



KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL

MAYOR

## CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

### TREE COMMISSION

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DARLEEN MELIS, CHAIR  
KIRT RIEDER, VICE CHAIR

ROBERT LEBLANC, TREE WARDEN

## MINUTES OF THE SALEM TREE COMMISSION

**SEPTEMBER 16, 2019**

On September 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. the Salem Tree Commission held a meeting at 98 Washington Street, Salem, MA. All members were in attendance: Joshua Arenstam, Naomi Cottrell, Curt Dragon, Charlotte Enfield, Paul L'Heureux, Rachel McCarter, Darleen Melis, Kirt Rieder, David Rowand, plus City Solicitor Beth Rennard, Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Joanne Roomey, Commission Clerk.

This meeting was the first meeting of the Commission. Each member provided a brief introduction.

### **1. Composition of the Commission**

Solicitor Rennard reviewed the City ordinance relative to the Commission's composition and stated that the Ordinance provides for seven regular members and two alternates to serve for three years, with appointments to be staggered. She noted that when initially appointed, all members' terms were set to end in 2022. Future appointments, after a resignation or expiration, should be staggered so members' terms do not end in the same calendar year.

Solicitor Rennard stated that once a chair has been selected by the commission, a vote should be taken to designate the alternates as Alternate 1 and Alternate 2. She added that alternates may participate in deliberations but only vote on a matter when one or more regular members are not in attendance or unable to vote. The Commission should, over the next few months, establish regulations for the use of alternates. Solicitor Rennard could assist in this process.

### **2. Open Meeting Law/City Ordinance on Public Meetings**

Solicitor Rennard reviewed the Open Meeting Law requirements. She provided the Commission with a document found at: ([mass.gov/files/documents/2017/09/25/2017%20Guide%20only.pdf](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/09/25/2017%20Guide%20only.pdf)). Below is a summary of Solicitor Rennard's comments:

- **Quorum.** A quorum of a meeting is the minimum number of members that must be present before the meeting may take place. A quorum of the Tree Commission is equal to four, a majority of the regular members

- **Meeting Notice and Agenda.** All meetings of the Commission must have a meeting notice and agenda posted at the City Clerk's office and posted on salem.com at least 48 hours in advance, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.
- **Minutes.** Minutes, not a transcript, must be created within 21 days of the meeting and approved in a timely manner, must include: date, time and place of the meeting; members present or absent; the decisions made and actions taken, including a record of all votes; a summary of the discussions on each subject; and a list of all documents and exhibits used at the meeting.

### **3. Parliamentary Procedures/Robert's Rules of Order**

Solicitor Rennard informed the Commission that parliamentary procedures enable the majority of a board to make decisions effectively and efficiently (majority rule), while ensuring fairness towards the minority and giving each member the right to voice an opinion. Most City boards, except the City Council, have adopted Robert's Rules of Order, a guide to conducting meetings and making decisions. She suggested that once a chair has been selected, the second motion for the evening should be to adopt Robert's Rules of Order as parliamentary rules to be used by Commission.

### **4. Officers**

Solicitor Rennard stated that the Ordinance does not set forth how a chair is selected. Until such time as an Ordinance is amended or regulations for the Tree commission have been adopted, recommend an annual vote of the Commission. She said that in small boards, the chair may debate, make motions and vote. Even so, the chair must exercise restraint. In order to achieve this, it is recommended that the chair not make motions, and should speak and vote last. She added that the chair works with staff to prepare agenda, calls the meeting to order, recognizes members to be heard, repeats motion and entertains votes, and closes the meeting.

### **5. Selection of Chair, Vice-chair and Designation of Alternates**

- Kirt Rieder moved to nominate Darleen Melis as Chair. Naomi Cottrell seconded. The motion carried.
- Ms. Cottrell moved to nominate Mr. Rieder as Vice Chair. Ms. Melis seconded. The motion carried.
- Joshua Arenstam moved to nominate Charlotte Enfield as Alternate 1. Ms. Cottrell seconded. The motion carried.
- Ms. Enfield moved to nominate Mr. Arenstam as Alternate 2. Ms. Cottrell seconded. The motion carried.

### **6. Presentation and Discussion – General Foreman Robert LeBlanc**

- Tree Ordinance, Chapter 43 of the Code of Ordinances** - Mr. LeBlanc provided a brief overview and the importance of Chapter 43 of the new Tree Ordinance.
- The Operating & Maintenance Budget for DPS/ Tree Division** - Mr. LeBlanc informed the Commission that there is a budget of \$125,000 for tree care and

- planting. Mr. LeBlanc plans on using \$65,000 for tree planting and maintenance in the fall and \$65,000 in the spring. By the end of FY2020, June 31<sup>st</sup> anticipating 178 trees to be planted.
- c. **Community Block Development Grant (CBDG)** - Mr. LeBlanc informed the Commission that there is also \$23,000 in grants for planting more trees, particularly in the heat island and re-greening of the CBDG areas (low-mod income areas).
  - d. **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** - Mr. LeBlanc informed the Commission that tree planting alone is not a CPA eligible expense.
  - e. **Essex Street Improvement Project** - Mr. LeBlanc informed the Commission that a major sidewalk renovation project, including new trees, is planned for Essex Street. The project was bid, but it came in over the estimate.
  - f. **The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant (MVP)** - The Grant will be for \$49,650 for the planting of (33) trees in Essex Street walkway and the Derby Square area.
  - g. **Urban and Forestry Community Challenge Grant (DCR)**
    - o The City of Salem will apply for a Grant through this program to identify the potential planting locations for the next several years.
    - o Greening of the Gateway Cities: This program is only for communities that qualify for tree planting. Salem is one of the cities in Massachusetts that qualify. The criteria for the programs are:
      - Economic thresholds
      - Environmental justice neighborhoods
      - Tree planting is a 75% and 25% split between State (DCR) and City
    - o Environmental Justice Grant - Letter of Intent due September 1, 2019
  - h. **Tree City USA Program** – Mr. LeBlanc informed the Commission that the City was a Tree City for many years but is not one this year. He has been in touch with the Tree City officials and will be completing the 2019 application. The application requires a per capita tree planting, a proclamation, ordinance, budget and an Arbor Day celebration. The City is doing a fall tree planting event that will cover the Arbor Day requirement. Mr. LeBlanc will file paperwork.
  - i. **Salem Autumn Arbor Day 2019** - Mr. LeBlanc informed the commission that the above-referenced tree planting will take place on September 28, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. at Greenlawn Cemetery. This event is being planned with the Friends of Greenlawn Cemetery.

## 7. **Salem 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Century Tree Program Proposal - Presentation and Discussion – Chair Darleen Melis**

Ms. Melis spoke about celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by planting tall-growing shade trees in locations where they may flourish throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The sites need not be next to the street but could be in lawns or backyards for optimal conditions. The community would be

encouraged to suggest places. The Tree Warden and Tree Commission would decide the locations each year. This topic will be discussed in future meetings.

#### **8. Discussion and vote on the plan to educate public about Chapter 43**

The new Tree Ordinance went into effect on July 1, 2019. The Commission discussed the following efforts to educate the residents:

- Direct mailing with a summary regarding Chapter 43 ordinance
- SATV
- Mayor's podcasts
- Social Media
- Salem's Newsletter

#### **9. Tree Manual review process**

Ms. Melis stated that a draft manual has been prepared and asked members to review. Ms. Enfield, Ms. Cottrell and Mr. Dragon volunteered to review the manual and provide their opinions regarding the rules and regulations by the next meeting.

#### **10. New business**

- Ms. Cottrell asked about the process of getting the city to plant a new tree. It was explained that you would go onto the city's website to SeeClickFix and enter your information. She also wanted to know if we could use the money in the budget for preparation, new equipment and aftercare
- Mr. Dragon asked Mr. LeBlanc how he was set up for equipment and if that was on his radar. Mr. Dragon discussed promoting organic products that makes its own compost. He can help set up: watering, pruning, sanitation and fertilization. He will contact Mr. LeBlanc and provide more detail
- Mr. LeBlanc discussed budgeting for staff training, equipment, tree selection and fall planting. He will also be working on next year's tree care plan

#### **11. Next meeting date**

A vote was taken, all in favor, and the next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2019 and then the third Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey  
Commission Clerk