

**TOWN OF ORONO
TREE BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023 AT 5:00PM**

**IN-PERSON
KEITH ANDERSON COMMUNITY HOUSE
19 BENNOCH RD, ORONO, ME 04473**

MINUTES

1. Roll Call & Introductions -

Present: Co-Chairs Dave Thompson and Tim White, Pat Thompson, Jennifer Dann, Jason Clarke, Kenny Fergusson, Associate members Cindy Blease and Jayme Titus, Environmental Services Coordinator Megan Hess, and Public Works Director and Tree Warden Rob Yerxa.

Absent: Terri Triandafillou

2. Agenda Review - No additions or deletions

3. Approval of Minutes of December 6th, 2022 Board Meeting

Motion by Jayme Titus and seconded by Tim White to approve the minutes. All voted in favor of the minutes as noted, 6-0. Kenny abstained because he wasn't present at the meeting.

4. Grants Update

- **Invasive Plant Control Practice Plan Report and Action Planning - Colburn Lot**

Megan Hess noted that the Town could apply for the Invasive Plant Control Practice plan for treatment funding this March, though is not sure how costly this project would be. It is unlikely that the Orono Land Trust would be able to volunteer to cut invasives at the Colburn Lot because they are tied up with other projects this year. Alternatively, the Town could apply for the creation of a new plan for the High School Lot. Dave Thompson explained that this may be a good option because we could actually tackle the Buckthorn there.

Mr. Yerxa and Ms. Hess will work on getting a quote from Hunter Manley on what the treatment would be for the Colburn Lot, while focusing on the larger Buckthorn.

- **2023 Invasive Plant Control Practice & Project Canopy - Planting Grant: Discussion in March.**

Megan Hess noted that the Project Canopy grant is due March 22, 2023 and the Invasive Plant Control Practice plan would likely be due at the end of March as well. The Board will discuss potential projects at the March meeting.

5. Tree Warden Update & Tree Evaluations:

- **Tree Evaluations & Maintenance Update**

Rob Yerxa updated the Tree Board that the Silver Maple that was taken down on Island Avenue, which was the last of the trees that were evaluated. Additionally, during the recent storms there

was a blow down on Mountain View Drive, a spruce blowdown on Mainwood Avenue on the backyard, and emergency clean up at the Tozier property.

- **Online Map Viewer**

Megan Hess will work on getting public access to the map so that everyone can see it. Ms. Hess will also finalize getting buried utility data put on the map. Dave Thompson suggested that the map could be put on the Tree Board webpage as an education and outreach effort.

- **BTM Trimming Event** - Feb 16th (3:30-5:00PM) Orono Middle/High School
- **Management Plan Update Planning - Goal Setting Discussion**

Kenny Fergusson asked if there is a template for creating a management plan from Tree City USA. Jenn Dann said that the US Forest Service has a template but it was designed for larger cities. Tim White asked if we were going to include the larger wooded lots (High School Lot and Colburn Lot) on the plan, or will it just entail the public right-of-way trees. Mr. White suggested that we reference the separate wooded lot plans, instead of including them. This plan would address the trees in the right-of-way, cemetery, Webster Park, etc. Rob Yerxa mentioned that the plan should be consistent with the new ordinance.

Jenn Dann stated that she would like to continue doing an Arbor Day Celebration each year and implement a plan to plant trees to maintain our Tree City USA status. Jason Clarke stated the Board should be more proactive in planting trees. He noted having a budget would be important, one of the goals would be to seek grant funding or partnerships with businesses. Mr. Thompson said the Board needs a strong plan for planting so that trees do not get mowed off or left unwatered. It will be important to develop standard specifications (i.e. Right Tree Right Place guidelines) that would likely require a large area to dig a large enough hole, to add good soil, and a plan for watering. Mr. Fergusson suggested doing neighborhood competitions to plant trees.

Mr. Thompson would like to have a general plan to replace the Norway Maples with species like Red Maple. It should have some statement about insects, invasives, and disease because we included it in the ordinance. It would be important to have trees with diverse ages and species, while paying attention to the health of the larger trees to keep them longer. Implementing information about carbon would also coincide with the Environment Committee's goals.

Mr. Thompson questioned if there would be a way to plan the High School Lot for harvest and generate some revenue for the planting projects.

Jayne Titus suggested having a specific section for community outreach and education, more participation in activities, and more press releases about the Tree Board on Town's social media platform. It would be good to change the view of the Tree Board from "cutters" to "planters".

Mr. White presented a layout to the Board, requesting that there be a section on the 1) current state utilizing David Ludwig's pie charts, 2) desired state, 3) new planting and replacing cut down trees, 4) public outreach and education, 5) invasives, 6) a schedule of Tree Board Activity, and 7) reference to the plans for the large wooded lots.

The management plan will set goals, guidelines and/or specifications on criteria that qualify a good planting site, and ways to achieve that goal. Rob Yerxa expressed the importance of

maintaining a tree inventory while continuing to update it for future planning. This will be a working document and Ms. Hess will create a first draft to get out to the Board for review.

6. Monthly Tree Board Activity Update

- **Chairperson Update - None**

7. Adjournment

Next Meeting Tuesday, March 7th at 5:00 pm

Major topics for the next meeting will be continued discussion of the grant applications for Project Canopy and the Invasive Plant Control Practice Plan that are due at the end of March. There will also be a first draft of the management plan to review.

Mr. White motioned to adjourn, and Pat Thompson seconded. The Board unanimously agreed to adjourn at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward
Executive Assistant