

## **Bowdoinham Municipal Tree Plan Committee**

*(A Sub-Committee of the Comprehensive Plan Committee)*

6/4/25 - Meeting Minutes

**Attending:** Jan Marks, Susan Drucker, Nina Mendall, Hank Ogilby, Peggy Christian,

Mark Tanner

**Absent:** Frank Drummond, Justin Schlawin

**Facilitator:** Jan Marks

### **Introductions**

### **Determine meeting secretary**

Motion made to have Hank be the secretary - seconded, voted on and approved

### **Approve minutes from last meeting**

Motion to approve previous minutes was seconded and approved unanimously

In the future, how should we get the minutes to town? Nina will ask about how the cemetery committee does it... Peggy will ask folks in the town office.  
Past experience, the solid waste committee chair sent the agenda to Nicole.

**Question:** should we as a committee survey the cemetery trees at some point?

Answer, not sure at this point, not really part of our current our mandate.

We'll circle back when and if appropriate.

### **Public Works speaker, Toby Frizzle:**

**Q: What is public works responsible for vis-a-vis municipal trees? Which trees are they responsible for? And to what degree is the town responsible for pruning, removal and replacement?**

As per Toby - Any tree threatening public safety... threatening to fall, hanging over the road...

we'll (the town) cut to the right-of-way

Right-of-way = 25 feet either way from the crown of the road

Mark added that in his experience from Portsmouth, property lines can be different.

Toby said, not so much here. The 25 feet from the crown of the road is standard.

The town is not responsible for any planting or re-planting.

The town is responsible for managing all the town properties as well, including the waterfront.

CMP is responsible for all trees "up and over the power lines"

The town is also responsible for tree work in the town owned cemeteries (many are private)

**Q: What, if any, tree work is planned for the coming year?**

A: a few trees in the Village and Ridge Road cemeteries

The new waterfront will fall under the public works as well, but not the planting. The town will be responsible for keeping the new plantings watered as soon as they are in the ground.

Q: (Peggy) Is EAB in town yet?

A: (Toby) Yes. On my property... one bug on his porch (Pork Point Road).

Q: What happens to the woodchips the town produces?

A: Wood chips are taken to those who want them, and then are eventually be stockpiled at the public works (future transfer station)

Q: What happens if there is a specific tree task/a more complex issue?

A: The town would probably hire an arborist.

Q: What budget would this come from?

A: It might come from Public Works, or another budget if relevant (cemetery, waterfront etc...)

Q: Are there any "Heritage Trees" in town?

A: "Nothing comes to mind"

## **Reports:**

**Nina: List of cemeteries and tree work planned**

3 have been taken down in the Village Cemetery, one more to go.

A few on Ridge Road still to be cut.

Trees by Center Point Cemetery were contracted out.

A concern with the cemeteries is the damaging of headstones, thus there is often a need for an arborist (insurance reasons, etc...)

There are 58 cemeteries in town. 11 are directly overseen by public works. Many are on private land, thus, either tree work is a cooperative venture, or it is left to the land owner.

Q: What happens if the cemetery is on private land, and Cemetery Committee ID's tree work to be done, and the land owner says "no"?

A: It hasn't happened yet, but the committee offers to pay, so owners are usually receptive.

FYI - Bay Rd. is not a town cemetery - it is owned by a "consortium".

## **List of town (municipal) properties) (Jan)**

Jan used property maps to ID many town properties. Many are quite small, and generally not publicly used holdings

Several are in the village and about the river(s)

Q: Regarding Kelt, IFW and other conservancy lands

A: They are not our purvey

Q: Do we need to visit/survey/get more familiar with all the town owned lands?

A: Similar to survey of cemeteries, not really our purview... unless there might be some tree work planned for these spaces.

Committee: "Really good research Jan! Thank you!"

**Review of community tree plans of other towns (Research done by Frank, but he was to attend to present his findings) -**

Nina - larger town plans were well defined, smaller towns, much more willy-nilly.

Committee: Freeport is quite a thorough and finished product; this could be a great model for us.

Committee: Bath has a mission statement which is succinct and to the point, with maybe the exception of greenspaces. And they have a city arborist, which they've had for a long time.

**Tasks:**

**1. Write Mission/Goal Statement for our committee, and or a municipal tree plan**

Jan put forth the motion to attempt to come-up with a mission statement.

- Possible keywords to include: advisory, advocacy, identification, communication, review, planning/planting/replanting, monitor status of trees/survey, educational, preservation, assessment, recommendations for actions, municipal,

"A long term management strategy for trees in Bowdoinham public spaces."  
(David Asmussen)

**Motion** - charge someone with writing a draft  
Susie volunteered

Q: Should we aim high/big broad, and then pare back? Or be concise from the get go?

Q: About budget - any decent sized tree might cost \$200-400 and must be well-cared for.

Various issues (root bound, pot vs burlap etc...), must be considered.

**2. Define a Municipal tree**

Question/Action - what is a municipal tree? Do we need to define this?

A: Probably.

Q: When does a sapling become a tree?

Discussion: A municipal tree is any tree on municipal property, however, this doesn't mean that all tree growth is subject to review by this committee. How do we balance this?

Many trees we might value or identify are on state and or private homeowner land.

Q: Should we include some sort of plan/recommendation for such trees? For example, the large maples on Main St.

Result of Discussion: A future task may be to draft such a recommendation regarding

Note (from Mark): The "Zelkova" is a Japanese Elm species, resistant to Dutch Elm Disease

**3. Define Heritage tree - does Bowdoinham have any?**

Discussed and tabled

**Determine other tasks necessary to drafting a Municipal Tree Plan**

**Planning for emerald ash borer talk - goal is to have the presentation in September**

- Peggy mentioned the Audubon talk, which was given by Maine Dept Forestry
- Peggy will ask them about coming here
- Will use Merrymeeting Hall, sometime after Celebrate (post 9/13)
- We'll ID a date in the next meeting
- Deadline for Sept newsletter is July 30
- Maine Cooperative Extension also has great info. Susie will get their 10 bullet list to copy/share
- Susie will also write up an EAB introduction for these bullets to go into next newsletter

**Other business**

- Possibly an educational session in the spring about proper tree planting, mulching etc....
- Weed-whacker use etc....

**Agenda Items for next meeting:**

- Review and possible approve mission statement
- Continue planning for EAB session in Sept
- Continue discussion/definition of municipal and heritage trees
- Assign further review of Frank's research
- Identify what other topics need to be in this plan

**Adjourn**

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