



City of Newburyport Tree Commission

Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2023

The meeting convened at 6:35 pm.

Tree Commission members present: Paul Knowlton (Chair), Bob Uhlig (Vice-Chair), Marcia Edson (Secretary), Paul Harrington (Financial Secretary, Alternate), Stephanie Pellegrini, Becky MacKnight (Alternate), Scott Hanley, Jean Berger

Absent: Marilyn Cohodas,, Jenn Sullivan (Acting Deputy DPS Director)

Agenda additions:

- Update on response from Tree Commission's letter to the mayor
- MIMap information

Public comment: No public attending

Tree Warden report: No report.

Paul K has continued to work with Jenn Sullivan on TC issues. He will reach out to Wayne Amaral, the new DPS Director, to invite him to our next meeting.

Secretary's report:

Motion by Jean to approve minutes of the April 13, 2023, meeting, seconded by Paul H. Minutes approved unanimously.

Treasurer's report:

Paul H. presented the April financial report which covers the purchase, planting, and care of trees through this fiscal year, ending June 30. Committed watering costs for July through September are FY24 expenses in the amount of \$11,239. Additional donations from FoNT will be necessary and those donations will have to be approved by the council's Finance Committee. Paul also included a projection sheet for FY '24. Paul based the projection on vendor price raises and the cost of 2-2 ½ in. caliper trees.

Social Media update:

Paul K. brought up the fact this is usually the last item on the agenda, and we often run out of time for discussion, so he requested that it be brought up earlier on the agenda.

Discussion revolved around the most effective use of social media. Becky questioned whether Twitter was the best platform for our information. Steph mentioned that Facebook or Instagram might reach more people. Marcia suggested that Marilyn review each of these options, check into sites that other city commissions use, and report back on what might be the best platform for the Tree Commission.

FoNT report:

Jean reported that the Arbor Day celebration was a great success with 12 participants taking part in the pruning workshop provided by three arborists: Jean, Dave, and Mike. Afterward Jean, Dave and Cris Miller led 3 FoNT volunteers and Marcia as they pruned trees from both ends of High St. Jean offered an additional pruning day on April 20th for those who were not able to participate, so pruning of all the young High St. trees would be completed. Jean stressed the importance of caring for the young trees we plant and urged a better showing next year.

The Tree Commission had additional visibility with the Earth Day festivities on the bullnose. The mayor read the Arbor Day Proclamation and Jean and Marcia gave out seedlings donated by Bigelow Nurseries.

Steph explained that FoNT is restructuring, and she will be taking over as presidents. She also reported that FoNT has a pending grant request for \$2,500 from the Newburyport Resiliency Committee. Steph was also able to confirm that Lance is updating the takedowns and stump removals. FoNT will no longer be involved with that.

Spring planting 2023:

Paul K. shared a revised Spring Planting spreadsheet. Trees will be delivered on May 14th and trees purchased from Amherst will arrive the following week. Planting will be done during the weeks of the 16th and 23rd. Tim will bag and water 134 trees.

Jean visited Bigelow and Northeast Nurseries. She said all the trees were beautiful, especially those at Bigelow where trees are actually grown. Bob suggested using Bigelow exclusively since they are the growers. Paul H mentioned that price and availability of species require purchases from other vendors.

There was a discussion about Dig Safe procedures and what their street markings indicate. Paul K will follow up on the Roosevelt Ave. property where two trees were sited, but one failed Dig Safe.

Jean brought up fall planting and asked how locations were determined. Paul K. stated we need to prioritize placing trees where the tree canopy is limited, especially in the south end. Paul will share the Fall 2023 spreadsheet and invited members to add suggested sites.

New business

- Response regarding letter to Mayor – Bob explained there hasn't been a direct response from the mayor yet, but the DPS budget hearing is scheduled for June 8. Paul H. agreed to go to support our budget needs.
- MIMAP – Paul K. has password and ids for TC members for MIMap. He will work on setting up a MIMAP tutorial for the Tree Commission, so everyone understands the inventory process. One possible endeavor would be to look at trees planted 10 years ago to determine how the various species fared.

Action Items for next meeting:

- Query Andrew Levine about Tree Commission access to city's Google drive folders – Jean
- Revisit and refine *Get a Tree* document.
- MIMap tutorial

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:05 PM by Jean Berger, seconded by Steph Pelligrino. Unanimous.

Next meeting will be at 6:30 PM, June 8, 2023, in the Program Room of the Library.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marcia Edson, Secretary