

**Minutes**  
**Village of Perry Tree Board Meeting**  
Thursday, March 5, 2020 - Perry Village Hall

Attendance: Felisa Brea, Eric Kelly, Ralph Field, Rose McEwen, Lori Schofield, Robbin Redding, James Reynolds, Dan Zerbe. Guest: Matt Jensen. Eleanor Jacobs excused.

**I. Spring Planting Details**

Dan distributed the list of sites where 23 trees will be planted this spring.

Discussion ensued, including:

- Locations where trees will be planted and justification (i.e. Main Street median crabapple to replace the one that was driven over; trees on Center Street across from \* will be planted 30 feet on either side of existing trees, and 7 trees on Fruit Street although most homeowners on that street declined a tree). Backup locations included at the bottom of the list (not yet declined).
- Order is in; Village will pay once delivered.

**II. Arbor Day Plan & Program (Saturday, April 25, 2020)**

Discussed Program's general plans:

- Publicity: James and Eleanor will handle (as in last year).
- MC: Dan will be the MC (James away that weekend, but will send recap to include during event; Dan suggested mentioning how many trees, their estimated height in comparison to skyscrapers).
- Location: Outside of The Center on Leister Street (where three trees will be planted and traffic noise won't be an issue).
- Trees to plant: Priority is bare-root trees, so will do Ginko, three Hawthorns and two Serviceberries (Rose's private purchase).

**A. POETree Contest Update**

- Felisa informed that teachers selected the best of most grades; no Kindergarten or 4<sup>th</sup> grade participation this year. (At the end of the meeting, the Board selected the winners: 2 to 4 per grade.)
- The Board will again publish a book of the winning poems (Felisa will fund, Rose will lay out and reproduce at SUNY Geneseo's Duplicating Center). Copies will be awarded as prizes to the winners, and 4 copies (for distribution to the elementary school library, the Perry Library, the Village and one for the Tree Board's archives).

**III. DEC Albany Meeting (Tree City USA presentation)**

Bethany and Dan Zerbe will represent the Village of Perry (nobody else volunteered) at the March 19<sup>th</sup> event, and will bring back the current "Tree City USA" plaque; Eric will affix to sign.

**IV. First-Saturday Work Days**

The Board's First-Saturday-of-Month work days begin this Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. Meetings will be at 9:30am, and this Saturday will meet at the Village's office. First project: Treating magnolias for scab with an oil spray; if this works well, will repeat treatment later and mulch removal (per Eric's recommendation, below). If the weather is bad, work may include discussion on subcommittee matters and/or reading Specifications document.

#### **V. Pruning Workshop May 2**

Don Gasiewicz (Cornell Cooperative Extension) has confirmed the workshop as planned: Saturday, May 2 at 9:30am in the Village Office.

#### **VI. Standards and Specifications editing process**

- Rose observed that a printed version of this document contains typos and misspellings. Matt compared the printed version with the one on the Village's Webpage and informed the Board that the digital version does not reflect the same inaccuracies. This document is being reviewed anyway; all updates will be submitted to the State in one year.
- Updated document will include a new policy on the private purchase of trees (see section IX, below), and per Dan's suggestion, will reflect the list of trees recommended by the grant study (replacing the existing list), most of which are available or have near-substitutes.

#### **VII. Tree Maintenance & Management Schedule/Proposal**

- During creation of grant proposal (see "X. Debrief on Round 15 DEC Forestry Grant," below), James prepared a management plan plotting a 5-year cycle (total number of trees, divided in equal numbers; drew five sectors in the Village). Plan includes preventative pruning/maintenance on those trees. James will share this plan with Eric.
- Eric informed that 22 trees were flagged **by \*** for removal, while the Village was recommended to "consider" the removal of an additional 27 (report does not include some properties that were missed). These 27 need to be inspected, as the Village could be held liable if either of those trees cause damages to neighboring properties. It is just as easy for the Village to inspect them (the assessment of professional arborists is subjective; determination of a tree's health/needs will vary from one arborist to the next). The Village will put all hands on deck. Eric already has been doing pruning of trees going over power lines. The Village is handling a lot of work this year, including the tree grant and the sewer project and sidewalk inspection. A 300-man crew could not keep up with the work, so his staff is taking care of high-risk tree issues first. The Board concurred that the Village's DPW can only do what its budget allows: about 7 tree cuttings per year (at about \$800/each, less for smaller trees). Equipment limitations (i.e. no fork/manlift) increases the cost; Perry's DPW borrows Castile's Electric manlift for emergencies, but would need to rent one long-term (more than a day) use.
- Matt informed that the Village is requesting in next year's budget \$20K: \$10K for planting and \$10K for tree removal (proposed to reduce potential

for liability). Discussion ensued about whether a year of not planting could allow for increased tree removal funding; it was decided that planting continuity is essential to build the next generation of trees. The budget proposal appears to have the Board's approval; the Mayor already has endorsed it (Matt commended Eleanor's work of substantiating to the Village Board the need for these funds).

- Other tree maintenance matters were discussed, such as trees by Pioneer Cabin (removed by Wyoming County), tree substitutions on North Main Street (by Rations) and dying tree (by Barber shop; Eric recommends that, due to tunnel that runs under that site, no tree be planted there).

### **VIII. Tree List/Tree Request Form Update.**

(See "I. Tree Planting Details," above)

### **IX. Private Tree Purchase Policy**

Dan distributed, for the Board's consideration, draft wording of a Private Tree Purchase policy that the Tree Board is proposing:

**Proposed addendum to Section 5 of the Standards and Specifications document, under "Planting approval"**

The Tree Board, through its Trust & Agency account with the Village of Perry, may accept from private property owners funds to allocate for the purchase of trees in coordination with planned Village tree orders to take advantage of wholesale bulk shipping and delivery, provided that the trees thus privately financed are planted within the Village of Perry, are in compliance with the Tree Law for the Village of Perry, and serve the public good in fulfillment of the Tree Board's Vision Statement which promotes the ecological and aesthetic benefits of a healthy planned and diverse village forest. Orders thus placed may be subject to substitutions based on availability of variety or size or root treatment from the chosen supplier, and the Tree Board and Village do not guarantee the health or survival of these purchased trees. Transportation from the Perry delivery site, planting, care, and removal of these trees is the responsibility of the private property owner, though volunteer help may be offered at times when available. Approximately 20% will be added to the price of the tree to contribute towards the shipping costs and handling of these trees and must be paid at the Village Office prior to payment and delivery of the trees. The Tree Board may offer advice on the variety selected but is not liable for the outcomes of this advice.

The Board approved the proposal, with minor edits (reflected above). Matt suggested that prior to its incorporation to the Standards and Specifications document, David DiMatteo, the Village's attorney, review the wording to ensure that the policy solidly shields the Village and Board against liability.

### **X. Debrief on Round 15 DEC Forestry Grant**

- Matt and Eleanor participated in the grant call. The DEC appreciated some aspects of our proposal, loved our map, and informed the grant was well done

(Matt commended James pro bono work in this regard). The proposal was disqualified, so they did not discuss it further with us.

- We have found a few areas that we can improve upon for a future proposal submission, such as:
  - Substantiating local support (letters from local merchants and partners, for example—James suggested we start working on obtaining these);
  - Inclusion of photographs.
- Over 150 entities applied for the grant. The DEC can fund 50 or 60.
- Next RFP (Round 16) will be in 2021; will table the Board's efforts for now, except for the letters that James will start gathering.

#### **XI. New Business**

- Felisa asked if the Board has a say on the trees planted on the Silver Lake Trail. Ralph informed that the committee has met once (next meeting will be later in March); planning is still in preliminary stages. Eric shared that, tree-wise, selection will depend on where the trail goes; in some areas, no trees could be planted (i.e. corner of Main and Mill, due to soil contamination).
- Dan inquired about this spring's DPW's mulch supply. Eric informed there is some left from two years ago, but that Renee has also ordered two or three tractor-trailers full; can deliver it to the Park. DPW has a small chipper, but it can only handle 6-inch-thick trees/branches. Eric also noted that we need to start digging mulch from around trees, especially on Main Street and its median; mulch from years before has accumulated to about one foot deep and it does not contribute to the trees' health.
- Dan informed that this year the Tree Board will be using slow-release fertilizer spikes (instead of granular).
- Related to the new order policy, the Garden Club wants to donate a tree and Rose McEwen wishes to purchase two service berries. Eric will handle the ordering of these; he stated that as long as the Village has the funds to pay for them, and the Club and Rose pay the Village promptly, this will not be a problem. Dan is also looking into replacing the rhododendrons he had planted in his front yard.
- Eric informed that Creative Foods plans to install a flowerbed by their facility's entrance. They already paid to repave the whole street, and may be able to cover the cost of additional trees.

**X. Next Meeting:** Wednesday, June 4 at 7pm