

## **Newburyport Tree Commission**

**Minutes December 11, 2014**

## **Newburyport Tree Commission**

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

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

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

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

### **Report of the Secretary**

The Minutes of the November 6 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved. **PB** reminded Commissioners that they had agreed that the process of producing the Minutes involved the Secretary's submission of draft Minutes of each meeting within four days of the meeting. Members in turn agreed to review the draft and respond within three days to insure accuracy. If comments are not received within that time frame the Minutes will be distributed in advance of the next scheduled regular meeting at which time further discussion and, if appropriate, changes may be voted. The agreed upon assumption is that the failure to comment by a Commissioner who participated in the meeting within the agreed upon time frame indicates tacit agreement to bring the draft Minutes forward, without change, to the next regularly scheduled meeting for action.

### **Report of the Treasurer**

The report was reviewed and discussed. **PH** and **WA** reported that the issue of the apparent incorrect charge against the **TC** has been satisfactorily clarified. The report was approved.

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

**WA** said that although he had stated at the November meeting that he would have a report for this meeting, he did not have a report as he is continuing familiarize himself with this role and the various related activities. He has met on two occasions with **ET** and various other members of the Commission relative to budget and Ordinance issues. **ET** indicated that he believed that the meetings were substantive and productive.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

#### **Planting and Pruning**

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

**DD** reported on the Education Committee's activities. He said that he would defer until January to allow **ST** to provide a full report. He noted that a power point presentation has been developed

and that he and **ST** are working with the 4, 5, 6 grades at the River Valley Charter School. The focus this year will be invasive species, as well as some follow up discussion of insects. **DD** will also contact them relative to Winter Moths as they have contacted **WA** seeking information. **WA** referred the request to **DD**. They will be working with teachers, all of whom seem to be going quite well.

They are also working with the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at Rupert Nock, and with the AP Science class at the high school.

**BG** reported on the planting of trees during the Fall those planned for the Spring 2015. **BG** noted that 41 locations were viewed and are ready for the creation of planting wells. **WA** needs to review the locations to be certain that each of these locations meet the criteria. When appropriate, Dig Safe will be contacted to review them. **BG** also noted that a proposal for Free Cash had been submitted to provide funds to purchase, plant, and properly maintain them over the first three years. As noted in November, **CM** has volunteered to coordinate the Spring 2015 planting.

**CM** reported that he, **DD**, and J. Esche had visited and inventoried about half of the over 580 trees which have been planted by the Tree Committee and its successor, the (TC), since 2006. **CM** projected that all of the 580 trees would be inventoried by the end of January rather than the previously projected end of 2014. The Commission will maintain the data-base in cooperation with the Tree Warden whose input relative to the conditions and action regarding trees is essential.

### **Green Street Planting**

**PH** volunteered to coordinate this project at the November meeting. **WA** said that the cut outs for the trees will hopefully be completed in the Spring 2015. Work on resurfacing the street and replacement of the sidewalks will be initiated likely in Fall 2015, but specific plans and financing remain to be finalized. **PH** noted that collaboration with **WA** and his staff is critical.

The Commission voted unanimously to provide funding from the Revolving Fund to supplement Green Street if additional trees can be planted beyond those supported (29) by the CPA grants, as well as the Spring trees requested from Free Cash.

**DD** announced that there would be one or two dates for the annual pruning and mulching activities by the Commission members. Potential dates are March 28 and April 11. **WA** committed to assisting in the process including arranging for the materials to be dumped at the city lot and to provide quality mulch.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **FY 15 Free Cash Proposal**

**ET** submitted the proposal for funding from FY 15 free cash for Spring 2015 tree purchase and planting. Discussions are ongoing with the Mayor's Office. A decision is expected in January.

#### **FY 16 Budget**

The FY 16 budget proposal developed by the Finance and Planting/Pruning subcommittees was discussed. The focus is upon planting and maintaining trees in 2016 and beyond. A proposal was approved unanimously for submission to WA for inclusion in the budget process. Before it is submitted to WA a narrative will be developed providing an overview and context for the proposal as well as emphasizing the benefits to the City.

During the budget discussion the importance follow up tree care was reiterated. It was reiterated trees will be planted for which there is a commitment for care.

### **The Revised 2015 Calendar of TC Activities**

The calendar received final approval.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Tree City USA Application**

ET reminded Commissioners that needs information regarding volunteer hours from those who had not yet submitted them in order to complete the application.

#### **Adopt-A-Tree Program**

BG described the Adopt- A \_Tree Program currently in place in Peabody. The Commission found it to be very interesting and agreed to look into it further. BG will take the lead on this with WA.

#### **Calendar of Meetings for 2015**

The Commission agreed to continue to meet on the second Thursday of each month.

#### **Commission Meeting and Operational Guidelines**

The Commission unanimously agreed to make two changes in the Guidelines, effective immediately.

A Nominating Committee of up to three persons will be appointed by the Chair no later than the December meeting to nominate Voting Members of the Commission for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair. Individuals eligible for appointment must agree to not seek one of the positions, unless they resign from the Nominating Committee prior to the nominations being made. In addition to those recommended by the Nominating Committee individuals may be nominated from the floor. Voting Members may self-nominate.

The Guidelines will now include the past practice of the Commission to allow time at the beginning of each meeting for residents to bring issues to the Commission for consideration.

#### **Commission support of the Waterfront Trust's (WFT) application to the Community Preservation Commission (CPC)**

The Commission unanimously supported Bob Uhlig's request for support of the WFT's application for funds to remove and replace Bradford Pears at the Firehouse. The

Commission agreed that it was their observation that the Pears are in various states of decline. Action needed to address this issue has been discussed by the Commission in the past. The plan is to replace the Pears with Ginkgo Bilobas (male) which would be more appropriate. **BG** will notify Bob Uhlig, and refer him to **ET** if a letter of support is needed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

**Next meeting:** Thursday January 8, 2015 at 7 PM

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