

MINUTES OF THE FORESTRY COMMITTEE

on Monday, April 13, 2026 @ 8:00 am in the Oconto City Hall Council Chambers

1. Tom Sasse, Chairman, called the meeting to order.
2. Roll Call: Nick Badendick, Tom Sasse, Diane Motiff, Wendy Spice
3. **Spice moved for approval of Agenda; Badendick called second. (4 Ayes)**
4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes from 03/18/2026 were motioned acceptable by Motiff with a follow-up of Spice. (4 Ayes)**
5. Public Input: Discussed was WI flood zones: Holtwood's rising waters continue: yards and fields are flooded. Superintendent Wusterbarth distributed a most recent (*April 2026*) tree inventory availability list from which the Committee narrowed its search and caliber of *Swamp White Oak*, *Hackberry*, and *Blue Beech* trees to be planted on the annual Arbor Day planting with our 6th grade students. Being most cost conscious we determined that ordering 7 of each type of tree would be cost-wise: ordering kid-friendly height and caliber in the selection would accommodate our teaching needs.
6. Correspondence: Sasse stated that in the future Oconto will report to the DNR the # of trees we plant yearly. Spice stated that we should promote reporting trees planted city-wide.
 - a. WI DNR FORESTRY NEWS (March 2026)
 - Arbor Day Action and Celebration is available with social media post suggestions.
 - Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council recently announced its annual awards honoring those dedicated to protecting, preserving and increasing the number of trees that line city streets, fill community parks and beautify neighborhoods throughout the state.
 - Cedarburg's Urban Forestry Annual report
 - The DNR is accepting applications for the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program through May 1, 2026.
 - Upcoming Forestry Conference suggestions and trainings
 - Other repeated issues
 - b. Northeastern WI Forest Health News – WI DNR (April, 2026) The following issues were read and available for comment by the Committee:
 - Forest Appreciation Week runs April 20-24 statewide, including Earth Day on Wednesday, April 22, and Arbor Day, on Friday, April 24 paying tribute to Wisconsin's 17 million acres of rich, diverse forestland.
 - An article on aerial spraying for spongy moths with "Foray" bacterial insecticide of Perrot State Park was available.
 - Trees compartmentalize winter damage, serving to limit the ability of bacteria and fungi to invade. Trees then begin growing callus tissue over or around the wounded area: further tree stress might be faced during the upcoming growing season. It is generally not necessary to use wound paint for wounds on trees, although there are some exceptions.
 - White Grub eggs are laid in dead and decaying wood and larvae feed on them. They avoid the solid wood of the trees.
 - An active winter weather season for snow, freezing rain and fluctuating freeze/thaw temperatures has exposed white pine along roadways to salt spray damage.
 - The best way to avoid damage from jumping worms, which can be substantial and long-lasting, is to prevent them from getting into your garden, yard or forestland in the first place. The worms don't become detectable until about late June.
 - To bring landowners and managers up to speed on the impacts of oak wilt and the best ways to prevent it: the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) offers a video highlighting the danger that oak wilt poses to trees and forests.
 - Many invasive plants that are problematic for Wisconsin forests gained their foothold in the state as garden ornamentals. Although Wisconsin regulates 145 plants under the invasive species rule

NR 40 prohibiting their sale, it's essential to check your selections before purchasing and choose native plants whenever possible.

- DNR Forest Health specialists speaking engagements will be listed ahead.
- c. Update on Nuisance Trees – Oconto City crew has completed most listed work to date. Stumps have been ground out of City Park. Holtwood Park is on hold during our flood condition.
7. Discussion/Recommendation/Action on the Following:
 - a. Arbor Day Tree Selection– It is anticipated that we (including the City crew) will plant 23 new trees with a few others placed within the City. The tree selection has proven to be caliber appropriate, hardy, and water tolerant. We continue to plant a variety of trees covering forestry canopy and floor due to disease that may overcome a variety as in the past. Aesthetics will dress the park as well as serve its needs.
 - b. Arbor Day Planting dates– **Wednesday, April 29, 2026 / Rain Day Tuesday, May 5, 2026** Oconto Middle School has been alerted to the schedule which will begin and end @ City Park this year. Mayor Cliff Martin should be present. Spice will see that our Historical Society speaker for the Historical Presentation will be on site and that they have the student schedule. Poster awards and history of City Park will parallel the time allotted.
 - c. Poster Judging of 24 students was completed after this meeting was closed ending @ 9:13 a.m.
 8. **Next Meeting Date/Time: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 @ 8 a.m.**
Agenda Items will include the tree the Committee dedicated to Jeff and Kitty Werner.
 9. **Motiff submitted adjournment @ 8:50 a.m. Spice witnessed second. (M/C)**

Minutes submitted by Susan K. Seidl