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Newburyport Tree Commission

 **Minutes December 10, 2015**

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

**Meeting Convened at 7:06 PM.**

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

**Members Absent**: Sheila Taintor **(ST),** JaneNiebling **(JN),** David Dylewski **(DD**)

**Open time for Residents**

No residents were present

**Report of the Secretary**

The Minutes of the November 12 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

**Report of the Treasurer**

The Treasurer’s report was discussed and the process for paying bills was reviewed. The report was unanimously approved.

**Report of the Tree Warden (WA): November, 2015**

1. Tree Warden Summary for 2015.
* 33 High Hazard trees have been removed this year.
* The most recent trees are;
	+ Opp. #17 Howard Street (18.5”) Oak Tree
	+ #47 Carter Street (21”) Norway Maple
	+ #11 Chapel Street (42”) Red Maple
* #17 Briggs Avenue, behind house on city land. (2 trees)
* 0 Non-High Hazard trees have been removed.
1. DPS Tree Crew Supervisor Vacancy – Still Vacant.
2. 2016-2017 Budget. Submitted **TC** free cash request for $10,000 for additional tree planting and $9,000 for Emerald Ash Borer spraying.

**Committee Reports**

**Planting and Pruning Committee**

 **Green Street Planting**

**PH** reported that all is prepared in anticipation of construction approval in Spring to move forward. Trees have been ordered.

**Spring 2016 Planting**

**BG** reported that the list of locations and trees was submitted, finalized and approved. The list was also submitted as part of the Spring 2016 request for free cash to purchase trees.

**River Valley Charter School Planting (RVCS)**

**DD** contacted **ET** to determine the status of the RVCS planting of four trees. **ET** will meet with RVCS staff during the week of December 14.

 **High Street Project**

**CM** reported that as planning was initiated for this project it was determined that the recently completed data base of street trees needs to be reorganized to address issues which were created by the merging of previous data bases. It is anticipated that this work will also include an on-site review of each tree on High Street. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of January. A report may be available for the February meeting.

 A preliminary review of High Street determined that there are up to 196 potential locations to plant trees. At this point in the process, with the invaluable assistance of T. Heatwole, a landscape architect, the planting design is in the conceptual stage. An element of the design will be to determine which specie of tree to plant in each section. The design will also include implementation in phases over a five year period to annually prepare sites, purchase, plant, and care for some trees all along the 2.3 mile stretch, as opposed to completing the planting section by section.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Tree Watering**

S. Hanley was not able to attend the meeting. It is anticipated that Scott will be able to attend the January 14 meeting to share his insights into the watering process and related issues which he gained from his experience in 2015; and, to have a preliminary discussion about 2016. As the **TC** previously agreed, ongoing planting is contingent upon a watering plan being in place.

**Tree Regulations**

The **TC** previously agreed to work with the Tree Warden to update the Tree Regulations as described in the Tree Ordinance. The **TC** unanimously approved a proposal by **ET** and **PB** to work with **WA**, who also supported the proposal. They will begin work in January and will hopefully be completed no later than April. .

**Update: TC materials on the City website**

The possibilities were discussed. It was agreed that materials to be posted will include, but not limited to: Minutes, Agendas, Tree Ordinance, Tree Regulations (to be completed), List of Recommended Trees for Street Planting (to be completed), and the Tree Commission Meeting and Operational Guidelines.

**FY 17 Budget**

**PH** submitted an updated draft of the FY 17 budget for the **TC** to consider for submission. Upon reviewthe **TC** gave initial approval to the budget proposal and will take final action on it at the January meeting. **PB** and **PH** will continue to work on finalizing the proposal.

**New Business**

**List of Recommended Street Trees**

**BG, DD, and CM** are working on the development of a final list to submit to the Commission for review and approval. In developing this list they are reviewing the current list and taking into account both new information and long term plans. The goal is a short, amendable list of recommended trees which will guide decisions by homeowners and the City. It is anticipated that the list will also include links to various sources to provide further information.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday January 14, 2016 at 7 PM

Location: Children’s Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library