

TREE BOARD – City of Columbia City

August 18, 2026, 6:00pm



MINUTES

- Roll Call
 - Members Present: Janice Daniel, Jeff Bleijerveld, Brent Bockelman, Bryan Smethers, Dan Knuth, Jim Christl, Amanda Thompson
 - Advisory Present: Chip Hill – City Liaison, Seth Slabaugh – City Arborist
- President Janice Daniel called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the July minutes. Dan made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Jim. A vote was taken; all voted “aye”.

OLD BUSINESS

- Financial Update
 - \$28,964 currently on hand in our regular account.
 - No changes to the donation account - \$21,965
- Update on Tree Keeper Records
 - Dan report that progress is being made. He now has an iPad to work with.
- Grant Applications
 - Jeff passed on the application materials for the DNR Small Towns/Big Trees to Chip. We may ask Lori Shipman to consider whether it would be worth our while.
- Funeral Trees
 - We are still waiting on materials to have available in our local funeral homes.
 - Brian, Jim and Brent will work on an informational brochure to present at our next meeting for approval.
 - Chip will request a QR Code to place on the brochure for people to make donations online.
- Tree Removal/Trimming List
 - Seth created an Excel file listing 50 trees (high priority), 25 (mid) and 25 (low) priority which we will be able to tender to tree services.
 - Tenders will be voted on at our September meeting.
 - Our goal remains to have the work completed and invoiced before the end of the current year.
- Smiles on Main Tree Update

- It will be replaced next spring if needed.
- Tree Ordinance
 - Brent and Chip will review the current ordinances and report back next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- Concerns Regarding New Trees on North Side of Depoy Dr.
 - There are home some model homes being built which could risk some damage.
 - Should trees be severely damaged, the contractor will be responsible to replace them.
- New Tree Planting or Removal Requests
 - The owner (driving school) at Walker Way and Main is hoping to put in a parking lot that would eliminate some of the owner's trees. However, any new work on the property would require streets be planted as per city ordinance.
 - Amanda will follow up with the owner.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Submitted by Jeff Bleijerveld, Secretary