



Pittsburgh Shade Tree Commission

February 19, 2026

Minutes

Lisa Ceoffe	Kristen Spirl	Clara Kitongo	Nazin Bagherynejad
Isabella Gross	James Stitt	Dr. Brian Wolyniak	<i>Guest: Elliot Williams, Mayor's Office</i>
<i>Guest: Michael Kelley, Forestry</i>	<i>Guest: Hana Kneiser, Forestry</i>		

Lisa opens meeting at 9:08am with introductions. Dave Breingan, Executive Director of Lawrenceville United (LU), provides a summary of LU's request for funding for up to \$100,000 for Arsenal Park Restoration and Canopy Rebuilding which includes:

- Professional tree inventory
- Essential care for Park's remaining mature trees
- Structural pruning on younger trees
- Plant 80 new trees in three phases
- Plant 100 shrubs to replace dead ones
- Retain logs from removed historic trees for ecological, educational and cultural value
- Provide tree care and watering for newly planted trees
- Ensure that planning locations and species priorities are identified by the community and coordinated with Forestry to ensure safety conditions, design and long-term maintenance needs

Lisa asks if there is a motion to review LU's proposal.

Clara makes a motion to review proposal.

Nazin seconds the motion.

Lisa states that funds will not be spent all at once, but will be over three years. Funds need to be earmarked now. Project will be completed in phases.

James states that the Stormwater fund can be used to plant trees and asks do we want to commit to three years or one year. Clara asks if costs can be broken out by year. Dave provides cost breakdown:

- Year 1: \$28,500
- Year 2: \$31,500
- Year 3: \$34,500

James asks if encumbering funds for Arsenal Park project will hinder our efforts for other efforts. Lisa responds that there is more than \$500,000 in the PSTC account and that there are no big-ticket items planned. The account is replenished by the Stormwater fund and the annual \$85,000 ad shelter revenue.

Kristen puts a motion forward to fund up to \$100,000 to support Lawrenceville United's Arsenal Park Urban Forestry Inventory, Restoration & Canopy Rebuilding proposal over a three-year period.

Brian seconds the motion.

Lisa adds that no cash will be going to Lawrenceville United. It will all be done internally through the City's procurement process.

Lisa abstains from the vote.

All in favor. Motion passes.

Old Business:

Lisa provides update on previously approved funding for a new mini skid for Forestry. It was delivered on February 18.

New Business:

Lisa ask PSTC to consider funding an estimated \$426 for 31 arboretum tags for trees in Westinghouse Park. Forestry will tag the trees.

James makes a motion to approve.

Brian seconds the motion with a change to fund up to \$500.

Isabella comments that the City is doing a survey with a consultant in Westinghouse Park to see what is there historically and otherwise.

Lisa abstains from the vote.

All in favor. Motion passes.

Approval/Meeting Minutes-January:

James makes a motion to approve minutes.

Clara seconds the motion.

All in favor. Motion passes. January minutes are approved.

Forestry Updates

Michael reports on previously approved Beechwood Boulevard tree planting:

- Planted 21 new trees. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy matched for a total of 51 trees
- 15 trees will be planted Spring 2026. Delivery mid-March

Michael discusses community meeting with Highland Park residents on February 19. The Highland Park project involves removing dead trees and using soil from Soil Creation Project for an orchard.

Hana provides update on Chatham Park project.

- Updates to Chadwick Park Greenway: working to transform an unused section of paved road and wooded ravine into a functional greenway, connecting the park's ballfields to the other side of the neighborhood. This will include trail creation, food forest planting, removal of debris, and stormwater management. Collaboration with community members, city planning, and rain reclaim has begun.

Reports/Community Partners

Elliott Williams, Mayor's Office

- The new Administration will not provide representation from the Mayor's Office on the PSTC. There are no plans for future communication with PSTC. Lisa will clarify and report back at the next meeting. Discussion follows regarding Chair position.

James Stitt, Pittsburgh Water

- Pittsburgh Water is moving all operations into two new buildings on River Avenue. Also, the new headquarters is at 31st and Smallman Streets. They are trying to figure out where to plant some trees.

Clara Kitongo - Tree Pittsburgh

- Plantings in Beltzhoover
- Orchard installations in Highland Park, Stanton Heights, Bellevue, Squirrel Hill South, California Kirkbride, Central Lawrenceville, Allegheny Cemetery
- 340 trees pruned throughout the City with LandForce
- Outreach Committee Canopy Alliance online meeting is at 3:00 on February 19. Will forward information to all

Isabella Gross – City of Pittsburgh – Department of City Planning

- Pittsburgh City Planning is trying to do four different days for Earth Month and different types of stewardships on Fridays. PCP may join Forestry on some events

Nazin Bagherynejad – URA

- Redesigning the South Shore. It should be ready by October 2026

Lisa discusses Earth and Arbor Day events at Robert E. Williams Memorial Park in the Upper Hill Sugar top neighborhood (April 11), and West End Overlook Park (April 18). Forestry may be coming to PSTC for funding but it won't be a large amount.

Lisa talks about the upcoming charette on February 28 to talk about Highland Park tree removal. It is an opportunity for the community to get together to discuss what they want to see happen. It would be great to have some members of PSTC there. It is a cool process to see. The event will be facilitated by Pittsburgh Water. It is a big project.

Brian Wolyniak – Penn State Urban Agricultural Extension

- Talks about ISA course, Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) April 1-3. If anyone is interested apply soon. See Penn-Del web site for details

Public Comment

In person meeting not available for public comment.

Kristen makes a motion to adjourn meeting.

James seconds the motion.

Meeting adjourns at 10:15 am.