**]Newburyport Tree Commission**

**Minutes May 14, 2015**

**Newburyport Tree Commission**

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

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

**Tree Commissioners (TC) present:** Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary) **(PB)**, Crispin Miller **(**Chair**)(CM**, David Dylewski **(DD**), Byron Getchell **(BG)**, Wayne Amaral, Tree Warden and Director of the Department of Public Services, ex-officio **(WA)**, Ed Taylor **(ET)**, Paul Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) **(PH**)

**Members Absent**: Sheila Taintor **(ST)**

**Others Present**: J. Esche, NUFA

**Open time For Residents**

No residents participated at this point. At a later point J. Esche asked how the **TC** planned to proceed in addressing the Emerald Ash Borer problem. **CM** indicated that he planned to raise the issue for discussion and make a proposal at a future meeting.

**Report of the Secretary**

The Minutes of the April 16 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

**Report of the Treasurer**

The report was reviewed and unanimously approved.

**Report of the Tree Warden**

1. Tree Warden Summary for 2015.
* 9 trees have been reviewed by the Tree Warden.
* 1 High Hazard tree has been removed.
	+ 67 Marlboro Street
* 0 Non-High Hazard trees have been removed.
1. Green Street reconstruction – Status.

Several holes have been dug to plant trees in the area from High to Washington Street/Harris Streets. A total of 34 trees are scheduled to be planted.

Some curbs are being installed. The remainder of the project is under negotiation to identify a contractor who will complete sidewalk work at a more affordable cost as the City is seeking to maximize its limited available resources.

1. Spring planting tree pits -15- should be prepared by the end of May. The **TC** will pay for and plant 14 trees; and, a citizen has volunteered to purchase one tree which the **TC** will plant. A total of 15 will be planted.

**Sub-Committee Reports**

**Planting and Pruning Committee**

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

**Spring 2015 Planting**

**BG** reported that he expects to begin planting the 15 trees after Memorial Day. **WA** confirmed DPS support for the planting in cutting out the sidewalk for the pits to be dug and the trees planted. **DD** will work with **WA** to confirm sites for Dig Safe to be completed.

**Street Tree Inventory Management**

**CM** reported thatwith the inventory has essentially been completed.  The inventory has reporting capability that will allow valuable data analysis. The inventory requires consistent updates. **CM** thanked J. Esche for all of his work throughout the project, indicating that at least 176 hours had been invested in the project.

**Green Street Planting**

**PH** submitted a draft RFQ for the purchase and planting of the 34 trees. The draft and the related strategy relative to planting, tree care, and tree/work warranty were thoroughly discussed. **PH** will move ahead to identify contractors in collaboration with **WA** and other **TC** members involved in the project. (See additional comments under Tree Warden Report above.) The timing of the planting of the trees remains uncertain due to a variety of factors not within the control of the **TC**.

**Pruning**

**DD** reported, and the other members of the **TC** concurred, that the pruning activities on April 18 and 25 had been very successful. Ten persons, including the entire **TC,** were involved on each day. Members expressed a strong interest in continuing to have pruning days. It was agreed that the days would be organized each Spring and Fall. **CM** estimated that over 200 trees, about one third of those in the inventory, were pruned and mulched.

**Collaboration with the River Valley Charter School (RVCS)**

**ET** has continued to work with A. Willemson, Principal to have some trees planted across from the school in the medium strip on Perry Way. It appears that RVSC will pay for the purchase of three trees and the **TC,** with help from the DPS, will plant and care for them. The location must be reviewed again to be certain that it is viable and to determine the best specie to plant given the location.

**Tree Watering**

**PB** is responsible for overseeing this project**. PB** reported that the contractor who had been hired to water and care for the trees beginning May 4, has had surgery. It is not certain when, or if, he will be able to begin work. Various alternatives for watering and care were discussed, but there was no resolution. Several suggestions will be pursued by various members of the **TC**. It was agreed that there would not be any future planting projects until this issue is resolved.

**Calendar Review**

The Calendar was reviewed and updated as needed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Update: FY 16 Budget Process**

Final action has not been taken, but it appears likely that a line will be approved in the DPS for $10,000 for the management and care of trees. **WA** indicated that he is to spend these funds in consultation with the **TC**. **WA** hopes to preserve all of the funds in this line for **TC** use.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Vandalism of City Trees**

**DD** wanted to bring the problem of destroyed and missing trees to the **TC’s** attention. There was unanimous agreement that vandalism is a costly problem, but lacking the ability to catch someone in the act, there were no suggested resolutions**.**

**TC Membership**

**ET** was reappointed by the Mayor. At his request he was appointed to an Alternate position**.** There is now onevacancy on the **TC,** as well as one Alternate position open. **CM** encouraged everyone to try to recruit new members to seek a Mayoral appointment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday June 11, 2015 at 7 PM

Location: Director’s Room, Newburyport Public Library