

April 2026 Minutes for the 4/21/2026 Board of Tree Experts Meeting

- I. Open Public Meetings Act read by A. Cramer
- II. Approval of Agenda. Motion was made by B. Emens, seconded by J. Greipp. Motion passed unanimously.
- III. Approval of the Minutes of March 2026 Meeting. Motion to approve made by J. Greipp, seconded by B. Emens. Motion passed unanimously with corrections
- IV. Administrative Report – The Monthly Statistics were reviewed. The new website is up and available as of April 6. A brief summary of the features presently available, problems that have been resolved and the possible future features. The old website URL has been connected to the new website URL so if you try to access the old one, it will automatically forward you to the new website. It is being managed by the State.

A. Cramer gave a summary of the meeting with Candice McLaughlin, DAG and 4 of the field personnel regarding the implementation of the new enforcement framework. We still have the administrative track (NOV, NVOS, AONOCAPA). The new legislation allows for a municipal court track where we have 2 choices which are, to have the inspector go to a local municipal court where they would file a complaint with the court clerk, and the other choice is to pursue establishing a special form of complaint which translates to a ticket book. The field inspectors can write it out and hand it to the company rep on site and turn in copies to the municipal court. Candice is working to get our list of citations established with the State. They need to be uploaded to their citation database. Once that happens we can start pursuing the other steps. We don't have a timeline of when this will be in place but Candice has some good ideas on how to streamline it. A. Cramer has compiled a list of the citations and has submitted them to C. McLaughlin, DAG for implementation.

G. Lovallo felt the ticket books should be held in the office and have the inspectors fill them out here. E. Jones agreed that handing the ticket at the job site is not the most efficient method since the owner is usually not present. He also brought up the risk of jobsite injury and how that would be covered. A. Cramer clarified that the ticket books will not be specific to each municipality. Our citations would be on a database accessible to all municipal courts so the books could be given to the inspectors. It is called a special form of complaint which is specific to our agency, not to any specific municipality.

We are finally included in the NJ Start program. Our Wells Fargo Account is closed and all our vendors are being paid through the State. Chris Sullo and ITC Solutions are now in the NJ Start System.

Raul Cabrera indicated to J. Greipp that he could help us out with the translations in Spanish but could look over the ones we already have to check for errors but his wife does do translations.

J. Greipp noted that the number of registered businesses has decreased. Hopefully under the new enforcement it should pick up. Suspended/non-

renewed business will receive a notice or NOV and a list will be sent to the inspectors.

V. Financial Report

There are concerns that we will not meet the \$325,000 budget by July.

In September 86% of our revenues come from Business Renewals and in January, 91.8% of our revenues come from License Renewals and that carries over to February 62%. We have no penalties coming in from February & March. The Wells Fargo account is presently closed.

VI. G. Lovallo asked about hiring another inspector. The DEP advised that we are close to maxing out on our PO's. Hopefully, the new enforcement strategy will help resolve some of the budget problems.

VII. General Public – Thomas Karkas

Discussion of his LTE license which has never been renewed since the inception of the law. The Board members reviewed the letter sent by Mr. Karkas regarding his renewals. Mr. Karkas said he was under the impression that everything was up to date until he got the notification that he had to re-take the exam.

They will submit any documentation they have regarding CEU's and renewals and the Board will review them and make a decision at a later date once the information has been submitted.

VIII. Unfinished Business

We received 3 used file cabinets with keys from the State warehouse today. They were free and they delivered them without a fee.

We have 3 LTCO exams but only one has been translated to Spanish. The staff will find out what the price would be for Mrs. Cabrera or ask Peter Slump to translate the other 2 exams. Then present all 3 to Raul Cabrera for review. We can also try submitting the exams through AI and then submit to Dr. Cabrera. Bulletin on New Legislation – A. Cramer developed a Bulletin for distribution to the municipalities regarding the new legislation. The Board was requested to review the Bulletin and make suggestions. No Vote on the final result is required. The emails should be individual between Amy and each Board Member. If Board members have comments, they should send them to Amy and she will summarize them. She will work with Bruce to determine if there should be a sub-committee or if all the Board members should be involved. There should be an introductory email with the bulletin attached so the recipients will understand it.

IX. Review of Applications

Business Registrations Approved

American Dream Tree Experts	Plainfield, NJ
Masterscapes Tree & Land Services	Toms River, NJ
Our Tree Service	Pt. Pleasant, NJ
Alex-son Tree Service LLC	Morristown, NJ
Mike's Trees & Property Maintenance	Hammonton, NJ
Efren Landscaping	Vineland, NJ
Playcrest Home Services	Glen Ridge, NJ

Exam Passed

Efren Hernandez

Angel Petruzzi

David Hernandez

Alex Pavon-Baca

Wilson Estrella

Vineland, NJ

Shamong, NJ

Landing, NJ

Morristown, NJ

Clifton, NJ

Reciprocities

Stephen Lahovich

Hamilton, NJ

Motion to go into closed session J. Greipp. Seconded B. Emens. Motion passed unanimously

Motion to go to closed session by J.Greipp . Seconded by B.Emens/ Motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION – April 21, 2026

No updates on the Amanda Glen litigation. The expenses for litigation are not covered because it is a discrimination case and will have to be paid through the Board. They will try and get 22nd Century to pay for some of the settlement.

Closed Session Minutes/summary from March 17, 2026. Motion to approve J. Greipp, seconded S. Spero. Motion was passed unanimously.

Discussion on Thomas Karkas. J. Greipp recommended payment for past fees and retake the field or payment of the past fees and submit all CEU's. Bruce Velzy, DAG will investigate how to proceed with this. The staff will work with him to get all the CEU's. We will bring everything to the next Board meeting. It was an oversight on the part of the Board staff not realizing he was not renewed.

Motion to come out of Closed Session made by M. Goggin, seconded by B. Emens, motion passed unanimously

Summary

In closed session I summarized who would be paying for litigation expenses in the Amanda Glenn case and whether there may be settlement options in the future. There was also an extensive discussion of Thomas Karkas' request to remove his suspended status which goes back to 2017 regarding his transfer from Certified to Licensed Tree Expert. The tree Board shared it's preferred resolution in this matter and I indicated I would do the necessary research and get back to them or the executive director.

There was nothing discussed in the closed session that required a vote.