

City of Ellsworth
1 City Hall Plaza, Ellsworth, ME 04605
ARBOR COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Monday, October 2, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**
2. **Adoption of Minutes of August 29, 2023**
3. **Housekeeping**
 - a. **City Council representation and staff support**
 - b. **Confirm Regular Meeting Time:** first Monday of the month at 8:00AM
 - c. **Minute Taker**
 - d. **Remote Participation Policy** (see sample in meeting materials)
 - e. **Review Rules of Order**
4. **Review Current State of Community Forestry Initiatives** (see attached summary)
 - a. **City of Ellsworth**
 - b. **Green Ellsworth and its partner organizations** (see attached summary)
 - c. **Other non-profits and organizations**
5. **Possibilities for initial Commission “To Do” List/ Timeline**

Provide formal input to Comprehensive Plan
Provide direction and support for Community Tree Nursery
(Upcoming work: mowing, tilling, planting, winter prep & ordering for next spring)
Provide input and direction for upcoming grant applications:
 new Project Canopy Funds (see forwarded notice) & related planning
Develop and request Arbor Day Proclamation
Complete application for Tree City USA renewal
Develop Community Forestry Management Plan
Clarify mandate and revise ordinance
Determine appropriate City Department/management unit for tree related initiatives

(Public Works, Planning Department, Code Enforcement, Parks & Recreation
Department, etc)

Secure funds for baseline Canopy Coverage Assessment

Develop proposed budget for Arbor Commission/City Tree Planting 2024-2025

Develop plan for public engagement and education

Other

6. Citizen Comments

7. Member Comments

8. Staff Comments

9. Adjournment

Remote Participation Policy – (Sample) (Agenda Item #3d.)
Ellsworth Recreation Commission

Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. § 403-B and after public notice and hearing, the above-named body adopts the following policy to govern the participation, via remote methods, of members of the body and the public in the public proceedings or meetings of the body. Remote participation will not be by text-only means such as e-mail, text messages, or chat functions.

Requirements.

A. Members of the City of Ellsworth Recreation Commission may participate in meetings of this body remotely when the following conditions exist:

- i. Inclement weather;
- ii. Travel;
- iii. Illness; or
- iv. Other unforeseen circumstances, as approved by the Chair or Vice-Chair.

B. The public will be provided a meaningful opportunity to attend via remote methods when any member of the body participates via remote methods. If public input is allowed or required at the meeting, an effective means of communication between the body and the public will also be provided. The public will also be provided an opportunity to attend the meeting in person unless there is an emergency or urgent issue that requires the entire body to meet using remote methods. Reasonable accommodations may be provided when necessary to provide access to individuals with disabilities

C. Notice of all meetings will be provided in accordance with 1 M.R.S. §406 and any applicable charter, ordinance, policy, or bylaw. When the public may attend via remote methods, notice will include the means by which the public may access the meeting remotely and will provide a method for disabled persons to request necessary accommodation to access the meeting. Notice will also identify a location where the public may attend the meeting in person. The body will not restrict public attendance to remote methods except in the case of an emergency or urgent issue that requires

the body to meet using remote methods of attendance. The body will make all documents and materials to be considered by the body available, electronically or otherwise, to the public who attend remotely to the same extent customarily available to the public who attend in person, provided no additional costs are incurred by the body.

All votes taken during a meeting using remote methods will be by roll call vote that can be seen and heard if using video technology, or heard if using audio technology only, by other members of the body and the public. A member of the body who participates remotely will be considered present for purposes of a quorum and voting. This policy will remain in force indefinitely unless amended or rescinded.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY Adopted April 25, 2023

Policy adopted by City of Ellsworth Recreation Commission

Current State of Community Tree Initiatives (Agenda Item #4)

City of Ellsworth:

Chapter 43—Tree Ordinance: https://www.ellsworthmaine.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ord43_Trees.pdf

Appoints tree warden

Arbor Day Proclamations

Pruning/removal of tree hazards within public spaces and right of way

Replacement of city-owned street trees

Contribution of a tree to each of the two GE pilot projects

City crew assistance with pilot project planting including watering commitment through 2024

Contracted care of some public spaces

Oversees Tree Growth Tax Abatement program

Development/expansion/care of Branch Lake Public Forest (in partnership with FBC)

Green Ellsworth Tree-related Initiatives in Progress

Since 2017 Green Ellsworth and its partner organizations (the City of Ellsworth, Ellsworth Garden Club, Frenchman Bay Conservancy and the Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District) have initiated a number of projects to preserve and strengthen Ellsworth's tree canopy—and in the

process raise the profile of the importance of trees to the extent that the City would ultimately appoint its Arbor Commission and provide more formal guidance to realize the vision communicated by its citizens in the green planning process. As with the entire Green Plan the tree sections of the Green Plan were intended to inform the current Comprehensive Planning process.

See the Green Plan Land Chapter at:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C6ntxHqvdyd86RDpPhIFFD0KDGmMhWR/view>
esp. pp. 84-85, 101-103 and Recommendations L-21 through L-25

GE has initiated the following projects:

Tree City USA since 2022 (GE)

Inventory and basic landscape survey for Ellsworth's public green spaces; see
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PFd4DpBY8wOSiat_UkysQFdTVUp_Bw99/view. (GE)

Street tree survey work in progress/COA map
(<https://coagis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=00a796623e6f45fb90b6b563b043d134>). (GE)

Native tree and shrub sales and give aways (HCSWCD, EGC)

Community Tree Nursery at Jordan Homestead Preserve (GE, FBC, EGC)
180 trees planted; @100 more to be planted fall 2023; 80 more in spring 2024
with school and community volunteer participation during Maine Arbor Week

Forested land conservation: Jordan Homestead; Spindle Preserve; Whitney Forest+ (FBC)

Heirloom Tree ID, list, education and preservation (EGC)

Public Education/Programming (EGC, GE)

Two successful Project Canopy Grant Applications (GE, EGC, FBC)

Pilot Invasive species survey of River Walk (FBC, GE/EGC)

Pilot planting projects: City Hall Plaza, High Street

Draft Forestry management plan

Developing the beginnings of a citizen/volunteer group to assist with tree assessment and maintenance

Other non-profits and organizations

Maintenance of forested preserves and public spaces:

Birdsacre (Stanwood Wildlife Sanctuary)
Green Lake National Fish Hatchery (US Fish and Wildlife)
Meadowbrook Forest (Blue Hill Heritage Trust)
Mt. Calvary Cemetery (Catholic diocese)
Woodbine Cemetery (Woodbine Cemetery Association)
Woodlawn (Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations)

New Project Canopy Funding:

Janet T. Mills
Governor

The logo for the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry. It features a stylized green 'M' with a brown tree silhouette inside the right vertical bar. To the right of the 'M', the text 'MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION & FORESTRY' is written in white, with 'MAINE DEPARTMENT OF' in a smaller font above 'AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION & FORESTRY'.

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

For Immediate Release
September 21, 2023

Maine Secures \$3.07M for Tree Stewardship and Grants in Underserved Communities

Augusta, Maine – The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) announced the award of over \$3 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support urban and community forestry projects and workforce development initiatives. This funding is part of President Biden's [Investing in America agenda](#) to advance environmental justice, generate economic opportunity, and build a clean energy economy nationwide. The grants are made possible by investments

from President Biden's [Inflation Reduction Act](#), the largest climate investment in history.

"Today's announcement marks a significant milestone in our commitment to environmental stewardship and community development," **commented DACF Commissioner Amanda Beal**. "As we invest over \$3 million in urban and community forestry projects and workforce development initiatives, we are strengthening the well-being of our community forests and nurturing the growth of forestry careers."

A \$1.57 million allocation will fuel a pioneering initiative launched by the [Maine Conservation Corps](#) (MCC), enabling the enlisting of five dedicated Community Tree Stewards, who will serve as full-time MCC members over four years.

"The Community Tree Stewards program will provide invaluable hands-on experience and mentorship opportunities for our members as they pursue careers in forestry," **said Sara Knowles, Director of the Maine Conservation Corps**.

"Simultaneously, it will elevate the well-being of community forests, benefiting all residents."

Established in 1983, MCC builds upon the Civilian Conservation Corps legacy by engaging diverse individuals to address pressing conservation needs in Maine communities. Members of MCC develop in-demand skills and work experience while showcasing the power of service and civic engagement. MCC is part of the DACF's Bureau of Parks and Lands.

[Project Canopy](#), a DACF Maine Forest Service (MFS) program, is set to allocate \$1.5 million in a competitive subgrant program aimed at municipalities and community organizations. This funding will support the upkeep of public right-of-way and park shade trees, risk mitigation efforts, and replanting initiatives to bolster climate change mitigation and resilience. Key determinants for grant approval will include designations as disadvantaged entities, evidence of pressing needs, proactive urban forest risk planning, community involvement and educational endeavors, and a demonstrated commitment to climate-responsive planning and planting for resilience against pests and storms.

"This significant investment in public funding for community trees will address the 20-year backlog of deferred maintenance of roadside trees in Maine," **said Jan Santerre, Project Canopy Coordinator**. "The investments will allow communities to build local capacity to understand this resource and plan for ongoing maintenance, growth, and long-term support for care."

According to Maine State Forester and MFS Director Patty Cormier, trees within our urban environments deliver economic, environmental, and social advantages.

"Urban forests help mitigate air pollution and stormwater runoff, provide the pivotal role of carbon sequestration, and strengthen local economies."

The Urban and Community Forestry industry contributes \$410 million to Maine's economy annually and employs more than 5,000 people, according to [a ground-breaking study](#) by the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance. Trees are estimated to cover 44.9% of Maine's most populous communities, saving them \$83.8

million a year by removing air pollutants, stormwater reduction, and carbon sequestration.

Project Canopy will seek input from potential grant recipients on the types of support most needed through a grant survey. The Request for Proposals will be announced by December 1, 2023. Interested parties are encouraged [to subscribe to receive Project Canopy updates](#).

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Media contact: [Jim Britt](#)