

Town of Henlopen Acres

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TREE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The Tree Committee of the Town of Henlopen Acres held a Meeting on **Friday, March 21, 2025, at 10:00 am** virtually and in person at Town Hall, 104 Tidewaters, Henlopen Acres, Delaware.

Present:	Jeff Jacobs	Tree Committee Chairman (Zoom)
	Lynda Moses	Tree Committee Member
	Andrea Richter Pedigo	Tree Committee Member
	Lee Raesly	Tree Committee Member
	Louise Montgomery	Tree Committee Member
	Joni Reich	Mayor
	Anna Fagan	Town Manager
	Bob Ribinsky	Town Zoning Officer
	Andrea Harpster	Town Clerk

Absent:	Tim Hidell	Tree Committee Member
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1. **Call to Order**

Jeffrey Jacobs called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

2. **Review and Approval of Minutes of the Meeting from December 11, 2024**

Lynda Moses made a motion to approve the minutes. Andrea Pedigo seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

3. **Develop list of recommended locations for the 2025 Fall Town tree plantings**

The Committee reviewed documents related to the 2024 Town tree planting. Town Manager Anna Fagan reported that the remaining budget for tree maintenance and plantings for the current fiscal year is \$7,500 dollars. Bob Ribinsky reported that all the trees that were planted last year had survived so far and further viability will be more apparent this spring.

The Town has consistently planted 20-30 trees annually and recommends planting no more than 30 due to capacity of Town staff to water and maintain them. The Committee would like the Town to plant as many trees as the Town can afford and maintain. The Committee members also expressed interest in developing a program to encourage residents to plant new trees on their own property as well.

Mr. Ribinsky asked if the Town is allowing residents to plant trees in the Town right-of-way.

The Committee clarified that any plantings in the Town right-of-way must be approved. The Committee will explore having the community help water trees, if necessary, after the yearly plantings. Mr. Ribinsky will discuss the possible use of watering bags, species of trees and locations of those trees for the fall planting with the Town Arborist, Jay Ashby.

There will be a special newsletter and tree planting in honor of Arbor Day.

The Committee was made aware that the cost of trees is increasing and availability is decreasing, so Mr. Ashby has recommended that the tree order be placed in May.

4. Recommended Town tree budget for 2025-26 fiscal year budget

Anna Fagan, Town Manager, presented a summary of the tree planting and maintenance budget for the current and prior fiscal years produced by Katie Manieri, the Town Finance Manager. Ms. Manieri's recommendation for the FY2026 budget is \$25,000 dollars based on spending trends.

Mr. Jacobs suggested a budget of \$25,000 dollars for the upcoming fiscal year, as well as a line item for water bags if the Town Arborist recommends them. Those should generally be less than \$1,000 dollars.

The Committee would like to stay consistent with \$30,000 dollars for the year so they are not limited to the number of trees they can plant. Lee Raesly made a motion to make the budget \$30,000 dollars for FY2026. The motion was seconded by Jeffrey Jacobs. It was unanimously approved.

5. Update on Urban and Community Forestry Grant from Delaware Forest Service for Survey of Town Trees

Anna Fagan gave the commission an update on the previously submitted application to the State forestry office for a survey of Town trees. Unfortunately, all grant decisions are on hold due to the federal funding freeze. They will reach out as soon as they have an update.

Ms. Fagan shared the proposals received for the tree survey for informative purposes. Mayor Joni Reich suggested the Town move forward with a Town tree inventory without the grant funding. Mr. Jacobs suggested using the remaining tree budget to do so. The Town will proceed with the proposal from Cypress Tree Care and Ms. Fagan will confirm that this work can be completed and billed in the current fiscal year.

The Town will explore options for surveying trees on private property.

6. Discussion of Arbor Day Tree Planting and Proclamation

Each year, the Town makes a proclamation recognizing Arbor Day to maintain its status as a Tree City. The Town may choose any date to celebrate the holiday, which is marked by the planting of a tree. There is a free seedling program through the State forestry office that the Town has utilized in the past. This will be explored for the 2025 Arbor Day planting. The Arbor Day Ceremony is usually in conjunction with the meeting of the tree committee. The Town will discuss the location and species of the tree to be planted with Mr. Ashby.

7. Identification of date(s) for the next meeting(s) of the Tree Committee

The committee set the date for the Arbor Day planting and next Tree Committee Meeting for Friday, May 9, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.

8. Any other business

Andrea Pedigo reported that the lamp posts throughout Town did not holding up well through the winter. Some of them appear to be leaning and not painted and some should be replaced. Mr. Ribinsky noted that they will work on the lamp posts, and the ones that need to be replaced will be replaced.

Dr. Pedigo inquired about her term on the Committee and asked for clarification of the renewal process. Dr. Pedigo and Ms. Moses are both up for renewal in October 2025. Dr. Pedigo expressed interest in continuing her position on the Committee for another term. It was explained that the Mayor makes recommendations to the Board of Commissioners about committee appointments when a member's term is up for renewal, and the Commissioners vote to approve or deny appointments.

9. Adjournment

Lee Raesly made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Andrea Pedigo seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 A.M.

Respectfully submitted

Andrea Harpster, Town Clerk