

**Minutes
Hampden Tree Board
Subcommittee of the Hampden Town Council Services Committee
July 08, 2009 @ 6:30pm**

The meeting of the Hampden Tree Board was called to order at 6:36pm on Wednesday July 08, 2009, at the Hampden Municipal Building by Jim Feverston.

Gretchen Heldmann, GIS/IT Specialist
Kurt Mathies, Recreation Director
Lance Case
Jane Jarvi
Shelby Wright
Jim Feverston

1. Introductions

No introductions needed.

2. Business

A. D. Dix Strategies for Community Involvement

The board discussed where to go from here given the lack of permanent access to the back part of the park. Lance suggested that the harvesting plan should not be changed, because the harvesting was not fully dependent on having permanent back access – it was more about enhancing overall forest health, and possibly cutting in some new trails, which could still be done. The group agreed to have Gretchen speak with Prentiss & Carlisle to gather the following information:

- Discuss doing harvesting this summer vs. winter or even next summer as it relates to current market conditions
- Discuss the possibility of having multiple “quotes” for the harvesting work, one including invasives removal and one not
- Discuss flame-removal as an option for eradicating Japanese barberry

The group asked Gretchen to look into licensing requirements, if any, for doing the flame-removal method. The board decided the next meeting would be devoted to developing a presentation to give at a public meeting about the park, to be held on 8/12 at 7pm. A walk-through is tentatively scheduled for 8/19. The abutters within 300’ of the park will be mailed a notice of the public meeting, and the meeting will be advertised in the weekend paper at least ten days prior to the meeting, per standard town office procedure. The purpose of the meeting will be to present the original concept and gather community reactions to the plan. An informational table will be set up in the room with various pamphlets of information. The presentation will take place in the community room in Public Safety.

B. Membership – Larry Bruen

Jim noted that Larry Bruen is interested in serving on the board but is hesitant because he wants to avoid any possible conflict of interest scenarios and he also does not want to lose potential town business. This situation was discussed with the town manager, and she noted it was okay for him to serve so long as he recuses himself from any decisions where that may actually be the case, such as awarding a bid for tree pruning or removal.

C. Pest Outreach Training – Lance

Lance attended a training on new invasive insect pests threatening our forests. He gathered a bunch of material and contact information for where the board could obtain more copies of the material. Gretchen will contact Jan Santerre and Greg Miller at the Maine Forest Service about obtaining copies of materials. It was suggested that the board look into inviting Project Learning Tree to present info to the board or at other related gatherings. Lance and Jane will work together to gather more info.

D. Project Canopy Evaluation

Kurt and Gretchen gave a current status update about the project: many of the trees sunk and had to be dug up and replanted. A few more need to be staked and roped. Rope is on order. Kurt estimates the work will be more or less done by the end of next week. Gretchen will contact Jan to let her know the situation and that we have not actually arrived at our final planting date yet. This was noted as important because according to the grant rules the board has 30 days after the project completion date to prepare a final report to submit to Project Canopy. The checklist of requirements is in the grant contract document, which Gretchen will scan in and email to everyone. Shelby and Gretchen will work on the final grant report. The following issues were noted:

- Staff need to be given the ability to be doing miscellaneous tasks and not assigned to one project. No forethought was given to who would be preparing lunch, which had to be a staff person with building keys to get the food. Staff were also needed for tasks such as purchasing additional ice for the BBQ, and running the excavator.
- There should be a more organized volunteer sign-in station, because a list of all volunteers and hours worked is a required part of the final grant report. Jane has been working on getting that list together since the day of the planting but it would have been easier to have people sign in and out.
- The holes needed to be much smaller.
- Weather/rain was a huge factor beyond anyone's control.
- The overall timing was extremely ambitious and pushed staff to the limits considering no staff person has in their job description what was required to do this grant. Kurt worked 50-60 hours per week for a couple weeks, and Gretchen also put in quite a bit of overtime to make the project happen. It would have perhaps been a little more relaxed if the planting were to happen next spring, given that staff would have had more time to visit nurseries to select the best stock, etc.

Positive outcomes: a great project overall, and great specimen selection. Lots of community involvement, with volunteers stating how happy they were to have been a part of this sweat-equity type of project that will last for years. The board acknowledged it could not have been done without Kurt and Gretchen, and Kurt's staff. Kurt and his staff were an integral part of getting everything set up, holes dug, BBQ, etc. Gretchen selected all specimens, coordinated all payments, and kept track of all other administrative-related tasks.

The board agreed that formal thank-you letters should be drafted and sent to each individual care/of the overall group address (i.e. all individual boy scout letters go to general troop address). The letter will be drafted by Jane and emailed to Gretchen to print on town letterhead. Jim and Mayor Arnett will sign each letter.

Gretchen has been gathering pictures from the event, and once she has all pictures will burn them all onto discs for each Tree Bd member and one for each group that volunteered.

3. Adjournment.

The next meeting will be 7/22 at 6:30pm. The meeting was adjourned around 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Heldmann
GIS/IT Specialist