

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission held on December 2, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in the Borough Chambers. Present at roll call were:

Present: Mr. Donald Salerno, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Lawrence Travaglia  
Mr. C. David Visscher  
Mr. Lloyd Williams, Chairman

Councilwoman Laurie Fu  
Mr. Dave Dubee, Forester

Absent: Mrs. Margaret Law

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams stated that adequate notice of this meeting has been published and posted in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Law of 1975, "Open Public Meetings Act."

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Travaglia moved that the minutes of the Commission's November 4, 2015 Regular Meeting be approved as circulated, seconded by Mr. Visscher. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **BUDGET**

Mr. Williams stated there is \$1,800 remaining in the budget at this time. He asked if all members had a copy of the Commission's 2016 budget. He and the Commission members reviewed various budget lines to decide if certain amounts should be increased or decreased. He suggested that the amount allocated to Tree Removal and Take Down should be \$15,000 for 2016. In 2015 the amount of \$13,000 has been spent. He proposed the amount \$4,000 for Stump Removal; \$3,700 was spent so far in 2015.

Cross discussion, including that it would be important to not cut budget amounts to close and remember that the Commission must anticipate many different kinds of emergency situations and that as long as the Commission stays within its budget allocation funds can be shifted from one category to another as needed.

Mr. Williams next discussed Pruning and Cabling costs. Another question was should the Tree Removal and Take Down allocation stay at \$22,000.

Councilwoman Fu commented that looking back at 2014 amounts spent, that \$27,000 was spent on Tree Removal and Take Down and \$15,000 on Pruning and Cabling. In 2013 the Tree Removal and Take Down was \$33,000 and Pruning and Cabling was \$24,000. Tree Removal and Take Down cost is usually more than the cost for Pruning and Cabling.

Mr. Williams asked if the Pruning and Cabling allocation should remain at \$12,000 even though the 2015 cost is significantly more than that.

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Mr. Salerno stated it seems to him that the Pruning and Cabling costs are unusually high for 2015. He believes the amount can remain at \$12,000.

Councilwoman Fu proposed if possibly the Tree Removal and Take Down could be \$20,000 and Pruning and Cabling be \$14,000.

This proposal was agreed to by the Commission members.

Mr. Williams asked about the remaining 17 trees to be planted at the affordable housing site, wondering if the State will be pay for these.

Councilwoman Fu responded that the State will pay for these as long as they are planted this coming spring; the program's planting can be extended to next spring.

Cross discussion about the affordable housing site as to whether there is any reason to think that the necessary work will not be done by spring so that the tree plantings can take place.

Councilwoman Fu said she will check further on this with those responsible for the work at the affordable housing site. The plantings must be done by June 15, 2016.

Mr. Williams and the Commission members continued to review the proposed 2016 budget allocations for such budget lines as Tree Replacement (remain at \$1,900), Field Inspection (cut down to \$300 from \$600), and Professional Membership (\$235) as well as other lines contained in the budget.

Mr. Williams asked for a motion on acceptance of the proposed budget for 2016.

Mr. Salerno moved that the proposed 2016 budget be accepted, seconded by Mr. Visscher. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

### **RECOMMENDATION TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL – WORK CONTRACT**

Mr. Williams read a proposed recommendation to the Mayor and Council regarding the Commission exercising its option to extend the Shade Tree Work Contract with Greenwood Tree Experts for calendar year 2016. He asked for a motion.

Mr. Salerno moved that this recommendation be accepted and forwarded to the Mayor and Council, seconded by Mr. Visscher. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

### **FORESTER'S REPORT**

Mr. Dubee presented his report:

**Winding Way** – Property owner reports this tree looks dead and that the leaves fell off it. There is some dead wood in it, but the entire tree does not have to be taken down. He recommended pruning that can be done in 2016.

Mr. Williams referred to certain work involving carpenter ants.

Mr. Dubee replied that this work will not be done now, but rather in the spring.

The Commission Secretary asked about the Work Sheet and reviews indicated. She also mentioned a Mr. Terreri and some tree issue(s) he has reported. She also referred to trimming trees in Malapardis Park.

Mr. Dubee agreed that certain work projects were on the Work Sheet. He also concurred that a purchase order was done for the Malapardis Park work and the work needed to be done should be removed from the Work Sheet.

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Cross discussion about other Work Sheet work projects as to when they should be done, have they been done, and who will do whatever work is needed.

Mr. Dubee spoke about the American Redbud tree. Apparently this tree can have either a crimson leaf or a green leaf on the tree. The tree the residents were concerned about was a crimson. The tree received is indeed an American Redbud tree. It is uncertain whether or not the tree will meet the residents' hope for this new tree.

Councilwoman Fu commented that she did not specify the tree be a crimson Redbud, so it is possible that it is not. They will just have to wait until spring when the tree's leaves appear. She said she would call the residents about this situation if this was thought to be a good idea. In the spring when the leaves are visible, if a change is needed they could try to obtain it as part of the State program.

Mr. Dubee said that both crimson and green leaf American Redbud trees look the same when in bloom.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Williams reported that the trees to be planted were planted about three weeks ago. Certain other trees will be at the garage. These trees may need to be planted at other sites since they cannot be left out of the ground for too long.

He advised that the Commission's contract with Barbato is completed. They are satisfied and from now the Commission is free to use any contractor they would like. But, the issue of any necessary tree replacements will still be the responsibility of Barbato for two years.

Councilwoman Fu and the Commission Secretary discussed matters relating to the payment of a certain bill.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Councilwoman Fu thanked the Commission for all its time and effort in working on the State grant planting program. She added commentary on her hopes for the survival of all the trees planted, particularly those planted along Route 53. She also invited all to attend the Council's Re-Organization meeting in January.

The Commission Secretary wished all a very Merry Christmas.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Salerno moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mr. Visscher. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Karen M. Coffey  
Commission Secretary

Maureen Sullivan  
Recording Secretary

