

DRAFT MINUTES (1/10/2023)

Town of Exeter  
EXETER TREE COMMITTEE  
January 10, 2023

Minutes

**I. PRELIMINARIES:**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eileen Flockhart (Chairwoman), Sally Ward,  
Gwen English

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Bisson, Kristen Murphy

**II. CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting was called to order at 8:45AM by Chair Flockhart

**III. OLD BUSINESS:**

Minutes of November 16, 2022 will be reviewed at our next meeting on  
February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

Eileen has spoken with Drew Bairstow, the principal at CMS, and he is eager to work with us as we go forward with establishing/maintaining our connections with area schools.

Sara Sankowich could not attend today's meeting, but included numerous creative and helpful suggestions for future projects in her recent email on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Greg Jordan also forwarded ideas to Eileen, including fact sheets on tree tips, such as "How Not to Mulch a Tree" (Volcanoes Kill Trees)!

We discussed topics to highlight each month, and contemplated *tree tips* as well as the idea of focusing on *tree types*. (Such as the October Glory trees that were planted at Gilman Park this past year.) It was noted that we should make our stories short and sweet so that we don't lose the attention of our audience.

In addition to the October Glory, we could possibly bring up a large Red Oak on Front Street that apparently was planted in honor of Abe Lincoln whose son attended PEA. This tree is on private property, in someone's front yard, but is visible from the sidewalk. We would absolutely need to get the homeowner's permission to highlight this tree on facebook. Another suggestion was a Tulip Tree on Ash

Street, and another on Lincoln Street. To start, though, we should probably highlight a tree that is on public land.

Eileen wanted to outline a plan for the coming months, and the committee members agreed to the following concepts:

**January:** Greg Jordan's information piece on "Volcanoes Kill Trees".

**February:** Focus on the October Glory

**March:** The "Abe Lincoln" tree on Front Street (with prior permission from landowner) OR perhaps a tree in Swasey Park

**April:** Something related to Arbor Day

**May:** Spotlight on Greg Jordan. Who he is, what he does, and how he can help Exeter with tree questions.

**June:** "Planting a Tree" theme. Could highlight the use of tree diapers.

**July:** "How many different types of caterpillars are hosted by Oak trees"

**August:** "Native trees are the Best. Why?" (And why not Bradford Pears, Burning Bush, Norway Pines etc.)

As we get closer to August, we will determine what will work best for September-December. Tree Tips or Tree Facts!

Eileen noted that Sarah Dewitt, a parent of two grade school children in Exeter, is interested in finding activities for kids. Eileen wondered if perhaps we could get them to make a little video of something related to trees, or maybe have the kids do artwork featuring trees. It might be worthwhile to contact the art teachers and enlist their support and assistance. Another thought was to have a plein air event at Swasey Park. (The Kittery Land Trust does an activity like this for their fundraising efforts) We could involve the Seacoast Art Association, and Art Up Front with Rose Bryant.

In addition to enlisting Greg Jordan's help, Gwen noted that there might be someone from the Cooperative Extension Service who could come to Exeter as an expert on trees. She indicated that she had seen a segment on WMUR's *Grow it Green* on propagating conifers, and believed he was with the Extension Service.

There was a brief update on the tree labels - Where they are currently located and where new ones will be placed.

Sara Sankowich likes the idea of connecting with students from 4-H and also Scouts.

Greg Bisson briefly reviewed the discussion at a recent Selectboard meeting about social media. The police and fire department used a media specialist whose work proved to be well done and a benefit to the Town.

Eileen would like to make a connection with CMS, and asked Kristen if she still knows someone on staff who we could work with. IF we do establish a stronger connection with the school, what would our goal be going forward? What are the needs and goals of the teachers at CMS? It was noted that if we let teachers and kids drive the activity, it will be more successful. There is value in letting the teachers know that we are a resource for them! Greg Bisson does know someone at EHS and will contact him and get the conversation going between the tree committee and the school. We'd like to augment something that is already taking place at the school. What are they already doing and how can we help? Eileen will reach out to Keven Breen about reconnecting with Ben Clapp, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher at CMS. We'll reconnect with Anne DeMarco at SST with the hope of getting those students involved as well. (This connection might involve Sara Sankowich)

Other thoughts included highlighting the story of Mark Schultz (Exeter DPW employee) whose kids planted trees by their home (near the LSS parking lot) when they were still students at LSS and received seedlings from Peter Waltz. These trees are now 15-20' tall!

Eileen will contact Jay Perkins and Kevin Breen and will do a walkabout to check on the health of the trees.

Greg Bisson noted that one of the trees inside the fenced area at Brickyard Pond tipped during a storm and is now leaning. He and Greg will try to figure out a way to save it, if possible.

9:40AM Meeting adjourned.

**NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON FEBRUARY 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:30AM**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Gwen English