



Shade Tree and Beautification  
Commission Meeting

Minutes

September 30, 2025  
3:00 PM

**CALL TO ORDER**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Matthew T. Starr	Mayor	Absent	
James Brown	Chair	Present	
Brian Ball	City Engineer	Absent	
Colleen Clarkson		Absent	
Quetin Platt		Absent	
Duane Barber	Board Member	Absent	
Sarah Wagner		Present	
Laura De Leon		Present	
Randy Pursel		Present	
Russ Mentzer		Absent	

Emil Diener- Board Member  
LeNan Hager- Board Member  
April Brady- Water Dept.  
Tanner Salyers- Safety Service Director

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

***July 29, 2025 Minutes 3:00PM***

Minutes will be voted on at the next meeting.

***August 26, 2025 Minutes 3:00 PM***

Minutes will be voted on at the next meeting

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Brown said Shade Tree is about to encumber and Shade Tree will have a better idea after they receive responses on the TCP trees.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Grants**

Mr. Brown said the grants for the International Paper and the US Forestry Grant for 2025 have been submitted.

Mr. Brown said that the US Forestry Grant has not been rejected.

Mr. Brown said the Tree City Application has just become active. The volunteer hours need to be turned in so it can be added to the application.

Mr. Brown says that he expects that the City will be able to apply for the growth award again this year. If the City receives the growth award this year, it will be the 12<sup>th</sup> year of receiving the growth award.

**Tree City****Sequoias****Pear Removal Program**

Mr. Brown said that since the engineering department is not at the meeting, he is not sure where SOS is on the pear removal. As of last week, Mr. Brown believes that there have been 15 pear trees removed and 8 trees selected for replacements.

Mr. Brown said that part of the pear removal program is to replace as many trees as possible with native pollinators.

**Arista Villas Development**

Mr. Brown talked with Clint and Dave who are the principals in the project. Mr. Wade and Mr. Brown walked the wooded area and there is not much good timber in the woods. The Arista Villas asked about the guidelines for the area. Mr. Brown said that there stipulations were that the Shade Tree and Beautification Committee would like at least 40% of shade tree coverage at maturity. The calculation will be hard because trees grow at different rates. There is a 10 foot tree lawn. Mr. Brown asked that they do not fill the tree lawn with utilities so that they can actually put trees in it. Mr. Brown said that because of the shape of the land, they will have to do a lot of grading and most of the trees will not make it. They are putting in one hundred quarter acre lot. Arista Villas needs to take a survey of 15 of those lots and use those surveys for the general survey. Mr. Brown said that there would need to be between 3 and 5 trees replaced per lot. Mr. Brown said that once they get a preliminary plan, they will need to set up a zoom call with the engineering department.

**Mount Vernon Ave Forest**

Mr. Brown said the City wants to sell land to a developer to develop. He said he went through the trees with Paul Helzer to look at the trees to see if there was anything that could be salvaged or harvested out of there. The consensus was that there is nothing there that's worth any money. There are some cherry trees in there that could potentially be worth something, but it wasn't enough to sell anywhere. Mr. Wade had mentioned that if there was enough cherry trees, then they could harvest the cherry trees and use it in the new police station or justice center. Mr. Brown does not know the timeline, but the City intends to sell that land.

**Arbor Day**

Mr. Brown has a meeting with Salvation Army on Friday October 10<sup>th</sup> to walk the property and get their feel for what they would like to have there. Mr. Brown is hoping that Mr. Wade will be available because he knows all the sites for the trees and what they should and shouldn't do.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**OTHER**

Mr. Salyers said that Shade Tree has about 6 or 7 spots that they can take funds from the general fund. Mr. Salyers said that Arbor Planting is a whole fund for Shade Tree and Beautification. Some of the miscellaneous funds are designated for projects for Shade Tree in Public Buildings and Lands which is Arbor Trust is also money that Shade Tree and Beautification can use. There are three new line items in the Parks Budget: Ariel Foundation Park which is \$80,000 and is used for park maintenance, the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery has a \$10,000 expense line, and the Splash Pad is also a new line for \$10,000, Mr. Salyers also added a \$3,000 line for Bee City.

Mr. Brown said that he is going to meet with Mr. Platt to go over where they would like to plant and remove trees for the coming year.

Mr. Salyers said the Field of Discovery and America 250 efforts need to be kept in mind when planning for the next year. In 2021, the City of Mount Vernon declared itself a Walkable City. Included in that is identifying areas of the sidewalk that are not ADA Compliant and areas that have low hanging tree limbs or any sort of growth that grows out into the sidewalk.

Mr. Brown said that the plan for the sidewalk programs is to start with the schools in the center and work out from there.

Mr. Brown said that at Memorial Park the new plan is to build a concession stand at the Babe Ruth Park this fall and then July 1<sup>st</sup>, they will close down the softball fields to take out the existing fields and put the new ones in.

Mr. Brown said the Delano Field of Discovery trails will be layed out after its seeded. In the spring, they will take the GIS until out to mark the trails so they can mow the trails where they want them. Mr. Brown said that most of the seeding will be done in the lower bowl area where they dumped the soil. Most of the seeding will be done this fall and will get reseeded too. The new trails mimic the Native Indian trails from the State of Ohio.

Ms. Wagner said that she received a request for a tree guard from someone who received trees last year.

Mr. Brown said that they do have tree guards. Mr. Brown said that he would not have a problem giving the extra tree guards to people who have had TCP trees planted. However, once the tree guards are gone, they are gone.

Ms. Wagner said that there should be a record of who is receiving the tree guards

Mr. Brown said that about 10 years ago, a group came to the Shade Tree Commission and said that they would like to put a historic marker in the Gambier Street Park. The Community Foundation gave the Shade Tree Commission \$3,000 towards the purchase of the historic marker. The historic marker will be more expensive now, but the foundation said that they were willing to put in whatever they need to get the marker purchased. Mr. Brown said that they are looking at the timeframe of April, May, or June to get it installed. Mr. Brown said that it does take some time to get one made.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Pursel about the fertilizer. Mr. Pursel said that they have been fertilizing for three weeks now.

Mr. Brown said that Mr. Pursel and his crew are going to try to fix the roof on a shed and that will be the Shade Tree out building for all the miscellaneous things Shade Tree has.

Mr. Brown said that there is 60,000 cubic yards of soil that Mr. Pursel can use to fill low spots and holes in the parks.

Mr. Brown said that Ms. Wagner is limited to 70 TCP trees a year and that fund is budgeted for, but because Shade Tree has money in the general fund that Shade Tree could use for more TCP trees instead of having carryovers.

**ADJOURN**

Ms. Hager made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Wagner second it.