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Touch the Future - Plant a Tree

**MINUTES OF THE SALEM TREE COMMISSION
JUNE 21, 2021**

A meeting of the Salem Tree Commission was held on June 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in person, in the first floor conference room, City Hall Annex. Present were Chair Darleen Melis, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder (remotely), Members: Naomi Cottrell, Paul L'Heureux, Rachel McCarter, David Rowand and Susan Yochelson; Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Commission Clerk Joanne Roomey. Absent were Joshua Arenstam and Curtis Dragon.

1. Tree Warden's Report

- The Salem Tree Department continues to have staffing problems. The crew foreman will be evaluated on July 17, 2021 for a possible return to work. He has been mostly unavailable for work since March 2021. The second tree climber has a substantial injury and will probably not return to work within the near future.
- The tree watering program is in full swing. Over 150 new trees plus planted traffic islands are being watered across the city on a weekly basis.
- Tree pruning, stump grinding, and tree removals will all be sub-contracted once a good list is established.
- Tree removal permits will be issued to the North Shore Community Development Coalition for the first week of July. The details of the permits have been established - four (4) trees will be planted, two (2) trees on Peabody Street, an extra in the Right of Way and one (1) in the traffic island at Peabody and Ward Streets. The two (2) Protected Trees that will be removed from the Leavitt Street site will be offset by two trees to be planted across the street at OnPoint. At the Palmer Street project, one replacement tree will be planted in the bio-retention swale. The remaining caliper inches will be offset by a \$12,037.50 payment into the Tree Replacement Fund. The trees may not be planted within the required 90-day period so the permits will be extended at the appropriate time.
- Mr. Bartlett, from Captain Dusty's Ice cream has asked to defer his appearance before the commission until September 2021.
- Jim and Kathy Turner from Turner's Seafood, Salem at Lyceum Hall, 43 Church Street, attended the meeting. Mr. Turner discussed an expansion to the rear of the restaurant that would require the removal of two abutting trees, which are in a state of decline.

Turner's Seafood will plant new trees and will be donating to the Tree Replacement Fund. The Public Shade Tree Hearing will be scheduled for July 15.

2. Greening of the Gateway Cities

DCR Forester David Bresnahan was present. Mr. Bresnahan told the commission that they had planted 185 trees: 13 on public property and 172 on private property. They plan on hiring two laborers for the fall planting. There was a discussion regarding watering and Mr. Bresnahan said the private property owners would water the trees. Property owners were given a brochure that explained how to water newly planted trees.

3. SIFI NETWORKS SALEM FIBERCITY Optic Installation Project – report on follow-up meeting – Paul L'Heureux

Mr. L'Heureux, Ms. McCarter and Ms. Melis were at the meeting on June 4, 2021 with SIFI Networks. The intent of the meeting was to provide clarification on the means and methods that will be employed by SIFI Networks' contractors in the installation of a fiber optic cable network through the city. Also, the purpose of this meeting was to determine the potential negative impact of this installation upon public trees and trees located on private property.

Mr. L'Heureux discussed how imperative it is that the project be accomplished without damaging existing trees nor preventing future tree plantings.

The Engineering Department and the Tree Warden will be coordinating the daily oversight of the installation in order to navigate around sensitive areas as there are no defined parameters for a root safety zone. Trenching the length of the tree lawn should not be allowed. The Tree Commission will need to be vigilant throughout the project to assure the success of both vitally important endeavors.

4. Mission Statement – Susan Yochelson and Rachel McCarter

This was postponed for future discussion.

5. Posting Tree Hearings to the <https://www.salem.com/departments> webpage under Legal Notices: <https://www.salem.com/legal-notices>

Commission Clerk Joanne Roomey explained that notices of Public Shade Tree Hearings are posted to the Tree Commission's webpage in both the Calendar and Agenda sections as well as on the city's Calendar page. When a hearing is created and posted under Agendas, an E-Alert goes out to everyone who has registered for email notifications: <https://www.salem.com/node/246373/agenda/2021>

6. Tree Permits – discussion of city service portal: <https://salem.viewpointcloud.com/>

There was a discussion about whether the downloadable Public and Protected Tree Permits could be added to Viewpoint Cloud, a website that the city has created. Some suggestions were to put them under the Engineering Department (trenching), Inspectional Services (Building Permits) and Planning & Community Development (information for homeowners). Mr. LeBlanc will follow-up with Rob Banks, the Business System Analyst for the city.

7. Beverly-Salem Climate Action and Resilience Plan – comments

The commission discussed the Beverly-Salem Climate Action and Resilience Plan. For more information, click on the following link: <https://resilient-together.org/action-plan>. Mr. LeBlanc will follow-up with the Planning Department.

8. Approve Tree Commission Minutes of May 17, 2021

Ms. Yochelson made a motion to approve the Tree Commission Minutes of May 17, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Rowand. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

9. New Business

The commission is cancelling the July meeting and will convene on Monday, **August 16, 2021** at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Ms. Yochelson expressed her preference for in-person meetings as it fostered a high level of commission engagement.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Cottrell made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Yochelson. A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 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**