

Village Green Committee
Monday, August 26, 2019 at the Town Hall Annex

Minutes

Attending: Felicia Sartell, Connie Kieley, Gail Cromwell, Carol Mamczak, Robin Downes, Honey Hastings, Peggy Cournoyer, Denise Collette Absent: Matt Cabana, Kathy Fedorka

1. Gail called the meeting to order at 2 PM.
2. Connie provided the treasurer's report that shows a balance of \$3,892.59 before reimbursement requests for mulch. Connie offered to donate the \$70. of mulch they provided this summer. **Motion by Gail to accept the offer, seconded by Connie, all in favor.**
3. **Motion by Connie to accept the minutes of June 6, 2019, seconded by Denise, all in favor.**
4. Carol presented an invoice for \$180. from Broad Oak Tree and Shrub Care for the consultation on August 13, 2019 and follow-up report of recommendations. (attached) **Motion by Honey to accept the invoice, seconded by Gail, all in favor.** Carol referred everyone to the notes (attached) previously provided via email and reviewed the basic points. Discussion followed regarding the pruning of lower branches to encourage growth in height of the 2013 maples and new maple. Pruning will begin next year. We discussed compost and mulch for the newer trees. Carol stated that the arborist felt and that she agreed that the large maple at the edge of the common on route 45 is not an asset and is becoming a liability. She drew attention to the declining health of the two adjacent maples as well. Peggy vehemently objected to the cutting of what she termed the "grandfather" tree regardless of liability. Carol stated that she values the opinions of the professionals we have contacted. There is a difference of opinion regarding the way forward, and we agreed to put the trees on next meeting's agenda. We will start the meeting on the Common, then move to the Annex. We will look at the two adjacent trees and assess a timeline for replacement, noting that we don't want to plant the same variety in the same spot where trees have failed to thrive.
5. Discussion continued around the history of the VGC starting in 1985, the VGC current role and the direction we should take going forward. It was agreed that the winter lights were greatly appreciated by residents and that the residents are interested in having a well-cared for Common. We discussed the 250th anniversary fund as a source of funding for replacement trees, something that will be done even as we evolve the VGC role in town. **Motion by Robin, seconded by Gail, to have Connie compose an application to the 250th anniversary fund committee for \$1000. to cover the cost of replacement trees.**

Discussion followed regarding what is the VGC responsibility and what is the town's role. Is maintenance a capital expense? Some members felt the town should cover the expense because it (trees) is a permanent addition. Several questions were posed regarding labor and the use of our funds. Robin suggested we make a list of all that needs to be done and that will help us clarify what we can do and what we need.

After lengthy discussion, the VGC voted in favor of the motion. Connie will follow up. (action item)

6, 8, 9, 10. Discussion of the VGC planter placement grew to include items 6. (mulching and weeding), 8. (annex garden) 9. (municipal garden) and 10. (library front garden). We agreed that the two planters behind the hostas need to be moved since the hostas have grown quite large. The VGC agreed to add the PO planters to the list. We are considering other changes, but that discussion will take place in the spring. We agreed that watering should guide our plant choices since some plants are far more tolerant and even thrive in dry conditions. A few varieties were mentioned but will go on a future agenda. Concerns were raised about the aging members of the committee and that we do not have enough help to support the planters and gardens all summer. It was suggested we ask for money in the town budget to create a position for someone to manage the care of seasonal gardens including the annex garden, the library hill garden (to be redone), the planter boxes, the municipal building plants, the memorial bed and others as determined at a future meeting. Honey mentioned some of the time she put in on various gardens and Gail has done some mowing. This can't continue. Carol thought that we could broaden our requests for help with watering because she felt that there are many new people in town who would respond if asked. Honey mentioned that Paul and Peter in the town offices would like to take up the offer by House to put flowers in the planters. Discussion came back to the questions of what we are budgeting for. In the interest of moving to the Harvest Festival agenda item, this discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

7. Harvest Festival – Felicia will coordinate VGC efforts. We will be selling totes, beans, cornbread, brownies, beverages (weather dependent) as well as lavender sachets and indoor lavender plants donated by Gail. We plan to do another raffle with a filled tote bag. Felicia will communicate the plans (schedules, donations) to the committee. She is organizing set up and clean up. The date is Sunday, September 22. (action items)

Robin needed to leave at 3 PM.

11. Other business – the town common wiring project by the Holiday Lighting Committee. Gail provided a summary of developments that included a revised timeline and proposed changes to underground wiring. It was suggested that the ditching be done around the perimeter of the common, outside the fence. The concern is that stakes driven in the ground during tent set up would pierce the conduit and potentially injure someone. Denise questioned if plans could be changed if we voted on the proposal at town meeting. Gail mentioned that they (the installers) would not be available to get this done before Harvest Festival, but the panel could be brought up to code. It was surprising to us that it was not done previously. Carol objected to perimeter ditching as it will negatively impact the trees and that we had voted our support for a plan that stated a radial layout would be used with careful consideration for the trees.

Motion by Connie and seconded by Gail that the VGC does not support the proposed perimeter wiring installation outside the common fence because the VGC previously voted to support the project as it was presented by Mr. Wills before the town meeting. The proposed changes may have serious impacts on the trees. Our work with the county forester and a certified arborist was based on the radial layout, not one on the perimeter.

The committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Denise located some documentation of stake requirements for large function tents. We will compare these with what the installer is using. It was suggested that slight modification to the plan would be acceptable. Honey suggested that metal tape be placed on the conduits as was done on her gas line so a metal detector could locate them. Gail is going to mark out the proposed lines and exact posts where the outlets are to be installed. A meeting will be held on Wednesday afternoon with representatives from the HLC, the select board and the VGC to discuss the installation. Gail and Carol will attend. (action items)

We set our next meeting for Monday, September 30th at 2PM, starting on the Common and moving to the Annex.

We adjourned at 3:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Mamczak
VGC Secretary