

Newburyport Tree Commission

Minutes October 09, 2014

Newburyport Tree Commission

Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library

Meeting Convened at 7:03 PM.

Members present: Ed Taylor (Chair) (**ET**), Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary) (**PB**); Sheila Taintor (**ST**); Crispin Miller (**CM**); David Dylewski (**DD**), Byron Getchell (**BG**); Paul Harrington (Vice Chair and Treasurer) (**PH**); Anthony Furnari, Tree Warden and Director of the Department of Public Services, ex-officio (**AF**)

Report of the Secretary

The Minutes of the September 11 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Report of the Treasurer

The report was reviewed, discussed, and approved.

Tree Warden's Report

The Tree Warden, **AF** distributed copies of an analysis/evaluation of tree at 19 Rawson Avenue which had been completed at **AF**'s request by a consultant in response to resident's request that the tree be removed. The consultant concluded that the Norway Maple is healthy. The matter is under consideration.

AF distributed a letter from the Arbor Day Foundation announcing the renewal process for the 2014 Tree City USA recognition. The application is due 12/31/2014. It is possible to submit an online application, which automatically saves and enters basic information into the current year's application which can then be edited.

AF generally expressed his interest in working with the Commission to plant trees as early as the fall of 2014. There was general agreement to plant trees if at all possible.

AF announced that the new Deputy Director of the Department of Public Services, who will also serve as Tree Warden, has been selected. Wayne Amaral will begin his duties later this month. He is currently employed by the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Sub-Committee Reports

Planting and Pruning

There was significant discussion about the importance of solving our inability to water our trees. There was general agreement with **DD**'s position that the Tree Commission should not plant any more trees unless we are sure we can water them. **CM** said he had been asking contractors if they would be interested in watering trees for us and jotting down their contact information. He will send that list to **ET** and copy the other commissioners, so that we can add to it. **ET** will call these contractors to discuss watering in the future, giving them a range of 60-85 trees.

DD explained that his subcommittee is seeking two members of the Commission to volunteer to coordinate the Green Street planting, and the planting of 15 trees this fall at various selected sites in the city. At the suggestion of **ET**, **DD** agreed to develop a description of the scope of the coordination responsibilities for members to consider. After discussion and review of the locations and financing of the fall planting, the Commission unanimously approved the proposal. The funds had previously been approved by the Commission. Additionally, it was agreed to expend all of the available credit at Northeast Nurseries, \$2,160 toward the cost of purchase of the trees.

BG had located the trees in containers at a cost of \$3,106.75 and was ready to have them sent to Newburyport. Only one contractor (Corliss) submitted a proposal to plant the 15 trees this fall, and the Commission felt the price was exorbitant (\$9,999 for planting 15 trees). **BG** has found a local contractor, Tom Ellrott, who agreed to plant the 15 trees for \$2,250 on fall weekends. **BG** offered to serve as the coordinator for this Fall 2014 planting. Tom Ellrott must submit an insurance certificate and a W9 Form to **AF**. **BG** offered to serve as the coordinator for the Fall project. After discussion, the Commission unanimously approved the proposal expressing gratitude to **BG** for his initiative and creativity.

DD noted that the subcommittee is also planning a Spring 2015 planting, but, as with the Fall project, there is a need for a Commissioner to coordinate this planting. The sites have been identified, but the coordinator will need to determine the species, order the trees and request a Dig Save performed for each site. The coordinator will also ensure that the trees are planted correctly and watered for the summer. **AF** offered that the DPS would assist in any way that it can, such as coordinating the Dig Safe, etc.

Green Street Planting

The cut outs for the trees will be completed this Fall. Work on resurfacing the street and replacement of the sidewalks will be initiated in 2015. The trees will be planted at that time. Much, if not all, of the financing is in place with CPA grants. The Commission is confident that funding is available to plant 29 trees.

Merrill Street

AF stated that funds are available to plant trees, but the work will likely not be completed until the Spring. **AF** wants to observe the operation and dynamics of the street design during the Fall and Winter, particularly the bump outs, before finalizing the location of trees. **BG** noted that he had submitted a list of tree species that would be best for Merrill Street to Andrew Lafferty several months ago, before Andrew resigned to take a position in Lynnfield. **AF** promised to look into it and discuss the matter with the project contractor. **BG** offered to resubmit the list if needed.

OLD BUSINESS

FY 15 and FY 16 Budgets and process

The fact that the Commission had not received any city funding, to date, was discussed. There was agreement to submit a proposal for funding from free cash which might become available in November to plant at least 15 trees in the Spring. A proposal, similar in format to that considered for the Fall 14 planting will be developed **by DD, BG and PH** for consideration the November 6 Commission meeting. The budget request will be forwarded to **AF** for consideration and submission to the Mayor.

There was also agreement that a FY 16 budget will be developed by the Finance and Planting/Pruning subcommittees. The draft proposal will be on the agenda of the December Commission meeting. The goal is to reach agreement at that meeting and submit it to **AF** for consideration and inclusion in the DPS request.

There was also agreement that a FY 16 budget will be developed by the Finance and Planting & Pruning subcommittees. The draft proposal will be on the agenda of the December Commission meeting. The goal is to reach agreement at that meeting and submit it to **AF** for consideration and inclusion in the DPS request.

Annual Calendar of Activities

PH developed and presented an annual calendar of Commission activities for use as an organizing tool. After substantial discussion the Commission adopted the proposed calendar as amended with an understanding that it will be reviewed periodically, but at least annually, to determine what, if any, changes are necessary.

Part of the proposal included a recommendation for Committee assignments for each member of the Commission, with the understanding that each member must serve on at least one subcommittee. The Commission Chair will make the appointments each year, or as needed. The Commission unanimously adopted the policy of each member serving on at least one subcommittee and the proposed Committee structure, which effectively codified the existing practice. **ET**, Commission Chair, made the proposed appointments, effectively.

Committee/Officer	Chair/Officer	Members (PP)
(S) Secretary	PB	(Alt) ST
(T) Treasurer	PH	(Alt) PB
(P&P) Planting/Pruning	DD	BG, ST, PH
(NPC) New Projects Committee	CM	DD, ST, BG
(EC) Education	ST	DD
(FC) Finance Committee	ET	PB, PH

Update: Benefit/Cost Analysis of Tree Commission Tree Nursery

Deferred for future discussion and consideration

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday November 6, 2014 at 7 PM

Location: Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library