

Longmeadow Tree Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday October 28, 2021
Remote Meeting

The Tree Committee meeting was held remotely via Zoom. The meeting opened at 6:05 PM. The following members were present: Dave Marinelli, Steve Steiner, Mark Tolosky, Bari Jarvis, and Patrick Carnahan. Also present were Longmeadow residents Bill Seefeld and Assistant Town Manager Corrin Meise-Munns.

The meeting was opened by following the approved “script” for conducting a remote meeting which included a brief review of the Open Meeting Law.

Public comments: None

New Business:

Dave introduced and welcomed Assistant Town Manager Corrin Meise-Munns. Corrin seeks committee support for the town’s application for an Urban Community Forestry grant through Massachusetts DCR. The grant is for \$20,000 and requires a match of funds from the DPW’s Forestry line item. The purpose of the grant is to fund a risk assessment and management plan for all of the town’s public shade trees. The Select Board and DPW Director have already submitted letters of support for this grant. If the grant is approved, the Committee may be called upon to answer questions from the public. Mark moved that we support the application. Steve seconded the motion. Vote: Dave: Yes Patrick: Yes Steve: Yes Mark: Yes Bari: Yes. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Corrin was excused and left the meeting.

Tree Warden Report and Old Business:

Status of Tree Warden hiring – Geoff McAlmond is serving as the acting Tree Warden.

Route 5 to Converse Street revisions - Town is preparing responses to the 25% plan but nothing specific regarding which trees were being slated for removal during project.

Annual windshield survey – Unlikely that a windshield survey will occur this year. The DCR grant mentioned above will serve the same purpose in 2022, if approved.

Fall planting - Residents have been submitting requests but due to staff shortages in the DPW, there are no plans to plant trees this fall. Three memorial trees will be planted on grounds of Storrs Library and Storrs House. The funds for these trees were donated in memory of a Storrs Library employee and a second town resident.

Tree inventory – Working with the Assistant Town Manager on which trees were lost to storms or age this year. Dave will remove them from the town tree inventory.

Tree City USA application is nearly complete. Dave and Kathy have been working on this application.

There is a sidewalk improvement project that may impact trees along sidewalks near Blueberry Hill School and the Longmeadow High School. This is part of the Safe Pathways to Schools initiative being initiated by the Commonwealth. Dave submitted comments regarding the plan after the 25% public hearing last night, requesting arborist assessment of trees to be impacted and tree protection during the project.

Best practices for tree protection during construction – previously Patrick reported back on findings regarding best practices for care of street trees during construction and/or road jobs. Dave provided a copy of Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) document titled, “Protecting Trees During Construction and Road” to Select Board member Mark Strange for presentation to the Select Board.

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New Business(continued): Kathy and Patrick attended DCR Tree Steward Training on October 14th .

Trees were planted at the Wolf Swamp Athletic Fields buildout. Question arose as to whether the trees were inspected by town officials prior to and during planting to ascertain that best planting practices had been followed such as burlap balls and metal cages having been removed prior to planting. Bari advised that she has a tree inventory list of trees that were planted at the site by Graziano Gardens, East Longmeadow.

Every year the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Conservation of Recreation (DCR), runs the Arbor Day Poster Contest for fourth grade students. This state-wide contest asks students to submit original artwork focused on the positive contributions provided by trees. The winning submissions are featured in the following years DCR Calendar. The 2022 Calendar features a winning entry submitted by a student at Blueberry Hill School. Patrick would like to draft a letter of congratulations to Blueberry Hill School, the teacher who supported the art project, and the student who submitted the artwork. The letter would be presented to forementioned as well as the Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee. Tree Committee agreed that this was a good idea. Patrick will follow up on this.

Minutes were read, corrected as needed and unanimously approved

Next meeting date – The next meeting of the Tree Committee will on November 18 at 6:00 pm.

Submitted by Patrick Carnahan, Secretary

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