

Newburyport Tree Commission

Minutes December 11, 2013

Third Floor Conference Room Newburyport Public Library

94 State Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Meeting Convened at 7 PM

Members present: E. Taylor (**ET**) (Chair), P Bevilacqua (Secretary) (**PB**), D. Dylewski (**DD**), B. Getchell (**BG**), P. Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) (**PH**), H. Kelleher (**HK**), Andrew Lafferty, (**AL**) Tree Warden and Deputy Director of the Department of Public Service ex-officio

Absent: S. Taintor (**ST**)

Others Present: Elizabeth Petty volunteer

Report of the Secretary

The Informational Meeting Notes of the November 17 meeting were accepted.

Report of the Treasurer

Sub-Committee Reports

- **Spring/Fall Planting**

DD indicated that there was nothing new to report at this time.

- **Green Street Planting**

DD Reported recommendations for bids will be submitted to Andrew Lafferty by the December 15 deadline set by the committee. It is unclear how many trees can be planted with the available \$20,000 CPA grant. There was discussion regarding the potential for additional funding sources, and the timing of full implementation of the plan, including the possibility of Chapter 90 funds. DD and others will pursue these possibilities in cooperation with Andrew Lafferty. The goal is to plant up to 29 trees at designated locations on Green Street. Initial plantings are scheduled between April and June of 2014.

- **Planting and Pruning**

DD indicated that there was nothing new to report at this time.

- **Nursery**

ST was not able to attend the meeting due to illness. The report will be submitted and discussed at the January meeting.

Update on Tree City USA- **ET** reminded everyone that, as in the past, the Commission would submit an application, for the 18th time, on behalf of the City. He noted that information and assistance was necessary from Commissioners to complete the three page application. He also asked each member to submit to him ASAP, but not later than December 27th, a total of their estimated hours of volunteer activity for the Tree Commission in 2103. All Commissioners agreed to do so.

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Secretarial Support for the Commission

PB is now the Commission Secretary. Therefore, there is no need for secretarial assistance at meetings. The Commission discussed with **AL** the possible source of secretarial support for hearings. **AL** agreed to review his budget and staff to determine how to address this need in the future. He will report to the Commission as to what he has learned and proposes at the January meeting.

Commission Membership/Recruitment of Volunteers

The Commission discussed the need to recruit two persons for Commission membership. One is for a regular or voting position and one as an alternate. Members agreed to continue to network and work with others to identify appropriate individuals who are interested and who have the needed time and skill.

Grant Functions and Responsibilities

The Commission reminded the Tree Warden, and those present, that it wanted to support and encourage the Tree Warden and others to work collaboratively in developing grants, but that the Commission would only accept responsibility if it is directly and substantively involved in the development and implementation of a grant. The Commission agreed to continue to work on developing an effective role in the development and implementation of grants.

Tree Commission Budget for FY 14 and FY15

After the November meeting **PH** and **PB** took the initiative to work with the Bill Squillace, Finance Director, to clarify the funds over which the Commission has jurisdiction, the nature of that jurisdiction, and the process for allocating and expending those funds. In collaboration with and under the guidance of Bill Squillace they had developed a draft Order for Commission consideration for submission to the City Council to create a Revolving Fund to replace the

existing more restrictive fund and limited purpose fund which had been created in 2004. The new Revolving Fund would also clarify the Fund's revenue sources.

Additionally, they submitted a draft Memo of Understanding (MOU) for consideration which would be signed by the Mayor, Tree Warden, and Chair of the Tree Commission. The MOU would prescribe the process for allocating and spending funds in the Revolving Fund. After substantial discussion to clarify the purpose and utilization of this account the Commission voted unanimously to approve the MOU and the Order for submission to Bill Squillace for action. **PB** was authorized to contact Bill Squillace to initiate the next steps.

Finally, **PH** and **PB** proposed a process and related formats, consistent with those used by the City of Newburyport, for the development and submission of budgets which would be submitted to **AL** for action. After substantial discussion the proposals were unanimously and enthusiastically approved for immediate use. **BH** and **PB** offered to organize and lead a workshop for members in the use of the format.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday January, 2014 at 7 PM

Location: Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library