

Minutes
City of Geneva Shade Tree Committee
Thursday January 22nd, 2026 Noon
Finger Lakes Welcome Center Conference Room

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

Excused: Jeremy Busch

Guests: Windsor Wade

Approval: Minutes for the December 18th, 2025 meeting approved

Old Business:

- Membership updates:

The committee membership and term ending date as follows:

James McCorkle December 31, 2026
James Anderson December 31, 2026
Daisy Hoyt December 31, 2027
Tom Burrall December 31, 2027
Jay Freer December 31, 2027
James Engel December 31, 2027
Charles Rouse December 31, 2028
Jeremy Busch December 31, 2028
James Norwalk (Chair) December 31, 2028

Staff Liaison – Joe Venuti, Director of Public Works

Council Liaison – John Brennan

Jim Norwalk was reappointed at the January city council meeting. He has 30 days to swear an oath.

- Problem trees and other updates:

One small tree was removed from Brooke St circle following a motor vehicle accident. Jim Norwalk will have to figure out how the trees in that location are listed in the database

Daisy Hoyt reported two Norway Maple (#1957 and #1958) at 11 Genesee St. conflict with overhead utilities. Tom Burrall said they are small now and won't be difficult to remove but will eventually become a complicated removal as they grow. Joe Venuti will talk to NTSEG. The committee agreed that prompt removal is recommended.

Jay Freer has been monitoring a chokecherry at 83 Hillcrest which is infected with black knot disease (highly destructive to some Prunus species). He recommends removal but Jim Norwalk suspects it is NOT a city tree because it is not in the database.

- Scheduled pruning updates:

None reported

- Discuss requirement for a 3-year Shade Tree Report

Joe Venuti provided some budget and spending data. Expenditures on STC projects are summarized as follows: \$24 for nursery flagging, \$1975 on tree purchases, \$45 for tree guard mesh, \$1500 White Oak Nursery trees and ID tags, \$275 fiberglass trunk-training posts.

- DEC Community Reforestation Grant 2026:

<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/urban-and-community-forestry/urban-and-community-forestry-grants>

Daisy Hoyt said the 2026 grants haven't been announced yet. Jim Norwalk said he will leave the urban forestry grant line in the agenda as a place keeper even if we don't have the capacity to apply this year.

Jim Engel reports the existence of a rolling state funding initiative for invasive species control. He will send the link.

- Planning Arbor Day Tree Giveaway 2026:

We have confirmed the following species will be available from White Oak Nursery for the giveaway.

Shrubs:

15 Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)

10 American Hazlenut (*Corylus americana*)

10 Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)

Small trees:

15 Downy Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*)

Large trees:

10 Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)

20 Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*)

10 Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

5 White Spruce (*Picea glauca*)

5 White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)

Tom Burrall Asked whether Blue Spruce would be a good choice. Daisy Hoyt considered them unsuitable because they are western natives and quite commonly available at nurseries.

Daisy Hoyt said we should offer Witch-Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) and Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) in the future.

- Annual Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA application.

Joe Venuti reported that the renewal was completed by Kevin Reed

New Business:

- Arbor Day Planning:

We will hold our tree and shrub giveaway on Saturday April 25th in conjunction with the city Earth Day festival at the Rec Center.

- Planning WWTP nursery work:

Joe Venuti asks that the members and volunteers let WWTP staff know when you plan work sessions.

Jim Engel complimented the improvements that the WWTP staff made last season, especially improving the timing and accurate coverage of the irrigation system.

We need to schedule a volunteer session to transplant the saplings he has staged at his nursery.

Jim Engel Said we need to find planting location for the Green Hawthorns we are growing. Jim Norwalk suggests creating a hedgerow in the fields behind the McDonough Park.

Jim Norwalk wants to have a source for the following to add to the nursery eventually: Black Maple (*Acer nigrum*), Cucumber Magnolia (*Magnolia acuminata*), and Chinkapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*)

- Joe Venuti will forward links to DEC Urban Forestry web-based seminars.
- Joe Venuti will ask Stoney Oak tree care consultants whether they recommend a contract arborist for the city to use. Tom Burrall said that Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association might have a suggestion too.

Next Meeting: NOON February 18th, 2026 at the Finger Lakes Welcome Center Conference Room