**Newburyport Tree Commission**

**Minutes February 12, 2015**

**Newburyport Tree Commission**

**Children’s Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library**

**Meeting Convened at 7:00 PM.**

**Tree Commissioners (TC) present:** Ed Taylor **(ET)**, Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary) **(PB)**, Crispin Miller **(**Chair**)(CM)**, David Dylewski **(DD**), Byron Getchell **(BG)**, Paul Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) **(PH**)

**Members Absent:** Sheila Taintor **(ST),** Wayne Amaral, Tree Warden and Director of the Department of Public Services, ex-officio **(WA)**

**Report of the Secretary**

The Minutes of the January 8 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

**Report of the Treasurer**

The report was reviewed and discussed. **PH** noted that the change in the budget from the January report is that the committed funds for Fall 2014 trees have been paid. The report was unanimously approved.

**Commission Chair Report**

**CM** and **PH** reported that they had a very substantive and productive meeting with the Mayor. They reported that she was very supportive of the direction of the **TC**. The Mayor verbally committed to provide funds for FY 16 to achieve the goals and requests outlined in the budget and related documents. They indicated that the Mayor was particularly pleased with the demonstrated planning and organization of the **TC**. The Mayor indicated that the information provided will fit in well with the city’s five year planning process.

**Tree Warden’s Report**

No report, **WA** absent.

**Sub-Committee Reports**

**Education:**

No report**, ST**was absent.

**Planting and Pruning**

**DD** led a multi-part report by members of the Committee.

 **Spring 2015 Planting**

**BG** reported on the planting of trees for the Spring 2015. **BG** has assumed responsibility for this project. During the presentation the **TC** unanimously approved the expenditure of up to $6,800 from the Revolving Fund to purchase trees for Spring 2015 planting. The **TC** also voted to expend the remainder of the FY 2009 CPA grant - $701.46- for FY 15 tree care, including the Spring planting; and, up to $5,500 for tree care for the 2015 growing season from the Revolving Fund unless other revenue sources, including - Free Cash - become available for that purpose**. BG** will move forward to purchase the trees and arrange for them to be planted.

 **Street Tree Inventory Management**

**CM** reported thatit appears that hisprojection that the remaining trees would be inventoried by the end of February will not be achieved as the trees to be inventoried are buried under the snow. The project will resume and be completed as soon as conditions allow.

 **Green Street Planting**

**PH,** the Commissioner responsible for coordinating this project**,** reported, as in the past, that the **TC** is ready to move ahead once the larger street renewal project begins.

 **Pruning**

**DD** announced that there would be a change in dates for the annual **TC** pruning and mulching activities. After consultation with Molly Ettenborough dates are now April 18 and April 25.

**Purchase of Reflective Vests**

**DD** noted that the 12 reflective vests for Commissioners to use in carrying out their work on various projects and, up to another 12 for the use of volunteers, have been ordered.

**Future Project for High Street**

**DD** noted that there are conceptual discussions for developing a project to restore High Street trees from Story Avenue to the Newbury line. **DD** will involve others and keep the **TC** informed as this moves forward.

**Calendar Review**

**CM** suggested that the **TC** review the **TC** Calendar at each meeting as a means of keeping on track and making, adjustments, as needed. There was unanimous agreement with this suggestion. Calendar Review will be placed on the agenda of each meeting in the future. Until other arrangements are made **CM** will maintain the Calendar and submit it for review at each scheduled meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Update: FY 15 Free Cash Proposal for Spring 2015 Planting**

This matter was addressed as part of the report on Spring 2015 planting.

**Update: FY 16 Budget Process**

See notes above relative to the **Commission Chair** **Report**. Additionally there was agreement to develop a spending plan once the FY 16 budget allocation to the **TC** has been received. The **TC** will use its draft documents which had been submitted as a basis for developing the spending plan.

**Adopt-A**-**Tree Program**

**BG** said that he is still involved in developing the proposal. He will report further in the future. The members encouraged him to do so.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Renewal of River Family Charter School (RVCS) Collaboration to Plant Trees**

There will be further discussion of a possible future project, for no earlier than Spring 2016. **DD** will discuss with RVCS and with Lise Reid of the Parks Commission.

**CPA Grant Application/Proposal-Historic Trees Restoration Phase II**

**PH** distributed a draft of CPA grant proposal. It was reviewed and, with minor modifications, was unanimously approved for submission. The proposal requests $13,532 to purchase and plant in the Fall of 2015, 17 trees of no less than 1 ½” in diameter in residential neighborhoods.

There was agreement to submit a proposal for CPA funds at least every other year. The Mayor had encouraged the **TC** to seek grant funds from various sources, in addition to City funds. In this regard, the Mayor offered assistance to the **TC** from the City grant writer

**DD** was thanked by the **TC** for his initiative and the work that he and others, including volunteer and former Tree Committee member Jane Niebling, had done to develop the proposal.

**Clarification of the roles and activities individual Tree Commissioners**

**CM** distributed a draft listing of the **TC 2015 Activities/Responsibilities** for review and discussion. There was general agreement that the listing of responsibilities was consistent with the document developed by **PH** in the Fall of 2014 which had been adopted. Some additions and deletions were discuss and **CM** will adjust the document accordingly.

**Clarification of the boundaries of the Tree Commission’s responsibilities.**

Generally the **TC** agreed that the primary responsibilities of the **TC** are outlined in the Ordinance in **Chapter 12 of the Newburyport Code of Ordinances** which created the Commission. The **TC’s** responsibility is generally limited to street trees.

**City Tree Nursery**

It was agreed that this item will be placed on the March 12 agenda for action when Commissioner Taintor will be present to discuss it.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday March 12, 2015 at 7 PM

Location: Children’s Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library