

TREE BOARD – City of Columbia City

December 16, 2025, 6:00pm

M I N U T E S

- Roll Call (Present) Janice Daniel, Jeff Bleijerveld, Chip Hill, Bryan Smethers, Dan Knuth, Jim Christl (Absent) Brent Bockelman
- President Janice Daniel called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the November minutes. Bryan made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Dan. A vote was taken; all voted “aye”.

OLD BUSINESS

- Financial Update
 - \$21,853 currently on hand
 - There are no further expenses projected until the coming year.
- Tree Planting
 - Twenty cherry trees were removed from the Main Street commercial section north of the city and replace with sugar maples.
 - A total 32 trees - 5 Patriot Elm, 5 Princeton Elm, 16 Sugar Maples, 2 Sentry Maples, 2 Ivory Silk Lilac and 2 Peach trees - were planted this fall.
 - There are some remaining cherry trees in the downtown, but we will not replace them if they remain alive. Renovation of the downtown corridor is anticipated to take place in two years.
 - If we do have trees die in the downtown, we will place flower boxes, rather than replace the trees.
 - We planted a total of 104 trees this year.
 - Everyone expressed their gratitude to Janice Daniel and her crew for their efforts to get all these trees planted before year-end.
- Grant Updates
 - We have not been successful in securing any new grants recently.
 - Jeff will approach the Community Foundation about a grant for \$5000 and indicate that this money would plant approximately 15 trees.
- Funeral Trees
 - Brent was not present to provide an update.
- Vacancy
 - The mayor is working on a possible candidate.

NEW BUSINESS

- Tree Removal and Tree Trimming List
 - We don't have any information at this point.
 - Seth Slabaugh (city arborist) will be contacted for his recommendations for next month's meeting.
- New Tree Location Flags and Signage
 - We now have flags with our logo to mark where trees are being planted.
 - We discussed having signs made to celebrate where new trees have been planted.
- Move Remaining Funds to Donation Account
 - **MOTION: We will move the \$21,853 that remains on hand in 2025 to the donation account so that it can be used in 2026. MOVED, SECONDED CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 6:37pm.

Submitted by Jeff Bleijerveld, Secretary