

# Ohio Christmas Tree Association – Board Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2026



Vice President Jeff Greig called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the absence of President Gary Hite

The meeting was held at the Hampton Inn, 8411 Pulsar Place, Columbus, Ohio 43240

## **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Joel Berry, Alan Binger, Amy Galehouse, Jeff Greig, Beverly Keener (arrived at 7:10 due to travel issues) Roger Koch, Matthew Perdulla, and James Stribrny

Absent: Gary Hite

Also Attending: Executive Director Valerie Graham, Jeff Bielek, Charles Perdulla and Dave Herbert

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Roger Koch moved to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2025 OCTA board meeting. Joel Berry seconded the motion. Motion approved.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Alan Binger presented the Treasurer's report. The general fund balance had a net loss of nearly \$8,200 in 2025 but about \$4,500 of that loss can be attributed to 2025 memberships and winter meeting registrations arriving in late 2024 as the information had been mailed out to membership earlier than usual. He reported that the two educational meetings each generated lower earnings than expected due to low attendance and the memberships of 131 were down eleven from 2024, all contributing to the net loss. The one-time purchase of farm signs was also a major expense that will not be repeated in 2026. The Operation Evergreen Fund shows a balance of \$10,347 at January 31, which is a significant improvement of the January 31, 2025 balance of \$5,867. This is due to only shipping 50 trees in 2025.

The scholarship fund and scholarship endowment funds saw significant growth with balances of \$5,200 and \$12,527 respectively. After discussion, Matt Perdulla moved to transfer \$1,000 of the scholarship endowment fund from the National City checking account to the Edward Jones investment account to be added to the certificate of deposit when it comes due there on April 16. The motion further authorizes Alan Binger to reinvest that maturing CD, along with the accrued interest into a new certificate of deposit at the best rate and term available. Alan will inform the board when the new certificate is secured. James Stribrny seconded the motion. Motion approved.

With no further discussion of the Treasurer's report Matthew Perdulla moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Amy Galehouse seconded the motion. Motion approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS-**

**New Board Members:** As there are currently three unfilled positions on the OCTA board, Vice President Jeff Grieg appointed Jeff Bielek and Cory D'Amico to fill the remaining two years of unfilled terms expiring December 31, 2027. Welcome to Jeff and Cory. There remains one board seat open with a term ending December 31, 2028.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS-**

### **Scholarship Committee:**

Roger Koch reported that one application has been received so far with a deadline of April 15. With the balance we are carrying we could potentially offer two scholarships again this year. Roger also discussed the makeup of the committee which is currently comprised of Roger, Robin Saum and Bill Cackler.

### **Internet Presence/Social Media Committee:**

Chairman Alan Binger reviewed the updates that have been made to the website and the 25 posts that were made on the Facebook page since our last meeting. There are currently 1107 followers on the OCTA Facebook page which is up from 1077 in October.

### **Operation Evergreen:**

Chairman Amy Galehouse handed out a written Operation Evergreen report and thanked everyone for the help with the project this year. 48 boxes were palletized containing 52 trees and while there were still some shipping hiccups, the trees were delivered in a more timely manner than in 2024.

### **Meetings/Education Committee:**

Chairman Jeff Greig discussed the 2026 Winter meeting to be held the following day. Valerie Graham reported that 100 registrations were received which is a significant improvement from 2025. It was decided to tentatively schedule the 2027 meeting for February 20, 2027.

The Summer meeting agenda and other summer meeting issues at Feisley Tree Farm were discussed. The meeting will be held June 26-27, 2026. Much progress is being made and Jeff Feisley will speak to the attendees at the winter meeting to promote the event. Registration fees will still need to be determined once meal costs are set.

The 2027 meeting will be held June 25-26, 2027 at Hidden Pines Christmas Tree Farm in Clyde. The Dickess Christmas Tree Farm in Lawrence County has volunteered to host a future meeting. A decision was not made at this time. A farm visit was discussed as no director was familiar with this location.

### **Finance Committee:**

Nothing further to report.

**Research Committee:**

The need for a research committee and/or a chairman for the committee was discussed. It was felt that as we have a research fund there should be some leadership. It was decided to ask the membership for any specific topics they would like researched. Jake Nicholson would be a potential point of contact for research through Ohio State University.

**State Fair Committee:**

Chairman Jeff Greig and Valerie Graham discussed the improvements coming for this year's contest and exhibit at the new building on the fairgrounds. More trees and help will be needed but we should have a nice area for display.

**Public Relations:**

No report.

**Hall of Fame Committee:**

Chairman Joel Berry reported that Jeff Greig is the 2026 Hall of Fame Inductee and will be announced at tomorrow's winter meeting. Congratulations to Jeff on the well-deserved honor.

**NEW BUSINESS-**

**New Growers/Other Educational Meetings:** Two possible locations for New Grower meetings were discussed. Kleerview Farms and Sugargrove Farms have offered to host.

**Mentors:** The need for mentoring new growers was discussed. We will ask experienced growers from around the state to inform Valerie if they would be willing to help mentor or offer farm visits to new growers

**FUTURE MEETINGS-**

Special Meeting (via Zoom): Monday, March 23, 2026 7:00 p.m. to set registration fees for the summer meeting.

Regular Meeting (via Zoom): Monday, May 11, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Moved by Roger Koch, seconded by Matthew Perdulla to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Alan W. Binger*

Secretary Pro Tempore