

Tree Task Force Minutes
May 1, 2024 at 6:30
Town Hall Conference Room

Attendance Eric Horne, Tyler Kolle, Kristen Dorsey, Sophia Wilson

New Business

Sophia Wilson consult:

- FSAB/TTF sending out an appeal for citizen donations designated for tree planting: Will not happen in time for in conjunction with Maine Arbor Week (3rd week in May) since the Spring flyer with "Dump Day" ticket is already at the printer. TTF needs to seek approval/ permission from TC to have be part of the annual appeal moving forward.

- Sophia described her observations of other established Tree City communities - the Tree Advisory body, typically gives information/updates to staff; also functions as hands-on volunteers. An effective tree board is a collaborative team with the Warden; expresses and elevates 'Tree Value' in operations.

-Freeport staff is talking about restructuring dept.'s, staffs assignments; most relevant to a future Tree Board is the consideration of an "Environmental Services Coordinator" within the town manager's office.

- TTF > Town Council Presentation. Sophia now hoping to get us on the May 21st agenda, in order to accomplish: 1) Presentation of the Tree Ordinance, which adopts the Program. 2) Present the Tree Program, which is 'policy guidance' for Sophia to go do the work. 3) We will also inform them of our drafted Management Plan too - this will comprise a new Chapter, with an Article, within the Code of ordinances; and be cross referenced with Zoning. Sophia will uniformly format each of these. Might need to be pushed out to June 4th.

-Review of our drafts: Tree Program, Ordinance, Management Plan. We agreed to having Sophia tidy up/align the language of each of these, as well as apply the attorney's Ordinance comments. She will meet with us again, to go over the new versions to ensure our goals/intentions are captured.

-Suggested that the eventual Tree Board should access Planning Partnership grant with the State of Maine, intended to fund Visioning. These provide conceptual planning >RAISE grant: pedestrian safety, economic dev't , public transit etc.- opportunity for enhancing street scape.

- In regard to moving our draft Zoning amendments to the Planning Board: At another time, ask TC whether our role should go beyond public trees; then the future Tree Board would make the request of the Planning Board, using our already drafted Zoning amendments which address tree canopy requirements for parking lots, development, etc.

- Funding: At the Budget Public Hearings ... request **additional money for planting, not just managing**. Currently the budget line only covers storm cleanup/safety. American Rescue Fund is available until 12/31/24 ... Fed'l gov't defines "obligated" as having a formal contract. We will need to have specific numbers calculated, for the cost of hoped-for contracts, such as the Audubon Bringing Nature Home/ Demonstration Garden projects. Corridor transformation would align with other committees' goals.

Next Steps

Presentation to Town Council on (placeholders: May 21st or 6/4), for Tree Program review and adoption. A "call to public hearing" possibly/hopefully will be made then.

-Sophia will work on redrafts, send to us. If we disagree, will have another meeting and push public hearing to a later date.

-Kristen will send word documents, so Sophia can edit.

-Contact Audubon to reopen conversations about demonstration gardens at our downtown priority sites.

-Reconsider Summer meeting schedule (tabled)

Next Meeting June 5th

Time of Adjournment 8:26 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Kristen Dorsey