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TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING April 27, 2021

Attendance: Erica Kipp, Vice Chair
Richard Whitehead, Vice Chair
Peter Viteretto
Cindy Cossuto
Andrew Strauss

Staff: Paul Sotnik, Deputy Tree Warden
Chris Torre, Tree Warden
Dilene Byrd, Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Kipp called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

2. PUBLIC INPUT - GUESTS AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY SPEAK TO ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA. (COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN THREE (3) MINUTES PER SPEAKER.)

There was no public comment this evening.

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ON MARCH 23, 2021.

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. VITERETTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

4. CAPITAL TREE PLANTING PROGRAM- SPRING 2021 PLANTING LOCATION LIST

New Plantings:

a. 21 First Street.

Mr. Sotnik said that he has received a planting order for 21 First Street.

b. 122 Partrick Avenue.

Mr. Sotnik said that he has received a planting order for 122 Partrick Avenue.

c. First Street - Other Potential Locations.

Mr. Sotnik stated that 30 letters have been distributed to the residents on First Street and he has begun to receive some calls for requests for plantings as a result, and there are currently three homeowners that are interested in receiving trees.

d. 38 Calf Pasture Beach Road - 1 Tree.

Mr. Sotnik said he has received a request for one Pin Oak tree at 38 Calf Pasture Beach Road.

Replacements:

Mr. Sotnik said the replacement tree has been planted at 97 Washington Street.

5. DISCUSSION - FINALIZE TREE LIST FOR 2021 TREE PLANTING CONTRACT RFP

Mr. Sotnik said that he had worked with Mr. Whitehead on the planting list for the 2021 Tree Planting RFP and said the list is broken out by native and non-native species and that some additions have been made based on the recommendations of Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Viteretto. Ms. Kipp requested that the Committee have more time to review the list. Mr. Sotnik requested the Committee members review the list and send him any changes and he will send the final list to the Purchasing Department so that the RFP can be advertised. Ms. Kipp said if the members of the Committee have any changes to have them submitted to Mr. Sotnik by noon on Friday, April 30th. Mr. Viteretto asked if the sizes were included on the list. Mr. Sotnik said "yes."

6. UPDATE - 2021 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION - OAK HILLS PARK, KENDALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND BROOKSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

Ms. Kipp said the members of the Committee should have received their e-mail invitation for the Arbor Day Celebration. Mr. Sotnik said they have been working to finalize the arrangements with the Board of Education. He said that on April 22, 2021 the trees at Kendall Elementary School and Brookside Elementary School were planted and that the Board of Education had selected those two specific schools.

Mr. Sotnik said the actual celebration will be held at Oak Hills Park and he had requested that Eversource provide sixteen (16) trees and they have agreed to five (5) at their cost as well as a \$1,500 grant that will pay for two additional trees. He said the City will plant three (3) additional trees along Fillow Street, so a total of ten (10) trees will be planted. He also said that Almstead Tree will be bagging the seedlings and they will be placed them in recycling bins and they will be dropped off at the schools on Friday morning and school staff will hand them out to the fifth grade students. Ms. Kipp asked the Committee members to attend the Celebration if possible to show support. Mr. Strauss asked if the person who took over for Chris Donnelly will be attending. Mr. Sotnik said that she has been invited, but is not able to attend, but will be sending a representative from her office.

7. UPDATE - NEEF GRANT APPLICATION (LUDLOW PARK) AND ARBOR DAY NCC

Ms. Kipp said that we have been approved for the grant and tomorrow she and Mr. Sotnik will be doing a site visit to Ludlow Park to be sure there is space for the planting and benches without overcrowding the park and will report back to the Committee next month. She said the funds from the grant have already been deposited so as soon as a decision has been made, the order can be placed.

Ms. Kipp said that for Arbor Day at Norwalk Community College, they had hosted a talk with the Audubon Society and it was a great success and had over 50 people log in remotely. She said additionally, she was introduced to a few grants that the Committee can apply for mostly being flowering shrubs and some trees that would encourage pollinators. She said that Norwalk Community College also hosted an Art and Poems contest and one of her students is putting together a video montage of all of the submissions and it will be displayed in the school and gift cards will be given to the winners. She said the title of the contest was “What does Arbor Day mean to you” and the participants ranged from four years old to seventh grade.

8. REPORT - TAC NEWSLETTER

Ms. Kipp said the newsletter will be sent out after Arbor Day so that the Arbor Day celebration can be included in the newsletter and said if anyone on the Committee has anything that they would like to add to send it to her. She said the goal is to have the newsletter done twice a year to coincide with the planting season.

9. TREE LIAISON WORKSHOP

Ms. Kipp said the Tree Liaison program will be revamped and Mr. Sotnik had sent her the material that was used in the past and is hoping that Ms. Cossuto would head the “Welcoming Committee” for the new tree liaisons.

10. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES

a. Program Updates

Ms. Kipp said that on April 24th, her students went to three different locations where the NTA was planting trees and the photos she saw looked amazing and the students had a fantastic experience.

Mr. Strauss said that the NTA has the resources to procure trees, but what was needed was volunteers, so he is sure they were pleased to have the volunteers from Norwalk Community College to plant the trees.

Mr. Sotnik thanked Mr. Broadbent for working on and securing the grant from Eversource for the trees on such short notice.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Viteretto asked Mr. Sotnik if he had the planting plans for the NRVT project. Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Yeosock is managing that project. Mr. Viteretto said this is a stellar opportunity to open the views to the river and bring in native species and natural vegetation to get rid of the invasive species.

Ms. Kipp said if anyone on the Committee sees a grant that the Committee may qualify for to send her the information.

12. ADJOURNMENT

- ** MS. KIPP MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. STRAUSS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd