

Newburyport Tree Commission

March 9, 2017

Director's Room

Newburyport Public Library

Meeting Convened at 7:06 PM.

Tree Commission members (TC) present: Crispin Miller (Chair) (**CM**), David Dylewski (**DD**), Paul Bevilacqua (Secretary) (**PB**), Jane Niebling (**JN**), Sheila Taintor (**ST**), Kim Kudym (**KK**), Wayne Amaral, Tree Warden and Deputy Director/Director of Operations Department of Public Services, ex-officio (**WA**)

Members Absent: Constance Preston (Treasurer) (**CP**), Byron Getchell (**BG**)

Open time for Residents

No residents attended

Report of the Secretary

The Minutes of the January 12, meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved. The February meeting had been canceled due to the closure of the Library due to severe weather conditions.

Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer was not present, but she submitted her report in advance. **CM** presented the budget. Report was approved unanimously.

Report of the Tree Warden:

March 9, 2017

Trees Removed in 2017.

- The most recent trees are;
 - Adams St #8
 - Allen St #6
 - Ashland St #5
 - Beacon Ave #8
 - Carter St #48
 - Dennett St @ Storey Ave
 - Greenleaf St @ Pond St
 - High St #189-191
 - High St #204
 - High St #283
 - High St #296
 - High St #319
 - High St #386 (2 trees)
 - Kent St #8
 - Merrimac St #308
 - Morin Rd #14 (behind property)
 - Myrtle Ave #7 (behind property on access road)
 - Washington St @ 40B Olive St

The total number of trees removed for 2017 is 36.

- 0 Non-High Hazard trees have been removed.

1. Preparing Tree Watering contract.
2. Preparing Tree Planting contract.
3. Working with Tree Commission on inventory collection and database.

Committee Reports

Tree Regulations/ Tree Plan Committee

PB noted that the Committee had no report.

Planting and Pruning

High Street Project (merged with Gateway I): DD reported that a contract has been awarded to Plants and Pleasantrees for \$3,700 to plant up to 33 trees. Twenty trees will be planted on High Street and 19 for the Spring planting. North East Nursery was awarded the contract for the purchase of 39 Trees.

Spring 2017 Planting: DD reported that the total number of trees to be planted is up to 39. Six of the trees will be planted by volunteers.

Fall 2017 Planting: CM reported that the Budget and Finance Committee of the Newburyport City Council has approved the \$10,000 free cash proposal to plant trees in the Fall. **DD** noted that up to 30 trees will be planted.

Grants

JN has remained in contact with FoNT, and other possible agencies which might provide grants. **JN** agreed to try to identify funding sources to help to support the Tree Inventory Project

Education

ST followed up her contact with the River Valley Charter School (RVCS) and the Pre K-8, STEM Coordinator of the Newburyport Public Schools regarding the 2017 poster contest for MA fifth graders sponsored by the MA DCR, the US Forest Service and the MA Tree Wardens' and Foresters' Association. Given the fact that there is a combined 4-6 grade at RVCS it is not clear whether a student poster will be submitted. The fifth grade at the Nock School has not indicated whether they will enter.

Community Outreach

CM noted that community outreach is a stated responsibility of the **TC**. He proposed that the **TC** consider ways to expand the current efforts. Various ideas were shared including setting a goal to plant at least 50 trees each year, and developing multi-faceted program around that goal including fund raising and public visibility. Such a program will provide visibility to the number of trees that have been removed and the need to replace them in order to retain and increase the health and beauty of the community.

Old Business

Annual Review of the TC Meeting and Operational Guidelines: PB proposed a few minor changes in language, but not in any practice. The changes were approved and the Guidelines were unanimously approved.

FY 18 Budget: The budget proposal was submitted to the Tree Warden and subsequently to the Director of DCS and the Mayor.

Liberty Elm Tree Project: CM met with the appropriate City offices. This project was approved. DD and CM will visit Keene, N.H. in May to deliver the check and view the trees which will be ready for pick up for Fall 2019 planting. They will be in nursery care in the intervening period.

Tree Inventory

CM briefly reviewed progress on the Tree Inventory project. CM and DD reported that they had met with staff from the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission who will be providing support/assistance for this project. They were both excited by the quality of the system and software which will be used to collect the data. They predicted that the volunteers will be able to learn to use the system easily and that the collection will be a success. The TC will inventory Street Trees and the Park Commission will inventory Park and other related trees. The project will likely begin in May.

New Business

Review of the Draft FY 16 TC Report to the Mayor and Council: Due to the cancellation of the February meeting and the necessity to provide documentation to the Mayor and Council to support the FY 18 budget and the FY 17 free cash proposal, CM submitted the draft and some related materials. The Mayor and Council were very pleased with the TC accomplishment and the report was helpful in supporting the proposals for funding. The TC unanimously approved the report and agreed that it will review the report, preferably no later than the February meeting, in future years.

Replacement Trees at the Bresnahan School/Senior-Community Center: The trees planted in 2016 will be viewed in May at a time when they should be leafing out. Any trees which do not leaf out will be reported to the contractor who planted them as part of the construction project. The City will request that the contractor replace the trees or provide financial compensation to the City to do so.

WA requested that the TC assume responsibility for replacement planting if the contractor does not fulfill his obligations. It is understood that in order to do so, the TC must receive additional funds to perform those duties.

Annual Review of TC Meeting and Operational Guidelines:

After discussion there was agreement to clarify the language regarding recording TC member attendance at meetings; as well as reiteration, as stated in the Guidelines of the expectation that only members of the TC will sit at the meeting table. Observers and guests are to be seated in the audience unless invited to join the TC members to explain or discuss an issue under consideration. There was unanimous approval of the minor language change. The revised Guidelines will replace those currently posted on the TC website.

Financing of the Replacement of Street Trees

DD asked that this issue be addressed. This issue was discussed somewhat earlier in the meeting. There was agreement that a program/annual campaign needs to be developed by the **TC**, possibly in conjunction with FoNT. **JN** agreed to be in contact with FoNT to determine what thoughts FoNT might have in this regard. All agreed with the importance and timeliness of the idea and thanked **DD** for bringing it forward. The need for trees is great and the ability of the **TC** to plant trees has substantially demonstrably improved each year.

TC Membership: There was discussion about, in effect, succession planning. The **TC** needs to make the community aware, that it has an ongoing need for persons interested in being involved; and, that there are opportunities for volunteers to work with or join the **TC**. In particular, residents with knowledge of trees are especially needed as the **TC** implements current plans and develops new plans for the future.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM

Respectfully Submitted, Paul M. Bevilacqua, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday April 20, 2017 at 7 PM

Location: Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library