



City of Newburyport Tree Commission

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 13, 2022

Zoom meeting

The meeting convened at 6:03 pm.

Tree Commission members present: Sheila Taintor (Acting Chair and Secretary), Sue Brown, Marcia Edson, Scott Hanley, Paul Knowlton, Paul Harrington (alternate) Jamie Tuccolo (Tree Warden, ex-officio)

Public in attendance: There was no public attendance.

Reports

Secretary

The Commission approved the Minutes of the November 18, 1921 meeting. Due to not having a quorum, the Commission did not meet in December.

Paul Harrington moved, Marcia Edson seconded, unanimous.

Treasurer

The Commission accepted the December Treasurer's Report.

Paul Harrington moved, Sue Brown seconded, unanimous.

Tree Warden

Jamie Tuccolo submitted MIMAP updates to MVPC between 12/25 & 1/1, so that trees removed over the summer would be visible on the map on the City of Newburyport website.

Sheila inquired how to handle residents' requests for a new tree in a spot where a large tree has been recently removed. The Tree Warden said to email him so that he can create a work order for Lance Rickard to take a look and advise us on whether another tree could be planted in the same site or close by.

Grants/Donations

The Commission had offered a stipend to Jane Niebling in July to write grants for us, since the City grant writer did not have time to write grants for the Tree Commission. Over the fall, Jane wrote grants to the Bromfield Fund and National Grid. We received \$3200 from the Bromfield Fund but have not yet heard back from National Grid. The Finance Department was not able to approve/pay Jane Niebling's invoice for writing these two grants as the City has a grant writer on staff.

Fortunately FoNT agreed to pay Jane Niebling's invoice for \$500, but we discussed what to do in the future. The Tree Warden suggested emailing Nancy London to inquire about this.

Recommended Newburyport Street Tree List

The committee revising the Newburyport Street Tree List is still working on it.

Inventorying new trees

Scott has spoken with Cris Miller re: inventorying the trees which were planted in Fall 21. There is no urgency. They plan to go out when the weather is better. Paul Knowlton will join them and be trained along with Scott, so that they can be a team going forward. Sheila will request a login for Paul from MVPC.

Commissioners contact info

Paul Knowlton asked if we could share our contact information with each other. Sheila said she would share the spreadsheet of members.

Education

ACES Tree Plaques

Sue Brown and Marcia Edson reported on the recent meeting they attended about the ACES Tree Plaques. Also attending were the Parks Commission, Christine Wallace (ward 4 councilor), John Elwell (who mentored 2 NHS students to ID trees along the Indian Hill reservoir last year), and Art Currier, (president of ACES). This project is to be a student driven experience with high school students researching, writing, and designing interpretive signage for several tree species within Atkinson Common. The group is reaching out concerned citizens and abutters.

2022 MA DCR Annual Arbor Day Poster Contest

This year's theme is: *Be A Cool Community, Plant Trees!* The deadline for schools to mail their winning entry to MA DCR is 3/15/22.

Fifth graders at the River Valley Charter School, the Molin and Immaculate Conception schools will all be participating in this year's poster contest. In addition, the Superintendent's office has sent info about the contest to homeschool students.

Commissioners Sheila Taintor and Marcia Edson will be making presentations to the fifth graders at the Molin.

Community Outreach

The Commissioners discussed how we can reach out to the community and let them know what we are doing, as well as recruit new members for the Commission. The following were mentioned:

- Monthly or bimonthly Tree Talk articles in the Daily News
- Paul Knowlton mentioned setting a Twitter account and offered to check into it.

- Paul Harrington suggested posting on Nextdoor. Scott Hanley will write a post to be shared with all the neighborhoods in NextDoor, hoping to duplicate his success finding us Marcia Edson.
- Marcia Edson mentioned a letter to the editor in the 1/12 Daily News by Glenn Richards, the Chair of the Newburyport Historical Commission soliciting volunteers. It is clear that the Tree Commission is not the only City body looking for more members.

Old Business

Rebuilding Tree Commission

By ordinance, the Tree Commission should have 7 members and 2 alternates, but we now have 5 members and 1 alternate. We would benefit from having an arborist, a grant writer and someone focused on Outreach. We discussed what we need to do to increase our membership.

New Business

FY 2022 Free Cash Proposal

We discussed requesting funding for planting street trees this spring. There are currently **38** requests on the Spring 22 planting list, but only funding to plant **23**, leaving 15 requests unfunded.

We discussed asking for \$7230 to plant the unfunded 15 trees, or \$9640 for those 15 trees and 5 more to allow for new requests. Each tree planted and watered for the remainder of this FY costs a total of \$482. That is \$250 for its purchase, \$200 to plant it and \$32 for the 4 waterings before 6/30/22.

Paul Harrington moved submitting a request for \$9640, Sue Brown seconded, vote unanimous.

Project for CPC application

The Commission discussed ideas for a possible grant application for a CPC grant, which has a Feb 3 deadline. After considerable discussion the Commission decided to pass on this round.

Sheila mentioned discussions with Jane Healey, the Chair of the Newburyport Resiliency Committee, about collaborating with us on a pilot project to combine stormwater management and trees. The Commission was very interested. We discussed building and planting trees in bump-outs on one of the wide streets between High and Merrimack/Water Streets.

Marcia Edson suggested looking into State Street. Scott Hanley suggested finding out if underground infrastructure would allow for bump-outs along State Street

Marcia mentioned setting up a program with FoNT to be held at the Library (probably remotely) to explain the Tree Commission to residents. She will investigate this and report back at the February meeting.

Shady News Talks Revival

In 2018-2019 the Tree Commission invited outside speakers to come address us on various topics occasionally at the beginning of meetings. There were speakers on the Emerald Ash Borer and Structural Soils, as well as presenters from the Parks Department, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, National Grid and the Bartlet Mall. Sheila suggested reviving this practice. The Commission was interested, and authorized Sheila to invite Steve Lopez from MVPC and members of FoNT to come and meet with us in our upcoming meetings.

January elections

Sheila Taintor was elected Chair unanimously. She will continue to serve as secretary and treasurer until she can be replaced in those roles.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Taintor, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday, February 10 at 6 pm