

HARRODSBURG TREE BOARD MINUTES

10/19/2026

Present: Ruth Webb, Sarah Shewmaker, Jessica Bessin, Laura Baird, Suni Ashton and Patrick Smith.

Allen Bush was unable to attend this month's meeting.

5:01 p.m. - Meeting called to order

09/21/26 meeting minutes: Motion to approve by Jessica Bessin. Motion passed unanimously. The Board noted the correction to the name of the Tree Week proclamation reader.

Financial Report

Suni: As of September 30, the only activity was the deposit of the \$3,000 City check, bringing the balance to \$6,557.50. Since then the Board paid \$165 to Reynolds Nursery, \$1,736 to Glenn Young Nursery and a \$39 reimbursement to Ruth Webb for mulch, signed at the meeting, leaving \$4,616.50. Of that, \$3,000 is designated as next year's grant match; LGE/KU typically awards \$2,000, leaving roughly \$1,000 for incidentals and educational materials.

Tourism grant: The \$2,000 tourism grant has \$225 remaining after \$1,775 in spending. Rather than returning it, Sarah will submit a written accounting to the Tourism Commission with the financials and request approval to reinvest the balance in tree care products.

Tree trunk protectors: Ruth priced expandable, breathable recycled-plastic trunk protectors used by Trees Lexington to guard young trees from weed eaters, from West Lake Dimex Company in Ohio at \$135 per 100 plus about \$20 shipping. The Board agreed to spend about \$155 of the remaining tourism funds on protectors and roughly \$70 on mulch, subject to Tourism Commission approval, with the Extension Office purchasing and the Board reimbursing. They will go on the cherry and ginkgo trees first. Laura cautioned that protectors are often left on too long and will need to be tracked and removed.

September 2026 Financial Report: Motion to approve by Ruth Webb and seconded by Patrick Smith. Motion passed unanimously.

Round Robin

Suni: A new resolution from the City Clerk is needed to reflect a name change and add Ruth Webb to the bank account. Suni will follow up by email; all three signers must then sign together at the bank, with Tuesdays and Thursdays best for Sarah.

Jessica: Will begin assembling the Tree City USA application, due at the end of December. Volunteer hours and total expenditures need updating; Suni will share her income and expense tracker, and the spring proclamation will be included.

Patrick: Reported on the Tree Board website and will contact City IT. Official email addresses are complicated because board correspondence is public record; options include City addresses or a page on the City website, where the Board is already listed without information. The Board agreed to launch the site internally for now while Patrick confirms whether it can also serve the public. Minutes and the calendar would be public; internal documents, project files and volunteer information would require a login. Members can use the "Request an Account" button and Patrick will create accounts.

Google account: The Tree Board Google account still lists Doug Miell for two-factor authentication and recovery, which prevents members from signing in on new devices. Sarah and Laura will contact Doug to change the backup address.

Laura: Noted that ethics board financial disclosure statements are due, since the Board appropriates City funds and the forms document the absence of a conflict of interest. The Board discussed completing them together each year.

Spring Hill Cemetery

Cemetery sexton Brian Sims has been placed on unpaid status until December 19, leaving Bubby Isham as the only staff on site and no maintenance supervision in the interim. The Board discussed planting beyond the roadsides, which requires an accurate map because of unmarked graves, and noted that families sometimes object to trees near graves. Sarah will ask the Lexington Cemetery how they decide where to plant and remove, and Suni will check with the County Clerk about maps and deed records. Ruth will then arrange a site meeting with Bubby Isham. Three-gallon containerized trees such as redbuds, which root shallowly rather than deep, and a possible family giveaway planting were raised as options. Jessica noted a map was used for the Maple Grove planting.

Trees Lexington

Ruth attended a Trees Lexington presentation by Rachel Cook (treeslexington.org), who reported 800 trees planted there last year and practical guidance on tree size and stock type. They used a KAEE grant to hire an intern for maintenance, volunteer work and trainings, and run an adopt-a-tree giveaway requiring sign-up and a conversation about siting and care. Rachel would speak to the Board or at the library. Ruth asked that future presentations be recorded, having missed Mike Hayman's talk, and will ask Allen whether a handout or outline exists.

Tree Week Review

- The variety of events was strong and the City collaborated well, digging holes for the plantings.
- Turnout was disappointing. The newspaper ran no advance coverage and the flyer that did run was too blurry to read; the Board may pay for an advertisement next year.
- Competing events drew families away, including the last soccer and little league football games of the season; attendance is down broadly this fall.
- The Big Spring walk went well, though only two or three attendees were not board members or family; a candidate for Judge Executive attended. The brochure needs a few edits and may go on the website or a QR code, with printed copies in a stand at Big Spring and at the Chamber and Tourism offices.
- A food or coffee truck at a future planting was suggested, since they bring their own promotion.

Jill Cutler, who requested the Big Spring map, is retiring but will remain until a replacement is hired and will serve on the Extension District Board another three years.

Anderson Dean Park

The Board reported considerable difficulty with new park management on the Tree Week planting. A donated mulch pile was removed as unsightly, with black mulch not expected until spring, and the gator with a water tank was denied the day before the planting despite notice on September 4. The Board has invested roughly \$13,000 plus volunteer hours there, and the Community Forest Management Plan calls for shifting focus elsewhere for a time while still protecting the existing trees. Sarah arranged watering with Evan: soccer field and cherry trees need one more summer, ginkgos two seasons, and water bags filled weekly this fall. Park staff still need pesticide licenses, which the Board will press after the new year.

LGE/KU Grant Application

Sarah presented the application narrative covering past plantings, promotion, ongoing efforts and budget. The Board will again request \$5,000, though awards typically come back at \$2,000 to \$2,500. Ruth questioned the mulch pricing as high; Sarah intends to budget for cypress mulch, which breaks down more slowly in park settings. On staking, the Board uses three stakes for mower protection but used two, tightened, this time. Motion to approve the application by Ruth Webb, seconded by Suni Ashton. Motion passed unanimously. The application is due October 31. Sarah will contact the grant administrator because this year's check and correspondence went to Doug Miell despite her being listed as primary contact.

New Business

The Board discussed buying its own equipment, including a tree dolly and a post driver, and where to store it so it does not leave with a departing member. Jessica offered the 4-H barn and Suni her basement, though a neutral location is preferred. Sarah will keep a list and bring back a budget.

5:53 p.m. - Motion to adjourn by Sarah Shewmaker, seconded. Meeting adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 16, 2026 @ 5:00 p.m.