

**Newburyport Tree Commission**

**Minutes August 14, 2014**

**Newburyport Tree Commission**

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

**Meeting Convened at 7:03 PM.**

**Members present:** E. Taylor (Chair) (**ET**), P. Bevilacqua (Secretary) (**PB**); S. Taintor (**ST**); Crispin Miller (**CM**); D. Dylewski (**DD**), Byron Getchell (**BG**)

**Absent:** P. Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) (**PH**), A. Lafferty, Tree Warden and Deputy Director of the Department of Public Services, ex-officio (**AL**)

**Report of the Secretary**

The Minutes of the July 17 meeting were reviewed, amended, and unanimously approved, as amended.

**Report of the Treasurer**

**PH** did not attend, but submitted his report to the Commission via email prior to the meeting. He reported that with the upcoming departure of **AL** he did not receive the customary spreadsheets. He noted that he did include a section under the TC Fund for pre-paid credits at Northeast Nursery for \$2,160.00. This presence of these funds was verified by **BG** who noted that some of the funds had been held since 2013.

**BG** explained that presently there is a balance of \$2,160 in the Newburyport Parks & Recreation account at Northeast Nursery. **BG** believes that this was a generic account title applied by the nursery as the funds were placed in this account at the nursery's discretion as no instructions were given at the time of receipt. **BG** said that he believes that the funds were intended for use by the City by the Tree Commission.

The two accounts are: \$1200 which was deposited on 09 October, 2013, and \$960 was deposited on 21 July, 2014 for a total of \$2,160. Both amounts were residual funds remaining from tree replacement settlements involving Bartlett Consolidated) and a balance of \$0 for the Newburyport Tree Committee under the name of former Tree Committee member Jean Berger.

The Commissioners indicated that they were unaware of the existence of the accounts. **ET** and **PB** will be in contact with the Director of Finance to gain a clearer understanding of how these accounts were created and why. The Commissioners agreed that in the future whenever possible, such funds should be deposited into the Revolving Fund.

As noted at the July meeting, such funds do not usually appear on the DPS financial report used by the Treasurer for his report to the Commission. **AL** had assured the Commissioners that these funds would be included in the future. The Commission's Treasurer will need to make the new Tree Warden and other appropriate persons aware of this. The specific amount received will hopefully be reported at the September meeting.

### **Tree Warden's Report**

The Tree Warden, **AL**, was not present. No report was submitted.

**AL** had committed to providing the Commission with a monthly list of the proposed and completed tree removals as had been agreed at the May meeting. It has not been received.

During this discussion the Commissioners agreed to send a letter to both local newspapers thanking **AL** for his work with the Commission. **ET** will develop and submit the letter.

The Commission also agreed that **ET** inform the Mayor that the Commission is interested in having one of its members serve on the selection committee for the new Associate DS Director/Tree Warden.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

- **Planting and Pruning**

No report was given. The Commission did discuss the planting of trees for which funds have been authorized and locations approved. It was clear that the Commission needs to determine the process which must be followed to hire a contractor to purchase and plant the up to 15 trees, in the locations approved by **AL**. The contractor will be asked to purchase the trees from a list prepared by the Commission. If these trees are not available the contractor will be authorized to purchase acceptable alternatives. **ET** will meet with Tony Furnari as soon as possible to determine the steps need to hire the contractor and to both purchase and plant the 15 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 2" caliper trees in containers.

- **Green Street Planting**

There was no report. **DD** notes that all of the information necessary to move forward with the purchase and planting had been submitted directly to **AL** who is yet to follow up.

- **Merrill Street Planting**

As a follow up to the June meeting, it was noted that there has been no further communication with **AL** relative to planting in Merrill Street. **ET** will follow up with **AL** or Tony Furnari

- **Contracts for Tree Care for April-June/July-November**

No final action to this point as an individual has yet to be identified, although **ET** has follow up on leads.

## OLD BUSINESS

- **FY 15 Budget and budget Process**

ET reported that he and PB had followed up the Commission's July 17 budget discussion and met with Mayor Holaday to gain a better understanding of her budget considerations for the Commission, as no funds had been specifically allocated to the Commission for FY 15. ET reported that the meeting was productive and that the Mayor had referred them to **Peter Lombardi, Director of Policy and Administration**, to discuss possible funding for the future. Focus of the meeting will be on whether Commission funds should be allocated for specific purposes to the Tree Commission's Revolving Fund or whether a separate line item should be created. Fund for FY 15 will be considered once the State verifies the City's available Free Cash in the Fall.

ET and PB will meet with Peter Lombardi and possibly someone from the Finance Director's office to better understand city purchasing processes. They will also meet with Tony Furnari for that and other purposes.

- **Update on Tree Evaluation Requests**

DD is no longer conducting these evaluations. AL has asked T. Brann of his staff to conduct these evaluations, as needed. When a volunteer is identified, Jeff Esche has offered to orient the individual.

- **Status of City Trees Planted by the Tree Commission in 2012**

DD reported that he had not yet completed this. It will hopefully be completed soon.

## NEW BUSINESS

- **Proposed Annual Calendar of Activities**

PH took the initiative to suggest annual calendar of activities. The proposal will be discussed at a future meeting when PH is present to explain his proposal.

- **Update: Benefit/Cost Analysis of Tree Commission Tree Nursery**

CM briefly outlined his proposal and distributed copies to those present to review of for feedback and discussion at the September meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

**Next meeting:** Thursday September 11, 2014 at 7 PM

**Location:** Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library