

New Jersey Community Forestry Council
Meeting Minutes
In-Person and Virtual Meeting, Forest Resource Education Center
January 9, 2025; 10:00 AM

The January bi-monthly meeting of the New Jersey Community Forestry Council (“Council”) was called to order by Chairperson Bill Brash at 10am and the Open Public Meetings Act notice was read. The notice was also available in the meeting packet. The roll call was taken by Brian McDonald.

Members Present: Kristin Ace, Mark Beamish, Bill Brash, Amanda Diamond, Dr. Jason Grabosky, Joseph M. Greipp, Tim Ifill, Lori Jenssen, Michael Martini, Dr. Melanie McDermott, Ryan Metz, Dr. Matthew Olson, Taylor Sapudar, Lisa Simms, Pam Zipse

Excused: Carl Bowles, Steve Chisholm, Vinh Lang, Marty Mayes

Absent: Neal Blitz

NJ Forest Service Present: State Forester Todd Wyckoff, Patricia Shapella, Brian McDonald, Ryan Bellinger, David DeCredico, Gail Harrje, Victoria Bec, Rachael Vannatta, Terri Slack, Ezra Caspi, and Cara Escalona. Quorum was met upon completion of the roll call.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from 12/12/2024 Meeting

Motion to approve from Dr. Melanie McDermott, second from Pam Zipse. Unanimously approved, with Lori Jenssen abstaining.

State Forester’s Report

State Forester Todd Wyckoff announced a promotional appointment for Brian McDonald in the UCF program. Mr. Wyckoff thanked council members for volunteering to join various council committees. Mr. Wyckoff reminded council members that the program Annual Accomplishment Reports will be due February 15th. Mr. Wyckoff announced the Spring Core course, held virtually through Rutgers University platform, running from March 3 – April 4. Mr. Wyckoff reminded council members of the upcoming NJ Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (NJISA) conference, and encouraged members to attend. Mr. Wyckoff noted that the program re-opened the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Leafing Out Education grant with two municipalities opting in. Mr. Wyckoff reminded Council that the State Arbor Day event will take place April 25th, in the City of Orange. Discussion ensued.

Chairperson’s Report

Mr. Brash additionally reminded council members to attend the NJISA conference. Mr. Brash noted that the Society of Tree Experts meeting will be held in Freehold, Friday January 10.

New Business

Annual Ethics and Cannabis Training was completed by members in attendance.

Fiscal Report

Pat Shapella reported on the fiscal state of the program, which was provided in the packet.

Program Report

Brian McDonald provided the program report, which was included in the packet. Discussion ensued.

Legislative Issues

Terri Slack provided the legislative report, which was included in the packer. Discussion ensued around the legislative report.

Subcommittee Reports

Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP) Review committee noted that there were no new plans for review.

CFMP Guidelines committee noted that they have included an updated description statement for the committee.

No Net Loss (NNL) committee noted that there were no plans for review. Discussion ensued on NNL process.

Council Business

None

Unfinished Business

None

Public Comment

Dr. Jason Grabosky noted that the NJ Shade Tree Federation (NJSTF) board has reached out for information on programmatic numbers through time.

Pam Zipse shared that the NJSTF 100th anniversary conference will be October 16 & 17th 2025 in Atlantic City and that the board is working on an agenda book to highlight this milestone.

Joe Greipp reminded council that the NJ ISA conference is Feb 27 & 28, in Atlantic City, with a number of CEUs available, pre-conference workshop, Spanish language, and networking events.

Pam Zipse noted that the NJ Tree Foundation,, through federal IRA funding, plans on expanding young tree pruning in municipalities.

Lori Jenssen noted that the NJ Nursery & Landscape Association conference is being held January 20 & 29th.

Kristin Ace asked a question around timing of pruning young trees.

Michael Martini noted that the ISA Municipal Specialist credential name has changed. Mr. Martini noted that SFI has opened a grant for up to \$75,000 municipalities to conduct a benchmark analysis for their standard.

Dr. Melanie McDermott asked a question about young tree pruning and grants.

Pam Zipse noted that the NJ Tree Foundation has a newly updated website and that the Foundation has launched a new podcast. Ms. Zipse noted that the Foundation has hired an additional full time staff member on the green streets crew.