

Newburyport Tree Commission

Minutes August 13, 2015

Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library

Meeting Convened at 7:05 PM.

Tree Commissioners (TC) present: Crispin Miller (Chair) (**CM**), Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary) (**PB**), Byron Getchell (**BG**), Ed Taylor (**ET**) J. Niebling (**JN**), Wayne Amaral, Tree Warden and Deputy Director/ Director of Operations Department of Public Services, ex-officio (**WA**), David Dylewski (**DD**)

Members Absent: Sheila Taintor (**ST**), Paul Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) (**PH**)

Others Present: J. Esche, R. Salus, S. Hanley

Open time For Residents

R. Salus addressed the Board. He said in part that he had met with Mayor Holaday to discuss an idea which he had for combining the high school's requirement of community service with the need for the City to annually replace public trees which were being removed at a rate of at least three for everyone replaced. He said that the Mayor had encouraged him and suggested that she would make up to \$1,000 available to him to purchase trees.

He asked for advice from the **TC** as to how to proceed to accomplish his goal. There was substantial discussion, including consideration of the timelines for planting in 2015, the number of trees proposed to be purchased/planted, and, the considerations involved with selecting sites. As a result the **TC** suggested, and Mr. Salus agreed, that it was probably preferable to speak with the Parks Commission relative to planting the proposed trees in a park area, possibly the Rail Trail.

The **TC** thanked Mr. Salus for his enthusiasm, and for this commitment to the City of Newburyport, and wished him the best of luck with the project.

New Tree Commission Member

JN's nomination to the **TC** was approved by the City Council and she has been sworn in.

Report of the Secretary

The Minutes of the June 11 meeting were reviewed, clarified in a few areas, and unanimously approved.

Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer was not present but he submitted his report in advance. The report was reviewed and unanimously approved.

Report of the Tree Warden: August 2015

Summary

- 15 Trees have been reviewed by the Tree Warden.

- 4 High Hazard trees have been removed.
 - o 12 Highland Ave (7") due to car crash.
 - o Nock School – removed 3 dead trees.
 - 0 Non-High Hazard trees have been removed.
1. #40 High Street – New tree planted by Accident Recovery Company. Again, can this tree be added to our watering list?
 2. On September 23, 2015, David Lefcourt, Tree Warden for the City of Cambridge will be hosting a tree planting class at the Water Waste Facility on Water Street. More details to follow.
 3. Tree watering underway by Scott Hanley. Seems to be going extremely well.
 4. DPS still has no Tree Crew Foreman. Hiring issues. Only emergency tree work is being completed.

Sub-Committee Reports

Planting and Pruning Committee

DD led a multi-part report by members of the sub-committees.

Green Street Planting

BG confirmed that the quote for the American Elm, disease resistant trees, has been received and the pits have been/will be dug. Once a final decision has been made relative to the purchase, the trees will be planted in up to six pits from corner of High Street to Washington Street along the side of Immaculate Conception School and at the top of Green/ High Street. Planting is planned for September or early October. **BG** will work with **WA** to get the trees planted.

The remainder of the street repair project has not yet been approved. It is anticipated that the remainder of the sidewalk work will be completed no later than early December. The remaining trees will be purchased and planted in the Spring 2016.

Fall 2015 Planting

A the suggestion of **BG** who is coordinating the project, the **TC** confirmed for that up to 15 trees will be purchased and planted this Fall, drawing upon the funds provided in the DPS line for tree purchase and care. The **TC** previously recommended up to \$7,500 for this purchase, subject to final approval by the Tree Warden.

The Fall sites have been reviewed and given final approval for planting appropriateness. The locations have been submitted for final action by the Tree Warden. It was agreed by the **TC** that conditions might require that the planting will extend into the Spring of 2016.

Adopt-A-Tree

DD and the Planting and Pruning Committee agreed to take on responsibility for further developing the Adopt a Tree proposal for future consideration.

Mulching

At **DD's** recommendation the **TC** agreed that in the Fall the 57 or more trees which are currently be watered will also be mulched by the **TC**.

OLD BUSINESS

Tree Watering

S. Hanley (SH) reported that he had watered the trees on several occasions to date. **CM** described and spoke highly of the value of his experience watering trees on one occasion with Scott. He spoke highly of the value of having a second person work with SH to move the process along and to provide a valuable experience for the Commissioners. Commissioners indicated that they would contact SH to arrange to go out with him on at least one occasion each.

During this discussion a recommendation was made to purchase up to 25 gator bags as more are needed due in part to the fact that several have deteriorated to the point that they are no longer usable. A motion was made and unanimously approved to purchase the 25 gator bags and to pay them from the funds identified in line 56 of the Treasurer's Report. The anticipated cost will be \$ 598.50.

NEW BUSINESS

Fundraising to Support Tree Purchases

CM reported that the subcommittee including **CM, JN, PB, ST and PH** had met to clarify the issues around fundraising and to develop an initial plan. The subcommittee reported that it agreed that it would develop a strategy to reach out to other groups, including non-profit organizations, to raise funds to purchase trees to supplement the funds raised through grants and allocated by the City. Funds available through the Tree Warden will be used for planting and maintenance.

It was pointed out that the Ordinance, established the **TC**, stated that one of the **TC's** purposes is to seek grants and conduct fundraising. Such funds raised must be placed in what was the Tree Fund. In collaboration with the **TC** the fund was revised by the City Council and Mayor in February 2014, and was reapproved and renamed the Revolving Fund.

Tree Regulations

The **TC** agreed to work with the Tree Warden to update the Tree Regulations which are addressed in the Tree Ordinance. **WA** agreed to submit a draft of the list of approved street trees for **TC** review at the September meeting. He will also work with the **TC** to further update the Regulations consistent with the Ordinance.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday September 10, 2015 at 7 PM

Location: Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library

