

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TREE PRESERVATION COMMISSION ON
APRIL 21ST, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Tree Preservation Commission was called to order at 6:00pm at the Village of Franklin Park Police Station, community room, located at 9451 W. Belmont Avenue, Franklin Park, IL 60131

Member Michael led the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:01 pm

ROLL CALL

Tree Preservation Members: Les Grahn, Ramona Michael

Absent: Joan Ambo

Bee Committee members: Mary Ellen Smolen, Violet Pamintuan

Absent: Monika Surovych, Katarina Modrich

Present: Trustee Karen Special, SFFPD Andy Smolen

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 17th, 2026

March 17th, 2026 minutes approved

1st ME Smolen

2nd Grahn

BUSINESS

1. Bee Board's Library Main Presentation Updates: Member M.E. Smolen has been distributing flyers to local businesses. She also forwarded the flyer to the Franklin Park Community Web Page for posting.

2. OpenLands Project with Leyden High School Ecology Club – May 9, 9:00 AM–1:00 PM Leslie Aguilar (OpenLands TreeKeepers) conducted canvassing with the Ecology Club students within a 1.5-mile radius of East Leyden High School. Nine homeowners signed up to receive trees. Member Michael and SFFPD Smolen visited North School and met with Principal Dr. Huisman and the school grounds superintendent. Together they walked the perimeter of the school and identified planting locations for eight trees on school property. Additional locations include five trees on Pearl, two on Gage, and one on Edginton Street.

3. Addison and Wolf Tree Planting event logistics:

Member Michael and SFFPD Smolen will go to Costco to purchase refreshments. The Village will set up tables for the tree-planting event on the 25th.

4. Tree Board Membership Updates: Member Michael reported that Katarina Modrich is returning as a Tree Board member.

Regrettably, Member Joan Ambo, who has served as Co-Chair of the Tree Board since 2023, will not be renewing her appointment due to other commitments. Member Ambo has been a valuable contributor and friend to the Board and will be greatly missed.

5. Trustee Special reported that SFPFD Smolen provided an update at the Village Board meeting, noting that other communities have begun reaching out to Franklin Park for guidance. The Board had not previously been aware of the extent of this outreach. Franklin Park continues to be a leader in non-pesticide practices. When other communities contact us, it is important that we include discussion of pesticide impacts—not only on bees and pollinators, but on human health as well. Trustee Special received a report for Monday’s Board meeting highlighting the great work of the Tree Board. Trustee Special emphasized that Franklin Park is far ahead of neighboring municipalities in its environmental and forestry efforts.

6. SFPFD Smolen Report: Earth Day attendance was low, likely due to the cold weather. However, thanks to Member Grahn’s efforts at the event, five homeowners signed up for trees. Next year’s Earth Day event at North Park has been scheduled for April 27, 2027. The City of Wood Dale has reached out seeking assistance in becoming a Bee City USA community. The Village of Norridge also contacted us and shared that they will be holding their first Arbor Day celebration this Friday.

SFPFD Smolen noted that many nearby towns do not apply for grants because the process requires significant effort. Member Michael suggested inviting representatives from Wood Dale and Norridge to attend some of our events.

Franklin Park’s Arbor Day celebration and CRTI tree planting will take place on April 25th. A total of 80 trees were donated. Planting will occur at Wolf and Addison; however, due to camera coverage limitations, only 60 trees can be planted at that location. The remaining trees will be planted throughout the Village. ME Smolen asked whether we have a form to use when driving through the Village to identify locations in need of trees and to request homeowner permission.

The Village still has remaining Grant funds which will be used to hire an intern at \$18.00/hour, with duties including canvassing specific areas for tree planting. Per capita, Franklin Park has planted more free trees in the last 15 years than surrounding communities. A resident of Elmwood Park reported that EP requires residents to pay for tree planting. Many residents there have invasive Bradford pear trees on their property.

7. The Board discussed creating a pilot program to remove invasive trees and replace them with fast-growing, non-invasive species.

Member Pamintuan suggested adding pollinator-beneficial native plants along King Street—species that tolerate full sun and provide windbreak for the bee hives.

8. Member Michael reported that Adam Schwartz from The Urban Canopy, who is extremely knowledgeable about composting and conducts numerous presentations, has agreed to be a speaker at the October 17th, 2026 Seminar.

We are still seeking a presenter for a seminar topic on municipal mosquito spraying. Xerces indicated they can provide a virtual (Zoom) presentation, but the distance is too great for them to send an in-person subject-matter expert.

9. A Franklin Park resident from 3400 Louis Street made the Committee a wreath as a gesture of appreciation for the work The Tree and Bee Board are doing for the Village. The Wreath will be displayed at future events.

Upcoming:

April 25th Tree Planting at Addison and Wolf
May 9th 9 to 1PM Openlands / Ecology Club Tree Planting
May 16th 10AM Library Bee Board Presentation
May 30th 11AM Library Summer Reading kickoff
June 13th RailRoad Days

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:45 pm a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Member Smolen, seconded by Member Michael.

Motion to Adjourn Roll Call:

Les Grahn
Ramona Michael
Violet Pamintuan
Mary Ellen Smolen

Approval

Signature:

TreeCommision@vofp.com

Date:

6/17/2026

