

DRAFT MINUTES (8/11/2021)

**Town of Exeter
EXETER TREE COMMITTEE
August 11, 2021**

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Eileen Flockhart (Chair), Kevin Breen, Gwen English

STAFF PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Kristen Murphy, Jay Perkins

II. OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes of July 14, 2021 were approved. (Jay Perkins moved to approve the minutes as written, Kevin Breen seconded the motion. All in favor.)

III. NEW BUSINESS:

Chair Flockhart started the meeting by outlining the time line for the work on the Tree Ordinance, stating that the draft needs to be in Kristen's hands by September 8th for it to be reviewed by the Conservation Commission at their September 14th meeting.

Eileen also indicated that this document should resonate to residents and Town staff. It needs to be a useful document, as well as a document that isn't too cumbersome.

Chair Flockhart proceeds to go through the current draft of the ordinance, starting on page one.

- It is decided that 'Shrubs' should remain throughout in the document.
- Greg Bisson will be asked about submitting language for the Memorial Tree Fund that would be put in place by the Parks and Recreation Dept.
- There was a discussion about the caliper of replacement trees, and the committee determined that the minimum caliper would be between 2" and 2.5". Jay and Kevin were concerned that requiring larger caliper trees (3" or greater) does not necessarily mean that the trees will be healthier.
- Jay would like to eliminate the word "written" on page 5, under Permits/Permission Required.
- The consensus was to change 'his/her', on page 5 and throughout, to Tree Warden "and designee".

- Eileen asked about tree watering systems with replacement trees. Although tree diapers can be, and are used now, systems could change in the future. It is best not to be too specific about tree watering systems in the Ordinance.
- Kevin proposed that a maintenance plan could be laid out.
- There was a good deal of discussion about hazard trees on private property and some rough wording was presented. Gwen will work on fine-tuning that.
- Kristen noted that Exhibit A is a spreadsheet, but maybe **here** we could just have the common names and the scientific names listed. The same would go for Exhibit B. Kristen also suggested changing the wording to: Exhibit A: Approved Trees and Shrubs. Exhibit B: Prohibited Trees and Shrubs.
- There was a question about Scotch pines being trees to avoid, and the committee decided to leave it in that category.
- In discussions about the planting of non-native species, the committee felt that adding the words '*Justification must be provided prior to the selection of a non-native species*' would be desirable.

Kristen asked about the *Drafts for Standards for Proper Planting and Maintenance* that Greg Bisson had sent out. Kevin indicated that he has a few things to add to this, and he will send them to Jay.

Kristen asked Jay if he is seeking additional funding for tree related work, and if so, should the Tree Committee make a recommendation to the Conservation Commission, so that they can, in turn, make a recommendation to the Selectboard that the increase in funding for the tree budget be approved? Jay indicated that he is proposing to increase the tree budget from \$18,000 to \$25,000. Eileen asked if his budget *had* been cut, and Jay responded that it had been cut by 10% (of the \$18,000.00) due to Covid. Kristen proposed that the goal is to adopt this this year, prior to next year's budget, and based on the refinement of those responsibilities and the support of the committee for education, tree planting, etc., this committee feels that the increase is justified. Jay feels he still has work to do to refine this, and to work out the logistics, and would prefer to talk about this more at our next meeting. We will put it on top of the agenda for the next meeting.

Eileen handed out a list for some limited brainstorming ideas which included Eileen's original list, and Kristen's add-ons. Kristen thinks this will make for a great work plan, and we can break it down into short term and long-term projects. (Put it on a time line.) Eileen noted that she forgot to put 'Get in touch with Riverwoods' on the list.

At the next meeting, we will review the ordinance and the responses we get from the Conservation Commission at their meeting on the 14th of September. We will also discuss the work plan/work list.

Kristen indicated that we need hard deadlines for getting everything to the Conservation Commission. Greg, Jay and Kevin can get everything together on time.

Kristen also told the committee that Dave Short will be the representative to the Tree Committee from the Conservation Commission.

The next meeting will be: **September 15, 2021 at 8:30AM**

Meeting adjourned at 10:00AM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Gwen English on 8/16/2021