



Pittsburgh Shade Tree Commission

Executive Session

August 15, 2024

Minutes

Members in Attendance							
	Kristen Spirl		Lisa Ceoffe		Angie Martinez		Nazin Bagherynejad
	Clara Kitongo		Dr. Wolyniak		James Stitt		Zinna Scott

Introductions:

Lisa opened the meeting at 9:00 am

New Business:

Lisa discussed roles and responsibilities of Chair and Treasurer, and asked if anyone was interested in filling these roles. Zinna declined Chair position due to her current commitments on multiple committees, but is happy to attend meetings and offer feedback. Lisa requested that anyone who is not interested in staying on, please let her know.

Kristen said Chair has to be somebody who is plugged in, and can navigate the City's system. Also, if for some reason the Chair is unable to fulfill the role temporarily, we should have a backup person who can step in. Perhaps a Co-Chair role. One person from inside the City and one who is not to create a good balance.

Lisa stated that the Treasurer needs to work with Accounting on what is being spent and keep track of annual checks deposited from ad shelter and PLI funding. We currently don't know where funds come from. James Barry is currently trying to do that. The goal for the Treasurer is to monitor funds so that PSTC can be transparent.

Angie suggested that between now and November, have James share what is working and what is not for Treasurer role, so that everyone understands the expectations and the responsibilities of that position.

Lisa will write Chair qualifications and expectations and email to Commission. She has also agreed to stay on as Acting Chair until the new person is appointed, with a target date of February 2025 to have all roles fulfilled.

Lisa suggested creating a Sub Committee for the transition period so that the new Chair person doesn't feel like they're out there on their own and that they're being supported. New Chair must have time to get things organized.

Angie asked is it realistic for Chair to take on administrative duties. Lisa said, yes, Chair needs to be able to craft letters and commit to advocating for Commission.

Dr. Wolyniak asked if we need to recruit new members. Lisa provided summary of current member term expiration dates. She mentioned Greg Miller being a good candidate for Planning. The other two spots are open community positions. Need to fill these spots. We're fulfilling the rest. Requested everyone think of potential new members which can be discussed at next meeting. Also, Dr. Bey can make recommendations for new members. He would actively push and promote behind the scenes.

Angie suggested doing a big push in 2025 to recruit new members, but commented it may be better for Commission to focus on structure and what qualifications are needed for the vacant positions before we recruit members for those spots. Lisa said representation from City departments is needed.

Clara asked if we have an orientation or handbook for new members. Dr. Wolyniak commented Handbook is accessible on PSTC Google drive.

James Stitt asked if we have a neighborhood merchant or business associate, someone from Building owners & Managers Association (BOMA) or National Association for Industrial Office Parks (NAIOP) may be a good source. They would probably love to have representation on the Commission. Zinna confirmed she is the only member on Commission representing a neighborhood.

Lisa provided update on the Equitable Tree Planting Policy. She received an email from Chief Frank about sending it to Felicity Williams (Mayor's Chief of Staff) since she can't send directly to Mayor. Policy was emailed on Aug. 7. Waiting to hear back.

Lisa discussed preparations for the Executive Session with Mayor Gainey on Oct. 15, and asked everyone to create list of goals and priorities to be reviewed at Sept. 19 meeting.

Clara inquired if we should be asking neighborhoods what their issues and goals are. Lisa advised we present to the Mayor what the Commission's goals are with policy.

James Stitt suggested comprising a list of candidates who apply for STC roles. Zinna advised that with list of names, we include the method as to why new members are needed is included so it's not just a list of names. She also suggested taking multiple copies of list to meeting.

Lisa asked if anyone else had issues to discuss. Members had nothing further.

Lisa asked preference for location of September meeting. Members agreed that Forestry office is more convenient. Zinna offered alternative meeting place at Susquehanna. The room is free and there is ample parking. She would need to know in advance to reserve it.

Zinna made recommendation to adjourn at 10:15 am. James seconds. Motion carries.