

Town of Paonia
214 Grand Avenue
Tuesday, August 19, 2025 5:30 PM
Tree Board Minutes

Record of Proceedings

Chair Hottinger calls the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Roll Call

Present:

Chair Hottinger

Vice Chair Newland

Secretary Patterson

Board Representative Heck

Board Member Haynie

Board Member Short

Board Member Wells

Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Newland stated he'd like to amend the agenda by adding the topic of the formation of a subcommittee to prepare a presentation for a study session with the Board of Trustees, agreement received by Chair Hottinger.

Vice Chair Newland makes a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment, seconded by Board Member Haynie.

The motion carries unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes - July 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Newland makes a motion to approve July 15th minutes, seconded by Board Member Wells.

The motion carries unanimously.

Secretary Patterson arrives at 5:35 PM

Actions & Presentations

Public Comment:

Kathy Swartz, speaking as a citizen, thanked the Board for advice Sick Tree Day.

The Board discussed the role of DMEA in pruning and removal for safety and fire mitigation, and the importance of homeowner communication and preparedness.

Item #1 - Town Park Trees - Finalize plan to replace 4 trees (2 behind stage, 2 play area)
The Board reviewed plans to plant five replacement trees in Town Park, agreeing that planting should wait until after installation of a new irrigation system to avoid conflicts. Members emphasized the need to review the irrigation layout to protect tree roots, select species from the approved list based on nursery availability, and provide supplemental deep watering for two to three years. The Board also discussed forming a volunteer watering group and will coordinate with Public Works Director Nicki Poulos on the irrigation project and tree plan revisions.

Item #2 - Discuss Town Administrator's request "...have a comprehensive training session for staff on proper tree trimming practices, particularly along rights of way."

The Board considered Town Administrator Wynn's request to provide comprehensive training for public works staff on proper tree trimming practices, with emphasis on right-of-way trees.

The Board noted that training should include both technical pruning techniques and procedural protocols, such as securing homeowner permission before entering private property. Although a

training session was previously held, staff turnover has created the need for recurring sessions. The Board agreed that the optimal time for hands-on training is late winter to early spring (February–March 2026), when tree structure is most visible.

Action steps include distributing instructional pruning videos to public works staff for interim reference and scheduling a formal training session with Tom Tyson in late winter 2026.

Board Member Short arrives in-person at 5:48PM.

Item #3 - Share observations from Sick Tree Day

Board members reported that the recent Sick Tree Day event was successful, with 11 attendees. The primary issues observed were related to drought stress and a need for pruning knowledge. The possibility of offering future public pruning classes for small trees was discussed.

Item #4 - Discuss regular meetings with Public Works Director Poulos


The Board stressed the need for consistent communication with Public Works Director Nikki Poulos on projects impacting trees and agreed to meet with her to review irrigation, watering, pruning resources, and communication protocols. They also plan to coordinate with DMEA’s vegetation manager to improve public notification of trimming schedules.

#5 Creation of Subcommittee for Board of Trustees to prepare presentation for study session for board.

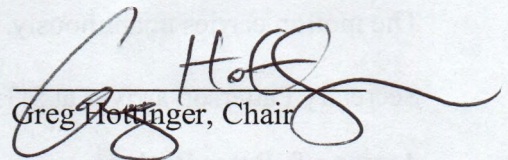
The Board discussed forming a subcommittee to prepare a formal 10 - 15-minute presentation to the Town Trustees on Paonia’s urban forest, highlighting its value, current challenges, Board goals, and specific support requests. Vice Chair Newland will share past examples and an outline, and a subcommittee, including Board Members Short & Haynie, will draft the presentation with clear visuals and actionable “asks.”

Adjournment

Chair Hottinger adjourns the meeting at 6:30 PM.


Ruben Santiago, Deputy Town Clerk




Greg Hottinger, Chair