



ALTOONA SHADE TREE COMMISSION
Minutes of September 19, 2019

In attendance: Ted Newkirk, Chairperson; James Batrus, Paula Over, Chris Harpster- Shade Tree Commission, Lee Slusser-Director, Marilyn Morgan, staff

Ted Newkirk, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

1. The July 17, 2019 minutes were reviewed and a motion for approval of the minutes was made by, Chris Harpster and seconded by JB Batrus. Motion passed.
2. **Public Comment** – There were no public comments at the meeting.
3. **Tree Requests – Arborists Report –**

1701 3rd Avenue – Solarshield has requested to have the trees in front of their building either trimmed or removed to improve the visibility of their building and sign. The Shade Tree Commission has granted permission to Solarshield to trim, but not remove or kill, the three ash trees along 17th Street at 1701 3rd Avenue. Solarshield can do this work by hiring an approved arborist. Or they can wait for the City to trim all of the trees on that corridor, which might happen over the next year or two. It was also suggested that Solarshield could improve the visibility by taking out the low hanging branches, which will be a cheaper option. A motion was made by JB Batrus to allow the trees to be pruned, and seconded by Ted Newkirk. Motion passed.

1512 11th Avenue – Trade Secrets has requested to have trees removed from in front of their business, claiming that the trees will hinder their signage. The Shade Tree Commission is very sympathetic to the plight of Trade Secrets, but to date we have not seen any plans for the type of signage. A motion was made by Ted Newkirk that Trade Secrets come back with a sketch of the sign and the information can be taken back to the commission in October for further discussion. Motion was seconded by Chris Harpster. Motion passed.

2009 6th Avenue – Sacred Heart Catholic Church has requested that all the trees around the church be removed. They have repaired all the sidewalks around the trees and the priest has asked that the trees be removed before the trees have the chance cause damage to the sidewalks. Terry Tomasetti has also made a request that all the trees in front of his law office across the street also be removed. A discussion was held and the commission wants more information. The arborists have not been able to come into town to look at the situation, nor has anyone been able to talk with John Benetti who repaired the sidewalks, to get his opinion, therefore, an informed decision can not be made at this time.

Public Works Proposed Trimming Project

Mr. Slusser explained the years ago there was a 10th of MIL that was collected and budgeted to the Shade Tree Commission. When the Home Rule came into effect that money could no longer be budgeted. Money must now be requested from the General Fund. \$80,000.00 was requested by Public Works. They have been working at coming up with how to best utilize these funds. Bid Documents will be advertised for tree trimming, pruning and removals in the Highland Park Area, along 6th Avenue, 17th Street to 18th Street removal of dead Elm Trees and spot planting In-town area. They will then turn their attentions to



14th Avenue behind City Hall, Logan Blvd. and then 17th Street trimming and pruning in this order. All of this is following current Shade Tree Commission regulations.

Update Arborists' Contracts

Public Works would like to get Local Arborists on board so that we don't have to wait for the ones from State College to respond. They are asking that we look at Penn Elec's Forester, Ryan Grant. He knows trees, but Mr. Slusser said he doesn't necessarily know as much as Mr. Elmendorf and Mr. Sam.

Tree Ordinance

The arborists have done their job, the Ordinance is done. It is stalled at this time. We have been unable to get the other directors and the City Manager to sit down and take a look at the ordinance due to the City Manager doing what he can to get that \$300,000. for a Tree Crew.

4. There being no other business, Mr. Newkirk called for adjournment of the meeting. A motion was made by JB Batrus. The motion was seconded by Paula Over. Motion passed.

Shade Tree Commission