

**OLD LYME TREE COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2023, 4:00 PM
MEMORIAL TOWN HALL
MEETING HALL**

Minutes

Attendance: Regular members: Joanne DiCamillo, Joan Flynn, Michael Gaffey, Emily Griswold by telephone. Alternate members: Fred Behringer
Absent: Anne Bing (regular), Tom Degnan, Tree Warden, ex-officio

CALL TO ORDER: Mrs. DiCamillo called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.
Mrs. DiCamillo authorized Fred Behringer to vote in place of Anne Bing.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominations and Election of Chairman

Michael Gaffey made a motion, seconded by Fred Behringer, to elect Joanne DiCamillo as chairman of the Tree Commission for 2023. Fred Behringer, Joan Flynn, Michael Gaffey, and Emily Griswold voted in favor. Motion passed.

Tree Commission's letter to BOF - request for funding April Seedling Sale

Mrs. DiCamillo wrote a letter to Nicole Ledger, Finance Director, requesting \$1500 from the Board of Finance for a spring seedling sale in Old Lyme. Ms. Ledger presented the information at a December BOF meeting. The letter explained the status of trees in town, the need to plant new trees, and the cost of planting and watering the new trees. During the past decade, many trees were taken down due to the combined effects of old age, storms, drought, insect damage and disease. The Tree Commission has been looking at different options for planting new trees that will save the town money and to also engage the community.

Mrs. DiCamillo has been invited to speak at the 2-6-23 Board of Selectmen meeting.

Tree Seedling information - The nursery that was selected at last month's meeting for purchasing seedlings has certain restrictions on purchasing, a minimum of 1,600, and offers a limited variety. Mrs. DiCamillo expressed her concern about placing a large order of 1600 seedlings when we are introducing a new project. We cannot predict how popular it will be with the community so we should start with a smaller number. She shared information that she found about The Arbor Day Foundation's bulk seedling program. They offer a wide selection of bare-root seedlings that are reasonably priced and sold in bundles of 50 for \$69. The varieties include evergreen, shade, flowering ornamentals, and several types of native trees. She suggested purchasing bundles of 50 seedlings in five different varieties for about \$350. The cost would be approximately \$.44

more per seedling than the original proposal but the smaller order will result in significant savings.

Fred Behringer stated he was in favor of purchasing a smaller number of seedlings and spending less money. There was a discussion about the number of seedlings to order, the cost and the need for additional funds for signage and promotion. The members agreed that we should order 5 bundles and revise our original request of \$1500 to the BOF. \$450 would cover the trees, the advertising, and the supplies. Planting 350 seedling trees would be a good start.

Michael Gaffey stated that we should double the amount and request \$900 for the spring sale and plan for a second one sometime in the fall.

Michael Gaffey made a motion, seconded by Fred Behringer, to request \$900 from the Board of Finance to fund a seedling sale in the spring, and a similar sale in the fall if the spring sale is successful.

Michael Gaffey stated that \$900 would provide enough money to fund the spring sale, and another one in the fall if the spring sale is successful. Any funds not used could be carried over to the next fiscal year. Fred Behringer, who seconded the motion, stated that he would prefer to wait and evaluate the success of the spring sale before requesting \$900 from the Board of Finance. Mrs. DiCamillo expressed concern about voting at this time to approve a second sale with funding for the fall. Michael Gaffey withdrew the motion.

Fred Behringer made a motion, seconded by Michael Gaffey, to authorize Joanne DiCamillo to request \$450 from the Board of Finance for the commission to purchase seedlings and other supplies for the Spring Seedling Sale. Fred Behringer, Joanne DiCamillo, Joan Flynn, Michael Gaffey, and Emily Griswold voted in favor. Motion passed.

Two potential dates were discussed: Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, and Saturday April 29 the day after Arbor Day. Emily Griswold agreed to manage the publicity for the sale.

Members briefly considered the best location for the sale. There was also discussion about selling the seedlings as opposed to giving them to the community. Members discussed setting a price for the seedlings and agreed that it would need to be minimal. Giving them to the community with instructions for planting and maintenance would be a nice gesture in celebration of Arbor Day.

Fred Behringer made a motion, seconded by Emily Griswold, to provide the seedlings free of charge to Old Lyme residents. Fred Behringer, Joanne DiCamillo, Joan Flynn, Michael Gaffey, and Emily Griswold voted in favor. Motion passed.

There may be a special meeting before February 16 to select the types of seedlings, depending on the ordering deadline. Fred Behringer agreed to take delivery of the seedlings several days before the sale. Joanne DiCamillo will contact The Arbor Day Foundation for information on ordering deadlines.

CLERK'S REPORT

Approval of 12-7-22 special meeting minutes
The minutes were not voted upon.

BUDGET REPORT as of 1/10/23

2022-2023 Budget balance: Total budget balance \$12,010. Contracted Services has a balance of \$7,800. Line item Other/Misc. balance is \$1,800. Funds are committed to planting trees on Ferry Road. \$1500 was paid to the tree warden, and \$186 to the tree clerk. The 2021-2022 Carry-over balance is 0 in Contracted Services and \$1600 in Other/Misc. Funds are also committed to Ferry Road tree planting. There were no invoices presented for payment.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ferry Road sidewalk project update: Mrs. DiCamillo reported that the new white vinyl fence at 9 Ferry Road appears to be on town right-of-way. The First Selectman met with the homeowners and the engineer.
- Tree inventory update: Danica Doroski, of DEEP, emailed Mrs. DiCamillo on December 20 noting that applications for grants offered by the CT Urban Forest Council were available. Awards for software for an inventory were included in the grants. The deadline for submitting the application was January 3, 2023. The qualifications in the announcement listed specific criteria. Old Lyme did not meet the requirements as the communities had to be urbanized areas with a population of 30,000 or more.
- Mrs. DiCamillo followed up with the Tree Warden, Tom Degnan regarding Michael Gaffey and Fred Behringer's willingness to start an inventory of trees in town. Tom would like to meet with the two men at Hains Park to talk about conducting an inventory. They will need a diameter tape measure and a tool that will identify each tree. Mr. Degnan recommended keeping the inventory as simple as possible and recording data related to the general health and condition of the trees, the location, diameter, and species. He advised using a simple health code on the spreadsheet. Examples include Health Code - Condition - good, average, poor and a Ranking System, 1- minor dead limbs, 2 - more significant, 3 - evaluate by a professional, and a box to check off the items. A simple inventory will be more effective.

Fred Behringer has started compiling a list of parks and town properties for the tree inventory.

OTHER BUSINESS - none

ADJOURNMENT –

Fred Behringer made a motion, seconded by Joan Flynn, to adjourn the meeting at 5:29 p.m. All present voted in favor; motion passed.

Next regular meeting: February 16, 2023, at 4:00 P. M.

Martha Hansen, Clerk