

THE HOBOKEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION

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DAWN ZIMMER
Mayor



James J. Tricarico, Chairman
Peter Cossio, Commissioner
Diana Davis, Commissioner
Matt Condon, Secretary

Minutes of the May 11, 2015 Shade Tree Commission Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7:08 p.m.

The following commissioners were present at the meeting: James Tricarico, Peter Cossio, and Diana Davis.

Also Present: Matt Condon, Secretary; Leo Pellegrini, Director of Health Human Services / Environmental Services; Christopher Brown, Designee for Environmental Services; Steve Fahmie, Volunteer; Peter Bakarich soon to be appointed as a Commissioner and Daisy Amado, recording secretary.

Agenda items discussed:

1. TD Bank Grant

Student field trip date is 5/18/15 and school planting on 5/22/15. Need to spend remaining funds by 6/15/15. We have \$20,000 with a \$10,000 match and we have spent about \$1,000 on education and planting. Training is coming up for 7th and 8th graders and plantings around the field on Jefferson Street. We also have a quote from Greater Newark Conservatory. The remaining \$17,000 should be used for removal of dead street trees. \$11,000 spoken for at Conservatory for field trip. We need purchase order from the City.

Commission also discussed: having 4000 healthy street trees by 2020. Commissioner Cossio stated the commission should make dead trees a priority and hire someone.

Director Leo Pellegrini spoke about challenges with the budget and how we need to figure out what we will accomplish and the possibility of obtaining an extension from TD Bank. Also stated that \$4,000 check went out and we have a requisition in the system that the Business Administrator needs to approve. Once same is approved, the Director will send the purchase order to Chairman Tricarico. Director also mentioned the need for a list of projects. He spoke with Trees Unlimited Company and if they are under bid threshold we can have them work on items.

2. Paul Cowie's cost of the STC CFMP and our need to submit reimbursement to the State Grant

Director Pellegrini has a purchase order for this. He needs to give a list of names and is working on the list. Commissioner Davis said the contract is for ten people. The event is on May 23 from 9am to 3pm here in City Hall. The first three hours are indoors, presentation, break for lunch and then go outdoors. We will probably need a projector. Need to work on tools list.

3. Barbato contract issues

Director Pellegrini advised the Commission that he has placed numerous calls to Mr. Barbato who has been non-responsive. There have been lots of issues with trees now so many are dead. Director needs to meet with the Mayor and Legal and finish documenting spreadsheet. The plan is to send a letter to Mr. Barbato giving him 24/48 hours to respond. The City does have a \$29,000 invoice for Mr. Barbato which has not been released and the full balance is \$47,000. We would like to cancel out second phase of contract as soon as possible and go with another contractor. Question came up as to another RFP for autumn for the second phase of the project. Director asked Commission for all emails and complaints on dead trees as he needs these for the file. Commission discussed having a monitor and Director advised he would assign an inspector.

4. Citizen outreach matters

Director Pellegrini spoke about gaiter bags and trying to salvage trees that are alive. Discussion ensued about the Commission having telephone numbers for the trees that are still alive and whether the city wants to water. Commission discussed homeowners signed a contract and they are obligated to water. Director said he would forward Dave's list to Commissioner Davis tomorrow. Commissioner Cossio stated that he has responded to everyone letting them know that we will replace dead trees. Director said we would put something in writing stating that they will get new trees, he will have Juan or someone from the City draft same.

5. CSIP Grant

\$20,000 grant with a \$10,000 match but TD Bank takes priority over this. Per Director Pellegrini, it is ok to have multiple projects going on at once. Commissioner Davis stated she submitted Green Communities grant but we need to submit back since we spent \$3,000 on Cowie. Director will speak with Chris Baldwin and Commissioner Davis should email the invoices to Leo.

6. Washington Street Project

One block a year; more expensive trees; and bigger tree pits. Matt Condon will email Chris Brown specs. Chairman discussed purchasing storyboards/poster boards for few hundred we should get those printed, Matt has PDFs. Commissioner Cossio mentioned a dead tree on 3rd and Washington in front of McDonalds. Matt Condon discussed a commitment from the City to water. Director Pellegrini advised we already started last week. Commissioner Cossio asked if we have volunteers for old gaiter bags. Per the Director, it all comes down to planning and he will have the help available.

Steve Fahmie stated that we need to inspect trees that have been planted over past five years. Matt Condon stated we need to mulch; clean out pits and get new mulch. Commission discussed how we can make this part of TD Grant: maintain trees on Washington Street; get garbage out, etc. and push this for the next week or two.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appearances by the Public:

Elizabeth Adams discussed her concern for a "healthy tree" cut down in Church Square Park in front of playground by Fourth Street. Director Pellegrini advised if the tree was healthy we would never have taken it down. Chairman Tricarico stated how that area is perfect for a row of trees.

Other new business:

Commission discussed volunteer groups as Chairman is receiving numerous calls from developers in connection to tree pits. Needs backlog on anything – use that plan – we are supposed to vote. One lawyer, Robert Matule. We then issue letter or give recommendation. Perhaps a liaison with Planning Board on the ordinance on planting trees. Commissioner Cossio discussed tree pit/tree guards.

Commissioner Davis said someone in city hall needs to give out packet on this, maybe Building department or Director Pellegrini's department. Director Pellegrini will discuss with Mario and get information for everyone. Director will also speak to Gary Holtzman on Planning Board and inquire about a checklist for Shade Tree Commission.

Chairman Tricarico discussed the software, Spatial Data Logic, and how he does not know how to use it and would like to receive training on same. Chris Brown discussed how this is ongoing issue in his office.

Commissioner Davis said the Commission needs to have a booth at the Arts & Music Festival as the Five Year Plan states we have to be present and she asked everyone on the Commission to be prepared for same.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30p.m.