

Minutes
City of Geneva Shade Tree Committee
Thursday April 17th, 2025 Noon
Finger Lakes Welcome Center Conference Room

Present: Joe Venuti, James Norwalk, James Anderson, Jay Freer, Jeremy Busch, Tom Burrall, James Engel, Daisy Hoyt, James McCorkle, Charlie Rouse

Excused: James McCorkle, John Brennan, Charlie Rouse

Guests:

Approval: Minutes for the March 20th, 2025 meeting minutes approved

Old Business:

- Membership updates:

The committee membership and term ending date as follows:

Charles Rouse December 31, 2025
Jeremy Busch December 31, 2025
James Norwalk (Chair) December 31, 2025
Tom Burrall December 31, 2025
James McCorkle December 31, 2026
Daisy Hoyt December 31, 2026
Jay Freer December 31, 2027
James Anderson December 31, 2027
James Engel December 31, 2027

Staff Liaison – Joe Venuti, Director of Public Works

Council Liaison – John Brennan

- Problem trees and other updates:

15 Pulteney St: The property owner needed to prune backed limbs of a Honeylocust overhanging their roof.

- Update on planting project with HWS Colleges.

This project has been completed. The committee would like to continue to provide trees for HWS Colleges to cover city ROWS since this exchange was so successful.

- Update on scheduled pruning:

Joe Venuti reports that these should be completed within the next 2 weeks. Joe Venuti said some trees on N. Genesee St. need pruning. A man named Brian Olsen has been hand pruning trees on Washington St.

- Review of the 2025 Budget and the impact on tree care:

Joe Venuti reports the DPW has spent about \$62,500 on tree clean in response to 5 weather events and emergency tree removal from the railroad beds along North Genesee St and East North St. As a general estimate he said a contract removal costs around \$2,000 per tree and that pruning of large limbs from a mature tree cost about \$750.00 and that costs are based on variables such as DBH measurements and location issues. He also reports that we spend about \$5,000 to \$8,000 every 2 to 3 years to treat about 20 ash trees with insecticide against Emerald Ash Borer. Tom Burrall announced that he has contributed around \$16,000 to the general fund with his firewood sales and wants a reassurance that this money is used to fund the tree nursery project and the Arbor Day tree giveaway and NOT diverted by the DPW to pay for tree removals, pruning, or other general expenses.

- Discuss requirement for a 3-year Shade Tree Report

This discussion will be taken up at a later meeting

- Consultation with the City Manager on the 2026 budget:

Joe Venuti asked Jim Norwalk to query the database to create a list of 20 most urgent removals. He reports that the city is seeking about \$80,000 in grant money to complete a new tree inventory.

- DEC Community Reforestation Grant 2026:
<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/urban-and-community-forestry/urban-and-community-forestry-grants>

This discussion will be taken up at a later meeting

- Upcoming nursery work:

Jay Freer will plant the new crabapple saplings before Arbor Day. We have planned a workday to plant this year's other saplings on Thursday April 24th at 9AM. The DPW will make sure soil is provided.

WWTP Nursery trees for Spring 2025

Small

60 Grafted Crabapple (Wafler)
20+ White Fringetree (White Oak Nursery)
20+ Eastern Redbud (WON)
3 Washington Hawthorn (American Natives Nursery)

Medium-Large

25 Common Hackberry (WON)
25 Black Gum (WON)

Large

25 Swamp White Oak (WON)
10 Chestnut Oak (ANN)
10 Northern Red Oak (ANN)
3 "heritage" Bur Oak (Jim Norwalk)

Tublings to be grown by White Oak Nursery for 2026

36 Eastern Redbud (ANN)
36 Alleghany Serviceberry (ANN)
36 American Hornbeam (ANN)

New Business:

- 2025 Arbor Day Tree Giveaway

The event is once again teamed up with the Mission Zero Earth Day celebration at the Geneva Recreation Center Saturday April 26th from 10AM to 2PM. Daisy Hoyt will create updated tree fact and tree care information sheets. Event volunteers: Joe Venuti, Charlie Rouse, Jeremy Busch, Jim Norwalk. Tom Burrall will arrive after 1PM. The following species will be offered:

Shrub

10 Silky Dogwood
15 Spicebush

Small

15 Alleghany Serviceberry

Medium-Large

15 Common Hackberry
5 Red Mulberry
10 River Birch

Large

10 American Sycamore
10 Black Cherry
10 White Oak

- Planning Fall 2025 tree planting

Bill Albert, the resident at 154 Maxwell Ave. He has agreed to have one or two of the available American Elms. There were 2 large trees removed from there recently, so we need to make sure the soil is ready for a new tree before planting. We anticipate the space will be ready for Fall 2025 replanting of 2 large trees.

Jim Engel will do a spring inventory of "transplant ready" trees for the upcoming Fall 2025 allocation.

- Review Lakeview Health Service/Finger Lakes Times property plans:

We recommend the Zelkova be replaced with oaks or maples. The Zelkova tends to shed too many limbs.

Next Meeting: TBD by availability to volunteer at the WWTP Nursery for planting, weeding, and inventory work.