

MURRAY CITY POWER
Shade Tree & Beautification Commission
Murray City, Utah
February 3, 2026

Minutes of the Murray City Power Shade Tree & Beautification Commission meeting held on February 3, 2026, 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

Flip Nielson, Parks Field Supervisor

Matt called the meeting to order at 9:06 am.

Marshall asked if there were any changes or corrections to the November minutes. There were none. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes. Jann seconded it. The minutes were approved.

Tree Lighting Ceremony Recap

Matt reported that there were thousands of people who attended the Tree Lighting event.

Flip thought the crowd was consistent for 2 hours of the event. Marshall liked that the event was spread out. Matt thought the outdoor market helped get people there. Jann would like to see more vendors at the market in 2026. Marshall thought a large tent to cover the entire market might be a good idea.

Matt thanked Alex for emceeding the event and said he did a great job.

The Commission decided that the wristbands to see Santa just didn't work and, in the future, there would be a line instead. MCP staff will continue to monitor the line, so it moves as quickly and efficiently as possible. There was talk about moving Santa away from the Council Chambers and closer to the North end of the building, so that there isn't a bottleneck. The Santa line would continue to be routed through the Council Chambers so they could listen to the choir.

Jann wasn't able to go to the Tree Lighting, so she asked how Santa and Mrs. Claus were. She was told that they were great.

Matt also told the Commission that he didn't know how involved they would be for the next Tree Lighting event. He is waiting to hear what the Commission's role will be in the future. He also told the Commission that a Tree Lighting recap meeting was held at city hall in January but didn't know the result of that meeting.

Arbor Day, Thursday, April 30, 2026

Marshall asked if the schools had been notified. Matt told him that they were. He also reported the following dates:

Poster paper was delivered February 2nd.

Completed posters will be picked up March 3rd.

Judging will be on March 10th at 5:00 pm. (Matt will let the Commission know which building.)

Matt reported that Murray City staff will also be there to assist with the judging. The Commission recalled that judging is difficult with so many posters. However, they also noted that they have a system that should help it go smoothly this year.

Jann was happy with the theme, With Liberty and Clean Air for All.

Marshall asked if anyone had nominations for the Honorary Tree Person. The Commission asked if Flip had any suggestions. Flip suggested Polly Holyoak, who volunteers 4 days a week maintaining gardens at the park.

Marshall volunteers at a garden and could nominate one of the other volunteers there, but thought Polly would be a very worthy nominee. If they decide otherwise, he will find some names.

Alex asked if the public could nominate. Marshall asked if they could ask the council. Matt felt that the Commission should choose and keep the decision internal.

Matt told the Commission that they could revisit the topic at their April meeting.

Matt talked about the educational sessions. There will be 9-10 sessions presented. They will be mostly city departments, the same as last year:

Storm Water

Water Department

Forestry Tree Planting

Fire Department

Parks Department (s'mores)

Alex said that the Office of Energy was contacted and consented to present at Murray City's Arbor Day. Their presentation will focus on energy conservation. (Last year Murray City Power employees did a similar presentation.)

Marshall suggested contacting the Olympic Committee and Utah State's Master Gardener's program to see if they would consider presenting. He also thought that Save the Great Salt Lake would be an informative and helpful presentation.

Alex said that Antelope Island has a museum about the Great Salt Lake and that they show a video. He suggested contacting them.

The Commission felt like those were great ideas as, "we are in trouble water-wise".

Jann asked if there would be a lunch again and Marshall asked who paid for those. Matt told them that there would be a lunch and that the cost came out of the Murray City Power budget.

Matt said the ceremony would be at noon and asked if Alex would consent to being the emcee. He said he would.

Alex asked if the speakers would be the same as last year. Matt said that the State Forester and the Mayor would be invited to speak again this year.

There was a question about which schools would attend. Cathy Singer, from the Nature Center, rotates between the Murray City elementary schools.

Last year the Murray Mansion/Museum hung the citywide winning posters and Jann asked if that would happen again this year. Matt said that they would and that the display was well received.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Jann made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alex seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.

Minutes recorded by Matt Erkelens and transcribed by Barbara Ishino. **The Commission will meet again on Tuesday, March 10th at 5:00 pm to judge the Arbor Day posters.**

The next official meeting will be Tuesday, April 7th at 9:00 am at the Murray City Power office.