

**APPROVED Minutes**  
**Ridgefield Tree Committee**  
**March 11, 2025**  
**6:30 p.m.**

**This is a Summary of the Activities of the Committee  
and not a verbatim transcript**

In attendance:

Tree Warden: Steve Lavatori. Members: Tom McManus (Chair), Paul Shotton; Ryan Bossis, Ian Dow, Don Hulnick, Kitsey Snow (6:45 pm). Absent: Bob Roth.

**Approval of Minutes of Past Meetings**

Mr. McManus referred to the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on February 11 that had been provided to the members in advance of the meeting.

UPON motion duly made (Shotton), seconded (McManus), and carried, it was RESOLVED that these minutes were APPROVED.

Motion passed: 3-0-3 (Bossis, Dow and Snow abstaining).

**New Committee Member**

Mr. Ian Dow was introduced to the Committee as a new Member and spoke for a few minutes about his background and interests.

**Next Meetings scheduled**

Mr. McManus reminded the Committee of the next meeting at 6:30pm on Tuesday April 8, and also Saturday April 26 at 10am at the Ballard Park Gazebo.

**Finances**

Mr. McManus informed the Committee that there were no receipts or expenditures to note.

**Sharing knowledge with the community**

Mr. McManus distributed a copy of a one-page document based on Mr. Shotton's draft circular "Raising Awareness of Tree Problems" that focused on how residents could report dangerous trees, either to the CT-DOT (on state highways), Eversource (near utility equipment), or the Tree Warden (Town property). The document is entitled Hazardous Trees: How to Help Mitigate Risks and is available at the Tree Committee website.

Mr. Shotton requested additional assistance to convert his ideas into something more "marketable;" Mr. McManus encouraged members to assist Mr. Shotton.

**Storm damage to Beech tree on private property**

Mr. McManus conveyed the news that he had been called to assess the damage to a very large Beech tree that had stood on Parley Lane. Its diameter was measured at 7 feet; owner (advised by SavATree arborist) had the tree removed the following day.

**Brainstorming ideas for Arbor Day Celebration on Saturday April 26**

Mr. McManus again requested members to develop ideas to attract Town residents to Ballard Park in late April. The CT Bureau of Natural resources (Forestry division) has offered to send a representative to participate. Ms. Snow suggested booking a backup

location (Library (N.B. unavailable, Rec Center) in case of inclement weather. Mr. Lavatori noted that the Town had recently ground down the stump of the large Sugar Maple that had stood for many years at the south (CVS) end of the park, east of the playground area.

### **Forestry management plan revision**

Mr. McManus reminded members that he had circulated two versions (via email) of the Town of Ridgefield Forestry Management Plan; the original as most recently updated in 2003, and a partially updated version on which he had been working. He asked whether members had comments or suggestions, especially with regard to referenced resources in the original document (e.g. Bibliography pp 17-18; Relevant Websites and Contact Information page 26). These notes will be of continued interest and assistance to residents, members of the Committee, and tree contractors working on town property. Mr. Bossis circulated information about Stockholm Tree Pits' innovations, which he suggested would be a useful addition. Ms. Snow had circulated an article about planting trees in New Haven as well.

### **Planting a tree for the Caudatowa Garden Club**

Mr. McManus inquired whether Ms. Snow had met with Melenie Rose of the Caudatowa Garden Club, about planting an Oak tree on the north side of the main entrance 90 East Ridge Rd (near the Governor St. intersection and uphill from the Playhouse sign). Ms. Snow will follow up.

### **Tree Care and Removals at Ridgefield Golf Course**

Ms. Snow mentioned that there had been trees removed at the Ridgefield Golf Course and wondered whether Mr. Lavatori or another Department had been consulted. Mr. McManus replied that he would inquire.

### **Applying for Arboretum Level I Designation for Ballard Park**

Mr. Hulnick circulated a draft application for accreditation of Ballard Park as a Level I arboretum by ArbNet (part of the Morton organization). Mr. McManus expressed concern as to whether the Tree Committee—as the proposed governance group—has access to sufficient resources and support.

### **Purchase of Trees for Arbor Day Celebration**

Mr. Bossis moved, and Mr. Shotton seconded a resolution to spend up to \$200 to purchase and care for two species of young trees (silky dogwood and sweetgum mentioned) intended for distribution to attendees at the Arbor Day celebration in Ballard Park on April 26, with any excess to be donated to and planted by other responsible Town organizations. Motion passed: 6-0.

### **Adjournment**

UPON motion duly made (Bossis), seconded (Shotton), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned at 8:07 P.M. Motion passed: 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom McManus, Chair