendance: Clerk of Council Barbara Brooks

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE AVON TREE COMMISSION HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Berges to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Avon Tree Commission held Wednesday, September 14, 2022, and to approve said minutes as published, and the vote was: Ms. Berges, "yes"; Mr. Boccabella, "yes"; Ms. Laurenzi, "yes"; Mr. Smith, "yes"; Mr. Traxler, "yes"; Ms. Wetzig, "yes"; Mr. Moore, "yes".

The vote was 7 for and 0 against and the Chairman declared the motion passed.

**DISCUSSION AND FINALIZING OF PLANS FOR THE ARBOR DAY ACTIVITIES – Ms. Laurenzi**

Ms. Laurenzi said that she had passed out an updated agenda for the Arbor Day activities that they could go through and see where they are and see some things that they need to wrap up.

Ms. Laurenzi said that the first item on the agenda is the timeline of events. At 12:00 noon we will do an opening with Mr. Moore and Mayor Jensen and it was decided to do the National Anthem first. Ms. Laurenzi thought it would be about 20 minutes for that opening and then the tree planting and tree pruning demos would follow at 12:45 pm and 1:30 pm. Mr. Varga said that the tree planting would be first and he was hoping that Mr. Traxler would help with that. Then depending on how many people we have, he would like to have 2 to 4 pruning demonstrations. Once you get over 20 people it is really hard to speak over everybody and communicate with everybody properly. So he would like to limit it to 20 people each time. Ms. Laurenzi asked if he could keep the demonstrations to 20 minutes and Mr. Varga said that 10 to 15 minutes is plenty of time because we just want to go over the basic concepts of proper pruning. Ms. Laurenzi asked if they thought that 45 minutes was enough to do the opening and the tree planting or should it be an hour? Mr. Varga said that for the tree planting, we will probably pre-dig the hole and he will have a 15 gallon container plant so that is probably only going to take 10 minutes. Ms. Berges noted that the opening will not take that long as the Mayor will be brief and Mr. Moore said he would not say much. Ms. Laurenzi asked, so do we want to do the tree planting at 12:30 pm then? Mr. Varga said, yes, and then at 12:45 pm we will start into the first tree pruning, and he thought that the pruning demonstrations should be done one right after another. Ms. Laurenzi said, so she would put 12:45 pm, 1:00 pm and 1:15 pm for the pruning demonstrations. Ms. Laurenzi asked if there will be some information sheets on the planting and pruning and Mr. Varga said that he has all that information and can print it and we can make copies.

Ms. Laurenzi then referred to the next agenda item which is the Christmas Tree Dedication and asked when they wanted to do that? Ms. Berges felt that if everyone is going to be gathered for the opening, it might be best to do the dedication at the very beginning before people disperse for other activities. Ms. Laurenzi said, so we will do the National Anthem, the opening and go right into the tree dedication, followed by the tree planting and we can adjust the time as needed. Ms. Laurenzi asked who was going to do the tree dedication and Mr. Varga believed it was going to be the French Creek Foundation. Mr. Moore said that he would talk to the Mayor or Clint Gault, President of the French Creek Foundation, to see what they wanted to do.

Ms. Laurenzi asked if they wanted to do a plaque with information about the Christmas Tree, such as who donated it, the year it was planted, etc. Mr. Varga said that there again, he thought that Mr. Gault was talking about doing a plaque so we can ask him about that also.

Ms. Laurenzi said that for the agenda item of Bags and Giveaways, she was working on putting together the registration table where we will have some giveaway bags. She wants to know if any of the sponsors have things that they want us to distribute such as flyers, coupons, etc. Mr. Varga stated that they have a whole stack of gift cards but nobody has said that they wanted to distribute flyers as of yet. He talked to Amy from the Lorain County Metroparks and they are considering just showing up and having a small booth just to answer questions about the Metroparks and trees in general. He will be stopping back to firm that up with them. Ms. Laurenzi suggested having some of the information about the pruning and planting along with some information about our Tree Commission and a thank you from the Tree Commission to the City of Avon and our sponsors; maybe we can put together some things like that for the registration table. Also, she was thinking about having something for the kids to take home such as coloring pages, or a little craft project. And we have the tree saplings; she asked Mr. Traxler if they had 100 saplings and Mr. Traxler said, yes, and there is a possibility of having more. Mr. Varga said he and Mr. Traxler had a meeting with Mr. Demaline and he indicated that there was going to be possibly more than an extra 50 saplings so we would have at least 150 in total. Mr. Traxler added, and they will be in containers. Ms. Laurenzi said that maybe we would want to have a bag to put the containers in and she asked Mr. Traxler to confirm the size of the container and the height of the saplings so that she could get appropriate bags and Mr. Traxler said he would get back to her on that. Mr. Traxler said that they were going to order the planting instructions. Ms. Wetzig said that she was going to make the tags to put on the saplings with the planting instructions and Ms. Laurenzi said that she would help with that. It was decided to just give the saplings to people as they come in rather than using the tickets as they had talked about previously.

There was discussion about having people take pictures of their trees over the next year or so and sending the pictures to the website or someone on the Commission so that growth of the tree could be followed. Ms. Brooks did not know if individuals could upload to the website but she could talk to the Mayor's Assistant and see what is best; maybe social media is a better outlet for that. Ms. Wetzig said that maybe we could make a tag regarding taking the pictures, etc. and put that tag on the sapling along with the planting instructions.

Ms. Laurenzi said that the next agenda item was the Avon City Tree and asked if we wanted to have information about that available at Arbor Day. Mr. Varga said that we will have the proclamation that is passed by City Council so we could bring that. Mr. Moore suggested just laying the proclamation on a table so that people could see it. Mr. Varga noted, and also the City of Avon won the award from Lorain County Soil and Water Conservation District for the biggest tree in Lorain County. In conjunction with that, there was a \$100 gift certificate from Don Mould's Plantation for the Big Tree Award, and the Mayor

told the Tree Commission to use that so that is included in our stack of gift certificates right now. Also through the Tree Commission, we got our designation as a Monarch Waystation at the Cahoon House so we are going to put that on a little plaque there. Ms. Berges said that we could have several small tables to display information and awards. Mr. Varga asked if the tents will be set up on Friday and Mr. Boccabella said that a lot of it depends on the weather but he assumed it can be done Thursday or Friday. Thursday makes more sense which gives us an extra day to see if we need more tables, etc.

Ms. Laurenzi stated that the next item is Food. She knows that Mr. Smith has the beer tent all set up with the Lions Club and she assumes that they will provide cups. Mr. Smith said that he went to Costco looking for 16 oz. cardboard cups but all the cardboard cups there were small and so he bought the Solo cups that are recyclable. He said that he will pick up the beer keg on Saturday morning and we can unload it at the Aquatic Center. Ms. Laurenzi said, and the Lions Club will be there to help serve. Mr. Smith said, yes, and he will also work in the beer tent. Ms. Laurenzi asked Mr. Varga about InForno Pizza and Mr. Varga reported that the owner wants to be involved but as of a week ago he was trying to hire more people; he is really short on help like everybody else. So Mr. Varga thought that maybe we should have a backup for the pizza. Ms. Wetzig said that he can check with the High School about who they order pizza from for the concession stand. Ms. Laurenzi asked when Mr. Varga thought InForno Pizza would be able to let us know if he can be there for Arbor Day. She thought that we need to know by Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Varga stated that he was going there again tomorrow to talk to the owner. Ms. Laurenzi said, and we will have water available and we talked about doing hot cocoa and she thought hot apple cider would be good too. So we are also going to get hot beverage containers and then we will also probably need some smaller cups. Mr. Moore noted that if the weather was really nice, people might not want hot beverages; he suggested not buying anything until we see what the forecast is going to be. We could have some days of 65 degrees and no one would want hot cocoa or hot cider. Mr. Boccabella said that the beverage containers can hold hot or cold so it does not matter. Ms. Laurenzi asked, so if we have water, beer, and cider whether it is hot or cold, is that enough and everyone said, yes.

Ms. Laurenzi stated that the Tree Scavenger Hunt was the next item. Ms. Wetzig said that Mr. Varga just showed her the sheet on that; on the back it has little tips, and lines for names and addresses, so we will collect all those and do a drawing later and then inform them that they won a certificate. She said that she will have a box to collect those. Mr. Varga mentioned some of the gift certificates they have right now: from Ray's Auto, there are 2 Visa cards of \$50 and 5 oil changes/lubes; Taylor Rental has given 10 certificates at \$25 each, InForno Pizza has provided 2 certificates for \$50, and then there is the City of Avon \$100 gift certificate. Ms. Laurenzi said that we could even just do a door prize. So we need to see what we have for families and then for the kids. She asked Mr. Varga to put together a list of exactly what we have so we can decide what we want to do. Mr. Varga said that he would have the final list on Friday.

Ms. Laurenzi stated, for Entertainment, Curt Vigg will be there and she asked what time that would be. Mr. Smith said that Mr. Vigg would start setting up about 11:00 am. He noted that on the Arbor Day agenda it says that Mr. Vigg will be "near the beer tent" and he wants him to be in the beer tent so if it is raining, his electronics would be protected. Ms. Laurenzi said that absolutely if it is raining, he could be in the beer tent but we were going to put him on the stage and the stage is probably not going to be in the beer tent. Mr. Smith said that he just wants to put Mr. Vigg in the beer tent right from the start. There was some discussion about a tent that Service/Safety Director Duane Streater will have. Mr. Smith said that he was not aware of that; he spoke with Mr. Streater about electrical power and he said he is going to have a generator. Ms. Laurenzi said we need to find out how big the tent is. Mr. Smith said again that Mr. Vigg will be in the beer tent; that will help sell the beer. Mr. Moore asked if people who do not drink beer would be uncomfortable about coming into the beer tent? Mr. Smith said that, at the Duck Tape

Festival, there were families with infants in the beer tent, listening to Mr. Vigg play. You will have all sorts of families in the beer tent whether they are drinking beer or not. Someone suggested calling it something other than the beer tent. Mr. Smith said, no, you have to designate it a beer tent, so when someone buys a beer, we will have a sign saying they have to keep their beer in the beer tent. Those are State regulations; you cannot be wandering around the property with beer. Ms. Laurenzi noted that we want that tent to be open for people to go in there and eat their pizza and Mr. Smith said, they can go in there but we have to designate it a beer tent. Ms. Laurenzi said they need to find out about the other tent so we can see how we want to set it up.

Ms. Laurenzi said that, for the Kids' Table, she thought we would do a table with some coloring pages, crayons, colored pencils and maybe a little acorn craft, and they can pick up the scavenger hunt pages there as well. And we will have the scavenger hunt pages at the welcome table also.

Under the Sponsors/Donations agenda item, Ms. Laurenzi said that she has listed our sponsors and they are all the ones on the flyer and we can add anybody to that.

Ms. Laurenzi said that, in regard to advertising and getting our flyers out, etc., she knows that everyone received a flyer in an email from Ms. Brooks and she has copies for everyone. She has given some flyers out but she has them for everyone to distribute wherever they happen to stop in Avon. She will go to the Fire and Police Depts. with flyers and she knows Ms. Berges is taking care of giving them to the Senior Center.

Ms. Berges stated that the flyers have been distributed today by the schools via email to all the parents and she is also going to reach out to Holy Trinity and St. Mary's. She will be dropping off some flyers at the Senior Center and also at the Library and will check with the daycares. The Garden Club is having a meeting next week and she is going to stop there and have some flyers and also see if they will post it or distribute it through their email to their members. For social media, she knows that Mr. Moore already posted something on "I Love Avon" and on Facebook. Then she has the newspapers to contact: Westlife, Sun Newspapers, the Chronicle, and the Morning Journal.

Ms. Laurenzi said that she talked to Mr. Smith and Mr. Varga about reaching out to all businesses in Avon. She definitely wants to make sure that all of our sponsors have some flyers posted in their businesses if possible, so she wants to make sure that we get some flyers to all of them. Mr. Traxler said he wanted to mention that Willoway has been most generous with donations and they emailed the flyer to all their employees.

Ms. Laurenzi stated for the Grounds and Cleanup item, she has had several conversations with Mr. Boccabella and she thinks we are covered on everything: we have done some planning on the tents and tables, microphones, stage. We discussed the beverage containers and the barrel for the water. She asked if trash bins are being provided by the City and Ms. Brooks said that she contacted Mr. Streator and he said he would contact Republic about getting those. Ms. Laurenzi asked if we could have separate bins for trash and recycling and Ms. Brooks said we can designate one as recycling. She can mention it to Mr. Streator. Ms. Laurenzi said that we are looking for a few volunteers so if anyone has any volunteers, please put them in touch with her and we can give them some type of assignment.

Ms. Laurenzi said, and so the only other thing to discuss is the tables for the sponsors. If there are any of the sponsors or anyone that is going to need table space at the event, we need to know who they are and how much space they need so we can have it set up ahead of time. We need to have that wrapped up at

least a week before Arbor Day. Mr. Moore stated that City Council did a proclamation for March 21<sup>st</sup> to be designated "Save Soil" Day and Ram Appana, the spokesman for Save Soil, wanted to have a table at Arbor Day to raise awareness of this movement. He would not be disturbing anything we do and Mr. Moore did not see a problem with it, but he is running it by the Commission. There was no opposition to this.

#### DISCUSSION OF THE APPLICATION FOR TREE CITY USA DESIGNATION – Mr. Varga

Mr. Varga stated that he, Mr. Streator, and Michelle Morahan in the Service Dept. have been working on this and are well in process of the application. Also, he has communicated with Stephanie Miller, our urban forester and went over it with her and she said we were on track. And when he was in Sweden, he had the opportunity to talk to the Director of the Arbor Day Foundation and went over everything with him and he said if we had any problems to call him and he gave Mr. Varga his card with his number. So Mr. Varga feels very comfortable about the application but he wants to have it submitted within the next two weeks so if there is anything that we did miss we can correct it before the deadline of December 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### DISCUSSION OF THE YOU TUBE VIDEOS ON TREE PLANTING AND CARE BEING ADDED TO THE CITY WEBSITE – Mr. Varga

Mr. Varga reported that he and Mr. Smith met with Kyle Burch, who has completed a couple other YouTube videos for the City already, and he is going to produce pruning and planting videos to post on our Tree Commission website. Mr. Varga sent him a couple YouTube videos from Utah State because he has a connection there and we can work off from that format. So we are in the process of making the YouTube videos.

#### MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Boccabella asked if there was a target time for them to show up for the Arbor Day ceremony on Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, and Ms. Laurenzi said that she would have Ms. Brooks send out an email. The setup is on Friday but we also have time on Saturday morning so we will see how that goes.

Ms. Laurenzi thanked everyone participating in making this Arbor Day a success and for all of their hard work. She said to please feel free to call her if they had any questions or any updates on anything that we have talked about. She said that she will be out of town from October 21<sup>st</sup> to October 28<sup>th</sup>, and during that time she will have very little access to email or anything but she will be back on the 29<sup>th</sup> and then we have the whole week before Arbor Day.

Ms. Wetzig asked about getting copies of the scavenger hunt sheet once it is finalized and Ms. Brooks said to bring it in to City Hall and either she or the Mayor's Assistant can make the copies.

Mr. Varga stated that the Tree Commission and the City of Avon are working with AT&T Pioneers to plant trees at Crushers Stadium this Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. AT&T is donating the trees but they are looking for volunteers to help plant them because as of today, they only have 2 volunteers. Mr. Varga talked to Tim Loeser, the Streets Supt. and he said they would get in there with an augur and dig the holes, which is a huge help. Ms. Wetzig said that she gave the flyer to her husband and he is sending it to the Leo Club Chairperson at the High School so hopefully we can get some Leos to volunteer. She can also reach out to the Avon High School Athletic Dept., specifically the baseball coaches, because Crushers Stadium is where they play their home games. Ms. Berges asked how many trees there were and Mr. Varga said, 31.

He added that AT&T bought the trees and even bought the gator bags to water them so we are trying to do what we can as a City because it is to our benefit as a City.

Mr. Moore thanked Ms. Brooks for doing the Arbor Day flyers and said he appreciates that. He stated that the donations are amazing; he was just blown away by the generosity of our local businesses. Again, he thanked everyone for a lot of hard work on the committee.

#### AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Megan Engleman, 2213 Garden Drive, said that she and her family are available to volunteer for the Arbor Day event and everyone thanked her.

#### ADJOURN

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

The vote was 7 for and 0 against and the Chairman declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council