

Newburyport Tree Commission
Minutes February 11, 2016
Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library

Meeting Convened at 7:00 PM.

Tree Commissioners (TC) present: Crispin Miller (Chair) (**CM**), Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary) (**PB**), Byron Getchell (**BG**); Ed Taylor (**ET**), Sheila Taintor (**ST**), Jane Niebling (**JN**)

Members Absent: Paul Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) (**PH**), David Dylewski (**DD**) Wayne Amaral, Tree Warden and Deputy Director/Director of Operations Department of Public Services, ex-officio (**WA**)

Open time for Residents

No residents were present

Report of the Secretary

The Minutes of the December 10 meeting were reviewed. All members present at the December 10 meeting voted to approve with clarifications

Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer was absent. **CM**, in the absence of **PH** due to injury, developed and presented updated financial report based upon the report filed by **PH** in December and discussions with **PH** and DPS and Finance Staff. **CM** reported that there is agreement on all account balances.

Report of the Tree Warden (WA): February 2016

Tree Warden was not present. A report was not filed.

Committee Reports

Tree Regulation Committee: The Committee has not been able to meet since the last **TC** meeting due to weather and other factors which caused meetings to be canceled. Future meetings are being planned.

Planting and Pruning Committee

DD was not present. The report was presented primarily by **CM**.

Spring Planting

DD will review approved locations with Dig Safe in early April. Northeast Nursery has reserved up to 16 trees. The contractor has been hired to plant the trees.

Green Street

BG has volunteered to coordinate Green Street project in the absence of **PH**. The project is set to begin once the city signs the overall contract for the entirety of the City project.

Pruning and Mulching

Saturday April 23 and April 30 have been finalized for the annual pruning and mulching led by the **TC**.

Appropriate Planting Locations

It was unanimously agreed that given the advice of **WA** and the type of trees proposed for planting on the center strip of Perry Way, that such a planting would be appropriate. **ET** will move forward with discussions with the RVCS.

OLD BUSINESS

Tree Watering

The **TC** had previously agreed unanimously to move forward to identify a contractor/contractors to provide watering services in 2016. After substantial discussion of the merits of trying to continue to rely upon volunteer help, and after considering two possible contractors, it was voted unanimously to recommend the award of a contract for the period April – June to an individual contractor who **CM** had identified. The contract was limited to that up to six week time period as that the **TC** only has sufficient funds available to support that time period.

CM will submit the final contract for this period to the **TC** for action at the March meeting. If funds are allocated to DPS for FY 2017 for tree care, the contract will be extended another 10/12 weeks to a contractor. **CM** will submit the final contract to the **TC** for action at the March meeting.

FY 17 Budget

No information has been received as to the FY 17 budget request.

Collaborative Efforts with Friends of Newburyport Trees (FoNT)

JN reported that meetings had been held with FoNT, which has submitted two grant proposals to support previously accepted Gateway Projects 1 and 2. One grant was to the CPA for funds to purchase trees for Project 1, the Cornelius Doyle Triangle. The other is to for the purchase for three trees for Project 2, Storey Avenue in front of the Home for Aged Men. **JN** will remain in contact with FoNT and will update the **TC** on the progress of the grant proposals.

New Business

Allocation/distribution of funds from Insurance Payments for damage to street trees.

CM is working with the Finance Director/Auditor, and other appropriate officials, to confirm that the language in the January 2014 Order which created the Revolving Fund-Account number 2828- directs that money from damaged street trees, including insurance settlements, will be deposited to the Revolving Fund for use as specified in the Order and the subsequent MOU between the **TW** and the **TC**.

City Tree Plan

The Tree Ordinance calls for the creation of a City Tree Plan which is to be updated annually. At present, a cohesive Tree Plan does not exist for the City of Newburyport, although separately many of the component parts of a tree plan are in place and /or are in the process of development. The **TC** agreed to delay developing of the cohesive plan until other priority projects, including the Tree Regulations, are completed. At that point the **TC** will take up development of a Tree Plan as a priority.

Earth Port Film Festival

The **TC** has been invited, through **ST**, to set up a table in the lobby of The 5th Annual Earth Port Film Festival (<http://www.earthportfilm.org/>) at the Firehouse on April 16. The theme of Earth Day this year is “Trees for the Earth” and organizers of the Festival felt it was a wonderful opportunity for the **TC** to share information with the public. The **TC** unanimously accepted the offer to have a member or members available to distribute literature and speak with interested persons. We will discuss further how best to use this opportunity at our March meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday March 10, 2016 at 7 PM

Location: Children’s Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library