

MURRAY CITY POWER
Shade Tree & Beautification Commission
Murray City, Utah
May 20, 2025

Minutes of the Murray City Power Shade Tree & Beautification Commission meeting held on May 20, 2025, at Murray City Power located at 153 West 4800 South, Murray, Utah.

Shade Tree & Beautification Commission

Jann Cox, District #2

Marshall Smith, District #4

Alex Motro, District #5

Department Staff

Matt Erkelens, Forestry Supervisor

Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent; excused

Special Guests

Cathy Singer, Kennecott Nature Center

Matt called the meeting to order at 8:33 am. He asked if there were any changes or corrections to the April minutes. There were none. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes and Jann seconded it. The minutes were approved.

Arbor Day Recap

Matt asked the Commission how they thought the Arbor Day program went. Cathy said that it was a great and beautiful day. She mentioned that one of the schools got off the bus a little late, but that they made it work.

Cathy explained that she asks three schools to attend each year. Because Parkside is so close, they are always invited. She then rotates between the other schools.

Matt asked how the busing worked. (This year educational sessions were in the morning instead of early afternoon.)

Cathy reported that there weren't any issues with the busses. She reminded the Commission that in earlier years the busses had to leave early because of limited bus drivers. This year that was avoided and she would love to keep the educational sessions in the morning going forward. She asked if the presenters were ok with the change and was told there wasn't any negative feedback.

Matt agreed that keeping the new time change would be a good idea. He also noted that the students were able to attend all the educational sessions.

Matt felt that the program started a little later than he would have liked. Cathy said that next year she would remind the teachers to have their students in their seats at 11:55 am so the program could start promptly at noon.

Matt thanked Alex for an amazing job emceeding the program. Several people that attended the event complimented Alex for a job well done.

Matt asked about what the Commission thought of how handing off the citywide winning posters to the Park's Department went. (After the winners were announced they handed their posters to the Parks Department for displaying at the Murray Mansion.)

It's possible that the Park's Department may not display them again, but the Power Department may choose to display them at city hall.

Matt wondered about having the winners turn in the posters AFTER the program rather than DURING the program.

Alex thought it was a little bit of a kerfuffle, but not chaos.

Marshall felt that collecting them during the program would be better than after so the kids didn't forget.

Cathy asked if a date was set for 2026. She said that all the Murray Schools would be in school on May 1st (a Friday).

There was some discussion, and a tentative date was set for Thursday, April 30th. Power staff will confirm the date and let the Commission know.

Matt asked if there were any other comments or concerns.

Jann was sorry to have missed the Arbor Day program. Cathy said that she heard positive comments from the teachers and that the teachers love the event.

Marshall asked if there was a way the posters could be displayed at the event. There are 59 winning posters, so the Commission couldn't think of how that might be done.

Cathy said that the students used to learn a song to perform during Arbor Day. She wondered if the Commission wanted a song or poetry like was done the last 2-3 years.

It was noted that the students didn't just read poems, but that they wrote their own. It was decided to continue to have poetry readers instead of singing.

Marshall asked if there was a "plan B" in case of bad weather. Matt told him that if the weather was bad, they would crowd under pavilion #5 for both the educational sessions and the program.

Beautification Awards

The deadline for nominations is Tuesday, June 10th. If the Commission would like to add to the nominations, those should be sent to Barbara by end of day, June 10th.

Barbara will compile a list of nominations and send it to the Commission by June 12th.

The following Commission members were assigned to canvas the different districts prior to judging:

Jann—Districts 1 and 2

Marshall—District 4 and ½ of District 3

Alex—District 5 and ½ of District 3

All Commission members will look at businesses and multi-family.

Jann asked if the judging of multi-family just includes the entrance. Matt told her that was correct. Marshall wants to try not to use previous winners. Matt agreed, however, they often have repeat winners in this category because there aren't many new places.

Judging will be held on Monday, June 23rd at 8:00 am. Commission members will meet at the Power Department. Judging will take around 3 hours. Matt will bring the judging sheets and a list of the final nominations along with a list of previous winners.

As a reminder, these are the following categories:

- District Winners
- Xeriscape
- Multi-family
- Commercial
- Water Wise Living Park Strip
- Citywide Winner

Matt wants to be sure that judging of the park strip includes plants and trees. Too many park strips just include rock. Rocks generate a lot of heat, adds to the greenhouse effect, and is hard on plants and trees.

Matt also talked about looking at the landscapes to see if a professional is doing the yard care or if it appears that the homeowner is doing the work. The preference is to choose yards where the homeowner does the work.

Marshall thought it would be good to remind the winners to please keep the sign in their yard for the entire summer. Alex's area said his winner kept it in the yard "through the snow" and up until the For Sale sign was put up.

Matt told the Commission that property values increase with a properly landscaped and well-maintained yard.

With no further business to come before the Shade Tree & Beautification Commission, Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alex seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 am. Minutes transcribed by Barbara Ishino.

The next in-person meeting will be on Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at 9:00 am in the Murray City Power office located at 153 West 4800 South.