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TREE COMMISSION
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ROBERT LEBLANC, TREE WARDEN

Touch the Future - Plant a Tree

**MINUTES OF THE SALEM TREE COMMISSION
APRIL 20, 2021**

A meeting of the Salem Tree Commission was held on April 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., via ZOOM, an online video conference call system. Present on call were:

Chair Darleen Melis, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder, Members: Joshua Arenstam, Naomi Cottrell, Curtis Dragon, Paul L'Heureux, Rachel McCarter, David Rowand and Susan Yochelson; Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Commission Clerk Joanne Roomey. Guests: Barbara Warren, Salem Sound Coastwatch and DCR Forester David Bresnahan.

1. Tree Warden's Report

- Two of the three Salem tree department arborists are out on work related injuries. This will mean the department will be short-handed for at least six to eight weeks. During this time, the crew will still go out on a limited basis with other qualified staff filling in.
- The spring planting program will begin in the month of May. DCR has already started planting some of the public sites that did not require any kind of pit preparation. The CBDG Grant will also be incorporated into the spring planting, with some of the same neighborhoods as the GGC, but also areas in Ward 6, Ward 7, and a small piece of Ward 1. Additional plantings will take place at all other locations by requests, not necessarily covered by the two Grant programs.
- There is a potential for three (3) public Shade Tree Hearings to take place in the month of May. Mr. LeBlanc has received requests from North Shore Community Development for trees at: 47 Leavitt Street; 38 Palmer Street; 34 Peabody Street; and 25-37 Ward Street.

Other Hearings may involve two trees behind Turner Seafood at 43 Church St. Also, two trees for the Essex St. municipal re-paving project, between North St. and Washington St.

- Presently, Mr. LeBlanc is crafting a certified letter to go out to the owner of the property at 143 Derby St. (Captain Dusty's) for the removal of a Protected Tree without a permit. He will keep the Board informed of updates on this situation.

2. Greening of the Gateway Cities

Barbara Warren, Salem Sound Coastwatch and DCR Forester David Bresnahan were on the call. Their goal is to promote tree plantings by using the Mayor's Facebook page, postcard printing, tree/lawn signs, banners for the Farmers Market, newspapers and create an online request.

Ms. Warren has started emailing and calling folks regarding tree planting in the spring. Ms. Cottrell will be the liaison between Ms. Warren, Mr. Bresnahan and Pioneer Terrace. The goal is to plant 100 to 200 trees by the end of spring.

3. Jay Carroll, Roadway Project Manager, Essex Street Roadway Construction update

Mr. Carroll presented the plan for the roadway project on Essex Street and expects construction to start in June and be completed by October. He explained where they would plant new trees and try to save the existing trees. He will be meeting with the contractor this week and has been meeting with Mr. LeBlanc consistently. Mr. Carroll will keep the commission updated.

4. Wyman Street – Discussion of extensive cutting before site plans are approved

Patti Morsillo, Ward 3 Councilor, explained to the commission about the extensive cutting of trees especially in the Highland Ave/Wyman Street area where there is no city water or sewerage. Kirt Rieder suggested pulling some kind of permit before clearing a lot or create an ordinance.

5. DCR Urban and Community Challenge Grant – Bob LeBlanc

The DCR Challenge Grant - The rough Draft of the final report is in. Mr. LeBlanc had a chance to read some of it and will look it over and add in any missing information that was not presented at the time of the draft. He would like to thank all the Tree Commission members who went out and did some walking around looking at tree locations. The rough draft has produced 1,052 potential planting locations.

The DCR Grant contract with the Greening of the Gateway Cities has finally be completed and all signatures are on it. The work that was proposed in that Grant application can start and will go through the end of June. The Grant is an 80-20 split, some of the DPW budget will need to be identified in the work. The work involves stump grinding, gas testing, site excavation, concrete and brick cutting and some soil amenities.

6. Plans for Arbor Day – Friday, April 30, 2021

An Arbor Day event is scheduled for the Bates School, third grade class for Friday, April 30, 2021 at 12:30 p.m. A tree will be planted in the back of the school near the vegetable garden and the students will all get a white spruce seedling to take home and plant. Those students who do not have a place to plant the seedling will be invited to Forest River Park at the Pioneer Village the next morning to plant their trees in a re-forestation effort.

7. Invitation from Friends of Greenlawn Cemetery to host a table about tree efforts, Saturday, May 1, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Cemetery Commission has approved the event on May 1, 2021 for the Tree Commission to host a table regarding tree efforts.

8. Remarks from the Public

Julie Andrews was on the call and asked about Captain Dusty's that was discussed earlier. Mr. LeBlanc explained to her that he will be sending a certified letter to go out to the owner of the property at 143 Derby Street regarding the removal of a Protected Tree without a permit and will update the Tree Commission with any new information.

9. Approve Tree Commission Minutes of March 15, 2021

Mr. Arenstam made a motion to approve the Tree Commission Minutes of March 15, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Rieder. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Salem Tree Fund – funding update

There are two separate tree funds: (1) Tree Donation Fund that has a balance of \$2,781.00; and (2) Tree Replacement Fund that has a balance of \$11,513.00. Both funds will be used for Century Trees and planting this spring.

11. New Business

The Tree Commission has been in operation for 18 months. The commission will review any needed clarifications in the Salem Tree Ordinance.

12. Next Meeting Dates: Monday, May 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. and Monday, June 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via ZOOM.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Dragon made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Rieder. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey
Commission Clerk

**Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and
City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033**