

Waterbury Tree Committee Meeting

Unapproved Minutes

Tuesday, November 15, 2022, 5:00 PM

Location: Waterbury Public Library

Present: Steve Lotspeich, Barb Blauvelt, Jane Brown, Erica Fuller

1. **Agenda modifications:** The agenda was approved as drafted.
2. **Public comments and announcements:** The new Town Manager, Tom Leitz, stopped by to introduce himself and talk to the committee. He is interested in trees, especially American Chestnuts. Our committee may look into efforts to restore this tree in Waterbury.
3. **September & October 2022 Tree Committee Minutes:** Jane B. moved to approve the minutes from September 20 and October 15, 2022 Waterbury Tree Committee (WTC) meetings. Erica F. seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.
4. **Tree Care Ordinance, Tree City USA designation.** Our draft is being reviewed by the Bill Shepeluk and Tom Leitz. It will be scheduled on the Select Board agenda soon. Once adopted by the Select Board it is effective after 60 days. During the first 45 days of that period, residents can submit a petition together to have the ordinance re-considered with a town wide vote.
5. **Discuss layout and implementation of future plantings at Newton Baker Park.** More planting in the future may include a focus on natives such as Serviceberry, Viburnum, Dogwood, and possibly Willows, with soil improvement and mulch.
6. **Discuss other possible state grant funded tree planting projects.** State Grants - the Vt. Urban and Community Forestry Program has a competitive grant program to plant Fruit and Nut Trees with a strong connection to education and inclusiveness in the community. Steve will reach out to the new Rec. Director, Wyatt O'Brien to partner on the grant application if interested. The community gardens next to the town library garden would be an ideal location and children who participate in the Town recreation programs may participate in planting and watering trees. Planting two to four trees was suggested for this application. The deadline is early December for this grant. A FAQ online meeting is offered on 11/17 for interested community members.

Caring for Canopy Grants 2023 - Jane will contact Elise Schadler with the state and report back of a grant program for shade trees in 2023 by the Vt. Urban and Community Forestry Program.

7. **Town budget for trees.** Funds for tree work comes from the annual town budget in two key categories, the Highway and Cemetery budgets. The Highway Dept. budget for Tree Maintenance is \$4,000 and the Cemetery budget is \$12,000 for Tree Maintenance for a total of \$16,000. We would like to increase the Highway Dept. by \$1000. Steve will pursue this with the Town Manager for the 2023 budget.

8. **Future priorities for the 2023 Tree Committee work.** The following projects were discussed:
- Develop a tree planting Master Plan for the Maple Street Cemetery.
 - Hope Davey Park – Install native plantings, especially in the wet areas near pedestrian bridge, and other areas to be identified in conjunction with current Town parks study.
 - Look into Audubon Food for Birds initiative to benefit pollinators and birds.
 - Plan for additional Street trees as determined, especially for potential Caring for Canopy grant program.
- Pruning Bur Oaks at Maple St. Cemetery- Barb Blauvelt spoke to Caldwell Clark, arborist with the local firm, Treescapes. He is interested in doing a pruning demonstration. He would need to be paid by the Town. Barb will follow up. The best time would be late winter/ early spring while trees are dormant. There are about eight larger Burr Oaks and another seven or eight smaller Burr Oaks that need to be pruned and could be the subject of a workshop with Caldwell. These trees will all need mulch next spring too.
9. **December Meeting:** Tuesday, December 13th, 5:00 pm, meet at the Town Library.
10. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Jane Brown