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TREE COMMISSION
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DARLEEN MELIS, CHAIR
KIRT RIEDER, VICE CHAIR

Touch the Future - Plant a Tree

**MINUTES OF THE SALEM TREE COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 19, 2022**

A meeting of the Salem Tree Commission was held on September 19, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., via ZOOM, an online video conference call system. Present on call were:

1. Chair Darleen Melis, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder; Members: Naomi Cottrell, Paul L'Heureux, Rachel McCarter, and Susan Yochelson; Raymond Jodoin, Director of Operations, DPS and Commission Clerk Joanne Roomey.
2. **Director of Operations, Department of Public Services**
 - a. No contractor work was performed for the month of August. DPS had 63 new work order requests from the month of August. They have closed 51 work orders for the month of August. That brings the total of completed work orders to around 324 YTD.
 - b. At present DPS has 118 open work orders.
 - c. The tree truck has had some challenges to deal with like staffing and mechanical issues for the month of August, but they are transitioning well over to the digital system (See Click Fix).
 - d. View Permit Online has issued many permits to date with no issues.
 - e. For fall planting, they are slated to install approximately 30 trees across the city with 16 of those trees being replacement of the trees that did not make it from the fall 2021, and spring 2022 planting.
3. **Greening the Gateway Cities**
 - Barbara Warren, Salem Sound Coastwatch – community outreach
 - DCR Forester David Bresnahan

Ms. Warren said to date, Mr. Bresnahan's crew have planted 534 trees in Salem, 534 trees were on private property and 96 on public property. There are 155 site requests for planting currently. Fall planting is delayed because of the severe drought and they want to wait until we get three days of full rain/water to proceed. Mr. Bresnahan has a full crew with six people. Ms. Warren emphasized the importance of watering the trees, especially with the record high temperatures and the severe drought conditions. Ms. Warren gave an informative speech at the "Preservation in a Changing Climate: Salem" this past week and spoke about much larger areas of Salem that will be impacted by high tides and floods.

The commission would like to post some of the maps she used so that flood resilient trees will be selected for planting in those areas.

Ms. Melis suggested asking for a recommendation from a commission subcommittee as to which maps to post to the webpage.

4. Emerald Ash Borer Beetle – Active in Salem. Open discussion

Chris Burke spoke about the Emerald Ash Borer Beetle situation that emerged this summer and wants to start an injection program to protect trees which require treatment every other year. He proposed that the Salem Tree Fund help bark injection of six trees. He said it took only one season at Forest River Park to kill several century old ash trees. Mr. Burke said that action must be taken before the leaves turn color and believes this is an urgent matter. For more information, visit: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/emerald-ash-borer>

The commission members all agreed that they need a city certified arborist' opinion to analyze the trees, it is not up to the board to answer or decide what should be done.

5. Community Activism – Volunteer tree planting in another town – Rev. Nathan Ives, Elm Project

Rev. Nathan Ives grew up in Rockport and created an Elm Tree Project to reach out to homeowners to plant new elm trees. He got \$50 donations for trees that were 6 to 10' tall that were cultivated in Oregon. His program may be a useful model if the City of Salem wanted to start its own project using the Salem Tree Donation Funds.

Again, the commission members all agreed that they need a city certified arborist to move forward on this project.

6. Mayor Salvo Bike Multi-Use Path – Update on MBTA tree planting

Mr. Jodoin spoke with Dave Knowlton on this issue, David Knowlton P.E. is working with the contractor as the trees are still in replacement timeline and will have an update shortly. Mr. Rieder asked if we are still in a contract for replacing trees and also if there were any replacement plans that would include watering, or any aftercare plans plans. Mr. Jodoin responded yes; they are still under contract for this project.

7. Gonyea Park – update for GGCP fall planting

David Knowlton P.E. is working with DEP and Tighe & Bond, an engineering firm, for the cleanup project at Gonyea Park. Mr. Jodoin will update the commission regarding clean-up and remediation, who is awaiting close out documents for project.

8. American Rescue Plan – Update on remaining balance

Mr. Jodoin said there is approximately \$21,872.50 available in funds and the city will be using it to plant trees in the spring and fall of next year because DCR was not able to get to it this year.

9. Salem Tree Donation Fund – Using the two tree funds

Mr. Jodoin said The Replacement Fund has **\$8,344.12** and the Donation Fund has **\$10,000**. Some applicants are putting in for street trees. Mr. Jodoin suggested removing the soil and add new soil and add some shade trees. Ms. Melis asked the commission to think about what they should do with the funds that have not been encumbered.

10. DCR Municipal Grant – (\$20,000) Update

The city got the DCR Municipal grant, \$16,439.00 of which Mr. Jodoin received and is going to target Federal and Church Street this spring and create new tree pits. Mr. Jodoin wants to put trees all around the parking lot. The Tree Commission subcommittee will look into this, and Ms. Yochelson and Ms. Melis will give an update at the next meeting.

11. Salem Common – Landscape architect – next steps. A donation without donor's name.

The landscape architect will meet with Patricia O'Brien from the Parks and Recreation Department to discuss what the next steps are. If folks want to donate anonymously to plant a tree, that would be acceptable, but they have to figure out a price. Due to the lateness in the season, the landscape architect recommends that the purchase of the new trees be put off until Spring 2023 when the choice of specimens will be better.

12. Approve Tree Commission Minutes of July 18, 2022

Mr. Rieder made a motion to approve the Tree Commission Meeting Minutes of July 18, 2022. Seconded by Ms. Cottrell. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Openings on the Tree Commission - Government Services subcommittee meeting tentatively planned for September 21, 2022.

There are three openings to join the Tree Commission. Two candidates, Cady Goldfield and Maria Connell have submitted their applications to the city clerk. The third opening is reserved for a certified arborist or a landscape architect. There will be interviews on September 21st that will be posted on the City Council's Agenda.

14. New Business: None

15. Next Meeting Dates: Monday, October 17, 2022, and Monday, November 21, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

16. Adjournment: 7:40 p.m. Mr. Rieder made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Cottrell. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

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**