

NEWBURYPORT TREE COMMISSION 1  
Monthly Meeting Minutes

JUNE 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013- APPROVED Minutes  
Secretary for this meeting is PB/ET

**Tree Warden is Andrew Lafferty**, Deputy Director of Dept. of Public Services (DPS)

**Meeting convened at 7:04 PM in the Newburyport Public Library Children's Room**

**Tree Commission members present:**

Andrew Lafferty(AL), Ed Taylor (ET) (vice-chair and secretary), Paul Bevilacqua (PB) , Dave Dylewski, Paul Harrington (PH), Sheila Taintor (ST)

**Absent:** Hugh Kelleher

**Also Attending:** Byron Getchell (12-14 Milk St.), Ann LaRue (37 Walnut St.), Katie Haried (former member), Geordie Vining (Sr. Project Mgr at the Planning Office)

**Reading of the Minutes** for the **May 9<sup>th</sup>**, 2013 meeting

The minutes were approved as amended (motion by: PB / seconded by ST)

**Treasurer's Report** reviewed and accepted (motion by: PB / seconded by ET)

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1.) Membership and volunteers project update**

The membership application of Byron Getchell has been sent by the Mayor to City Council. The second reading is scheduled for Monday June 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm (sign up to speak is from 7-7:25).

**TASK\*: Anyone wishing to speak in support can sign up before the Council meeting and say a few words.**

**2.) Unauthorized tree cutting or damage - updates**

No discussion.

**3.) Spring planting update – City Nursery**

ST made a species inventory last week. She reports significant attrition.

See also the planting projects below.

**TASKS: ST and DD will look into the reasons for the die off.**

**4.) CPA update**

Parts of the CPA grants may need an application for extension.

**TASK: PH will be in contact with Katie Newhall-Smith at the planning office.**

**5.) Tree watering project update**

A contract with Classic Companies is awaiting signature.

**TASK:AL will finalize the contract detail.**

**6.) Review of planting projects:**

**Green Street Parking Lot Project**

This project is being administered by the planning office. They have produced a review plan and want to finalize the planting plan ASAP. After a discussion about the project, including input from KH, BG, and DD, it was decided that the Tree Commission could not support the species selection nor the planting plan proposed by the City's designer.

The Commission passed a motion of its general recommendations. AL wants to have specific planting recommendations from the Tree Commission by Tuesday June 18th.

The Commission thanked Katie Haried for developing a very thoughtful critique including a detailed alternative proposal for consideration by the Tree Warden and the Planting and Pruning Subcommittee.

**MOTION:** "The Tree Commission recommends substantive changes to the Green Street parking lot planting proposal: the City should plant trees, preferably native species, that will reflect the scale of the lot (not overly tall), that have strong salt and wind resistance, and will not produce seed pod or other potentially hazardous litter; plant appropriate shrubs and ground cover along the south perimeter to reduce soil erosion; eliminate perennial plantings because they require costly yearly replacement and upkeep; consider the cost benefit of using permeable pavers where possible or mulch between trees."  
Passed unanimously.

**TASK: BG to make species and sourcing recommendations to the Tree Warden.**

**Green Street Planting Project**

Members agreed that next step the Commission plans to take is to vet the planting sites for viability, i.e., develop a more detailed plan that identifies obstacles such as underground utilities. Also, the level of support by abutters for plantings along the street between High and Merrimac should be clarified.

**TASK: DD to convene a meeting of the Planting and Pruning (P&P) Subcommittee. See New Business below for more details.**

**7.) Tree calls – evaluations update**

No discussion

**TASK: DD will continue to evaluate calls from residents with tree concerns.**

**8.) Tree requests: update**

No discussion

**TASK: DD is keeping a list of requests**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1.) Planting and Pruning Subcommittee**

This committee is re-forming under the new Tree Commission. DD will head the group with help from PH and BG. DD will request additional help as needed. Issues on its immediate agenda include: ongoing pruning efforts; review and further detailing of the Green Street planting project; Spring Planting 2014; liaison with the Planning Office and all Commissions concerned with trees.

**TASK: DD to convene the first meeting.**

**2.) Tree City USA Awards**

Newburyport won a Tree City USA award for the 17<sup>th</sup> year in a row. This year's event, sponsored by the state D.C.R. and N-Star utility, was held at Wheelock College in Brookline MA.

Our city was represented by Tree Commission members Sheila Taintor and Ed Taylor as well as resident tree man Jeff Esche.

**TASK: AL will attach the 17th year medal to the wood plaque at the DPS offices.**

**TASK: ST to explore the possibilities of displaying the Tree City banners on the school athletic field fence on Low Street and at the junction of High Street and Story Avenue.**

**TASK: ET to send PR about the event to local newspapers.**

**3.) Meeting Guidelines**

The goal of the guidelines is to create a meeting structure that makes the process accessible and transparent and the use of meeting time efficient and effective.

Approved by unanimous vote for a 6 month trial with review in January 2014.

PB distributed a copy of Section 9-7 of the new City Charter rules going into effect January 2014: Uniform Procedures Governing Multiple Member Bodies.

**TASK: PB will distribute the finalized copy of the guidelines**

**TASK: Commission members will read the guidelines and the Section 9-7 information. Review of the latest open meeting laws is highly recommended.**

**Adjournment at 8:45 pm**

**Next meeting: Thursday July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Location: Newburyport Library Children's Reading Room**