



# CITY OF SWEET HOME PARKS & TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 19, 2025, 8:30 AM  
3225 Main Street, Sweet Home, OR 97386

WIFI Passcode: guestwifi  
PLEASE silence all cell phones – Anyone who wishes to speak, please sign in.

## Mission Statement

The City of Sweet Home will work to build an economically strong community with an efficient and effective local government that will provide infrastructure and essential services to the citizens we serve. As efficient stewards of the valuable assets available, we will be responsive to the community while planning and preparing for the future.

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## Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 AM

## Roll Call of Park and Tree Committee Members:

### PRESENT

Member Matthew Bechtel  
Vice Chair Lena Tucker  
Member Nancy Patton  
Member Debra Northern (Online)  
Member Melanie Jones  
Chairman Wally Shreves  
Councilor Aaron Hegge

### ABSENT

Member Scott Swanson

### STAFF

Angela Clegg, Planning & Building Manager  
Dominic Valloni, Public Works Operations Manager  
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager

### GUESTS

Candy Snyder, Beautification Committee  
Rich Little, Emerald Ash Borer presentation

## Time Reports

Chairman Shreves reminded the Committee to email Angela with any volunteer time they had put in.

## Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the 2025-10-15 Park & Tree Committee Meeting Minutes as amended was made by Vice Chair Tucker and seconded by Member Bechtel. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Member Bechtel, Vice Chair Tucker, Member Patton, Member Northern, Member Jones, Chairman Shreves.

NAY: None

ABSENT: Member Swanson

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*The location of the meeting is accessible to the disabled. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, advanced notice is requested by notifying the City Manager's Office at 541-367-8969.*

## **Public Comment.**

None

## **Beautification Committee**

Candice Snyder reported that the Committee is making 21 lollipop pots to place around town for Christmas. The lollipops were made and donated by Tina Cullison, and the Committee will fill the pots with greenery. They also received enough paint cans to set each lollipop in cement to help prevent them from being removed. Public Works plans to place the decorations around town, hopefully before Thanksgiving.

Member Patton asked who donated the paint cans. Candice explained that she collected them by asking around; her brother-in-law is a painter, and she continued requesting cans until they had enough.

## **Old Business**

Northside Park Replacement Trees: Vice Chair Tucker reported that Garland Nursery is holding the trees, and she and Chair Shreves will pick them up. The trees selected for Northside Park are a Redpointe Maple and a Fall Fiesta Maple—one with bright red fall color and the other with a rusty orange tone. Both are fast-growing, high-quality trees. In addition, the native oak donated on Arbor Day will also be planted at Northside Park. The Committee will coordinate with Crew Lead Hegge to schedule a planting day. Director Springman asked whether coordination with Hegge had already occurred; it had not but will.

Mollie's Dogwood Replacement: Vice Chair Tucker shared that the replacement tree for Mollie is a Muskogee Crepe Myrtle. It has pale lavender-pink blooms, aligning with the requested pinkish color. She noted that she viewed a mature Myrtle and found it to be a very attractive tree. This will likely be the first crepe myrtle the Committee has planted.

Sankey Park: Vice Chair Tucker ordered two additional cherry trees for Sankey Park. Garland Nursery did not have Akebono cherries in stock, so delivery may occur in late winter; details will be confirmed. Chair Shreves reviewed the proposed planting locations with Manager Valloni and Crew Lead Hegge, who had no concerns. The trees will be spaced 12 feet apart, which continues the existing curve of cherry trees along the sidewalk. The site has adequate water access for healthy growth.

Sankey Park Phase III: Manager Clegg reported steady progress on the project. The committee will review all submitted trail system proposals this week, with the intent to award the project next week. The Notice of Award is scheduled to be sent out on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November.

Staff also met with the Timber Framers Guild and now have a tentative bandstand design. The Guild is preparing a materials list and cost estimate for the City. Once received, staff will develop a community materials list and walk the Park & Tree Committee through the process. An extension for the grant will be submitted by the end of the month, though the City still must complete the project by the end of June. Despite the tight deadline, staff remain optimistic.

Chairman Shreves noted that this timeline aligns with the expectations set when the project began four years ago. Clegg added that the process should be rewarding and will bring the community together. The trail system has been more challenging than anticipated due to the site's topography, but staff are working through those issues.

In response to Member Patton, Clegg confirmed that the bandstand remains part of the project. The tasks were separated under the grant so the bandstand could be awarded directly to the Timber Framers Guild, while the trail system is bid separately. The Guild is using traditional timber-frame construction and has incorporated elements inspired by historic local mill architecture. Some materials may even be donated by area mills. The design is still preliminary and is currently undergoing engineering review. Once complete, the final design will be presented to the committee.

Chairman Shreves commented that the design is similar to earlier concepts but will better connect to the community due to the Guild's involvement. Clegg explained that the Guild not only assists with construction but also offers educational sessions, allowing community members to learn about timber-frame building.

In response to a question about how staff found the Guild, Clegg explained that the Guild initially contacted the City. A local Guild member, whose daughter is an architect for the organization, visited Sweet Home, reviewed materials, and helped identify design elements that reflect the community's history.

Chairman Shreves noted the significant changes in the park over the past several decades and how frequently it is used. He also mentioned that the dog park at Northside Park is consistently busy.

### **New Business**

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Presentation: Committee members received informational pamphlets on the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Vice Chair Tucker provided a brief overview of the pest and potential areas at risk in Sweet Home, then introduced Rich Little, a retired local entomologist.

Mr. Little presented information on EAB locations throughout the United States, current tracking efforts, and possible migration patterns. He also discussed prevention and treatment options and shared a sample showing what an EAB exit hole looks like.

Mr. Little recommended that the City inventory its ash tree populations and identify any significant or high-value trees. While he was not familiar with specific pesticides, he noted that some treatment options exist. He also advised thinning dense ash stands to slow the spread and help protect important trees.

Mr. Little reported that EAB has been confirmed in Marion County and will likely reach Linn County and Sweet Home in the near future. He offered to assist the City in surveying and identifying affected trees. He also recommended delaying any public announcement until a mitigation plan is ready.

EAB Next Steps: There was discussion among the committee about taking action with education. Manager Clegg suggested staff develop a mitigation and communication plan for surveying, detection, and prevention before sharing information with the public. Vice Chair Tucker volunteered to assist due to her background in this area. Staff will collaborate with her and return to the Committee with an update at a future meeting.

The Committee thanked Mr. Little for his presentation.

### **Round Table Discussions**

Chairman Shreves reminded the Committee to prepare a priorities list for discussion at the December meeting. This list will be provided to staff and City Council as a recommendation of projects to focus on in the next fiscal year. The Committee discussed the potential budget and possible areas of focus. Chairman Shreves asked whether the upcoming budget is expected to be higher, lower, or the same as the current budget. Manager Clegg stated that she is unsure, but due to the unexpected expenses associated with Phase III, she doubts the budget will be higher or even equal to the current year's budget. Manager Clegg will compile a list of activities already included in the task list and budget for the next fiscal year. Member Patton encouraged the Committee to review last year's budget ideas. Director Springman reminded the Committee that there are dedicated funds specifically for the Weddle Bridge, which should be included in future project priorities.

Member Patton asked Councilor Hegge to recall prior Council discussions regarding the bridge. Councilor Hegge stated that approximately \$125,000 was set aside to assist with matching grants for funding. Manager Clegg outlined the process moving forward and the steps required before any bridge rehabilitation can occur. Member Patton asked whether the engineer who provided the original cost

estimate would be available to assist with the bridge project. Manager Clegg informed the Committee that she has recently spoken with individuals who have engineering contacts that specialize in bridges. Manager Leisinger reported that staff has applied for historic designation for the bridge and is awaiting a decision. The Committee discussed the pros and cons of historic designation.

Vice Chair Tucker asked whether the bridge will be permanently gated due to vandalism. Staff confirmed that it will remain gated except during special events. The Committee discussed the reasons for this decision.

Member Jones reported that while she and Member Northern were out assessing ivy, she encountered members of the public who expressed interest in helping. Chairman Shreves recommended that ivy removal be organized as a group effort so that clean-up can be coordinated with the Public Works Department. The Committee discussed potential ivy workdays and coordination with City staff. Manager Clegg informed Member Jones that anyone interested in helping must first complete a volunteer form and will then be added to a list to receive notification of workdays. She also asked that volunteers indicate on the form that their interest is specifically for ivy removal.

Vice Chair Tucker informed Manager Clegg that she is willing to assist with the Tree City USA application. The Committee discussed the information that is currently being tracked. Manager Clegg also informed the Committee that the City will qualify for the Growth Award Grant this year since it did not apply in 2025.

Chairman Shreves stated that the Committee should consider scheduling another ivy pull and begin planning for Arbor Day. Manager Clegg informed the Committee that the Arbor Day celebration will be combined with a larger event and that she will provide additional details once they become available. Vice Chair Tucker stated that she will schedule a tree planting day after coordinating with Public Works.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 AM