

Newburyport Tree Commission
Minutes: June 12, 2014
Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library

Meeting Convened at 7:03 PM

Members present: Ed Taylor (Chair), Sheila Taintor (Acting Secretary), Byron Getchell, Crispin Miller, Dave Dylewski; Andrew Lafferty, ex-officio (Tree Warden and Deputy Director of the Department of Public Services)

Absent: Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary), Paul Harrington (Vice Chair/Treasurer)

Report of the Secretary

The Minutes of the May 8 meeting were reviewed and approved with correction.

Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer submitted his report to the Commission via email prior to the meeting. He reported payment of \$160 to Dave Dylewski for a conference reimbursement, and committed \$49 to Ed Taylor for conference reimbursement – both from the Revolving Fund. The Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.

Tree Warden's Report

Since the last report, 2 trees have been damaged by auto-related accidents and the City has submitted for reimbursement from the insurance companies:

- (1) 4" linden at 287 High (corner of Rawson) will be replaced by one tree (same site) and another on Columbus Street
- (2) 12" Norway maple at Pond and High will be removed

Tree Inventory: Andrew Lafferty has hired Mayer Tree to work on the inventory. One arborist has been working 6 days/week and a second will be starting soon. Work will be ended on 6/30 due to grant expiration.

Work orders: During the month of May, there were 93 work orders. The actual number is probably a little higher since not all work gets an order. There were 2 tree removals and a bunch of forest trees removed near the Artichoke Reservoir.

Merrill Street: Red maples are currently listed to be planted on Merrill Street but several Commissioners expressed concern about planting this species on such a narrow confined street. A. Lafferty requested that the Commission submit alternative species to him for the Merrill Street plantings by July 1. Dave and Byron plan to walk the street in the near future and pass on their recommendation to the Tree Warden.

Brooks Court: Brooks Court will be repaved. The reclaiming machine that will remove the hard surface digs down as deep as 12". Tree Warden Lafferty is concerned that the de-paving of Brooks Court may destroy the roots of 3 large trees, making them hazardous. As a result some trees may need to be removed.

Fair Street: A large unhealthy beech tree on private property on Fair Street was discussed. DPS been in contact with the owner, Mr Hurlin. He has trimmed and pruned the tree, and it is “safer” that it was.

Green Street: Tree pits are to be dug within the next week or so and filled with loam.

Byron Getchell and Dave Dyleski will check into availability of the Valley Forge American Elm, the Allee Lacebark Elm and the Frans Fontaine hornbeam trees. These trees will be planted fall 2014 or spring 2015 depending on availability.

The City will purchase the trees, select and hire a contractor to plant them. The Commissioners supported using one of the three large contractors who have done work for the City.

Status of City Trees Planted in the last 2 years

Trees Planted in 2012: Dave Dylewski will report at our next meeting how many of the trees planted in 2012 have survived.

Trees Planted in Nursery 2013: Sheila Taintor reported that only 1 red maple, 8 zelkovas and 8 honeylocusts are still alive from the 30 red maples, Japanese zelkovas and thornless honeylocusts. Ten of each species were planted on Earth Day, 2013. Only 1 Eastern redbud, 3 Washington hawthorns, 1 white dogwood and 0 goldenrain out of the 20 treelets survived (4 of each species were planted). The 2 transplanted American elms died.

Sheila will contact the Arbor Day Foundation about getting replacements for the dead red maples.

Green Street Parking Lot: Ed Taylor has been in touch with Planning Director Andrew Port about the terrible condition of the trees planted in the Green Street Parking Lot. The Planning Department will follow up with the contractor, and Ed will check back with Andrew Port.

Tree City USA awards

Ed Taylor reported briefly on the 6/4/14 Tree City USA Awards that he attended. Photos of trees consumed by the Emerald Ash Borer were shown. Due to changes caused by the beetles, even the strongest wood becomes brittle. The tree is then in an extremely dangerous condition and can snap at the trunk – even on windless days. The conference attendees were advised to consider proactively removing ash trees before they are attacked by the EAB.

Ed turned over the Tree City USA materials received to Andrew Lafferty and gave Cris Miller, our newest Commissioner, a Tree City USA cap.

Newburyport “Clean Energy Road Map” – Mass CEC (Clean Energy Center)

Recycling, Energy & Sustainability Coordinator Molly Ettenborough contacted Sheila Taintor to request the Tree Commission to develop a grant proposal project concerning tree shading to be submitted to CESP (Community Energy Strategies Program). As 1 of 3 initial community participants Newburyport was well positioned to get the grant. Based on the Newburyport Clean Energy Road Map, the four areas M. Ettenborough was considering were

tree shading, solar canopies, bike sharing and an anaerobic digester. Upon further discussion with Mass CEC, the decision was made to submit a proposal for solar canopies.

OLD BUSINESS

Revolving Fund Memo of Understanding (MOU)

Andrew sent the signed MOU to Ed Taylor and Paul Bevilacqua.

Tree Requests

Dave Dylewski reported 10-15 calls this past month.

Annual Calendar of Activities. This topic will be held for next month's meeting when its proposer Paul Harrington is present.

Parks Department request to use the water wagon/pump. Lisë Reid is working on wording of the agreement with the Tree Commission to share expenses.

Tree Watering

Dave Dylewski stressed the importance of watering the street trees planted in the last two years, especially after this dry spring.

Ed Taylor checked with Lisë Reid about the Parks Department volunteer who will be watering the gardens along the rail trail. Ed is meeting with this volunteer to see whether he could do our watering as well.

Ed also spoke with Roseann Robillard, director of the Council on Aging, to see about other potential volunteers.

Ed offered to check with NECC, Essex Aggie and Whittier Tech to see if there are any students who might be able to take on this responsibility. He will write an article for the local newspapers soliciting volunteers for this purpose and other Tree Commission projects.

Cris Miller volunteered to check with Jean Berger of Green Jean's to see whether her summer intern might be available to pick up extra hours helping the Tree Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

Benefit Cost Analysis of Tree Nursery

Crispin Miller volunteered to undertake a benefit cost analysis of the Tree Nursery, to help the Commission decide whether or not to proceed with the project and a recommended phased approach with activities and funding. He has set up meetings with well drillers and irrigation people to find out the expense involved with providing water at the Nursery and will report back at the July meeting.

Community Relations. Byron Getchell stressed the importance of having the public know that there is a process for tree removals. Any tree being considered for removal is looked at independently by up to three people. No tree is removed capriciously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sheila Taintor, Acting Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday July 10, 2014 at 7 PM

Location: Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library