

Village Green Committee
April 17, 2020 11 AM
Zoom meeting
Minutes

Present: Gail Cromwell, Honey Hastings, Connie Kieley, Carol Mamczak, Felicia Sartell, Peggy Cournoyer
Guest: Dan Cournoyer

Absent: Robin Downes, Matt Cabana

Gail called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM and read special rules under NH RSA 91-A. She confirmed that the meeting is publicly accessible. All voting is to be by roll call.

Roll call attendance was conducted.

Garden maintenance position – Gail reported that we received four applications for the garden maintenance position. Official applications were sent to the first three. The fourth was received this morning and had a complete resume and references attached. We reviewed the merits of each applicant. One has a permaculture background and extensive gardening experience. He has worked for the town seasonally in the past. Another is a forester who grew up here, is/was an active volunteer in the town and is thought of highly by many residents who have hired or worked with him. The other two applicants demonstrated strong interest; one had experience working at a local nursery. The consensus was to hire the candidate with permaculture gardening experience, Alan Fox. Honey recommended making one phone call to a listed reference. Connie asked John to join the meeting briefly to provide a verbal recommendation to the committee since Alan has worked for him in the past. He gave a very positive recommendation stating that Alan consistently exceeds expectations and is an asset to the town. Tim Fiske, former road agent, also spoke highly of him in a phone recommendation. Gail will follow up with all applicants. She will provide contact information to the other applicants for local residents who are looking for gardening help.

Motion by Connie to hire Alan Fox, second by Gail.

Roll call vote: Ayes - Felicia, Carol, Connie, Peggy, Gail, Abstain - Honey

Tree location – Gail had placed stakes on the Common and Honey paced them. Carol also observed the locations. They are not equidistant but does it matter? Due to the large stump of the maple that was removed, one stake is close to the fence opening by the road. A properly pruned tree will develop a canopy at a height well above the area where people will walk. The full-grown canopy size and shape need to be considered. The Scarlet Oak will be a bit larger and has a round canopy. The Princeton Elm will have a vase shaped canopy. It was stated that we should consider putting the oak away from the gate area where people may enter the Common due to future acorns. The trees are expected to arrive on Wednesday. John will pick them up. We discussed whether to have the select board view the stakes or wait until the trees arrive. It was felt that the board's main interest is placement that will accommodate vendors at events.

It was felt that nine feet looks appropriate and will allow for mowing by the fence. Those who have not seen the stakes will take a look. Carol and Gail will move the stakes as suggested. Peggy sought clarification on who made the removal and replacement decisions and felt that the townspeople did not have a chance to make the decisions. Connie stated that the select board approved the purchase at a meeting last week. She understands why Peggy feels upset but restated the need to move forward with planning and decisions. Honey stated that the select board speaks for the town; they approved the removal and replacement and will approve the locations for new trees.

It was agreed to combine a meeting for tree placement with our regular meeting on Wednesday, April 22 at 11 AM on Zoom. Committee members are requested to view the stake locations before the meeting.

Membership – it is assumed that Kathy does not wish to continue as the committee has not heard from her either via email or by meeting attendance. Felicia would like to continue for one year. Membership numbers were discussed. Connie felt we should expand membership. Carol and Honey would like to stick with seven regular members with one or more alternates due to the difficulty of having a quorum. The VGC web page extends an invitation to residents who may wish to participate but not join the committee. Honey suggested we submit our current membership to the select board assistant and work on this next year when several terms are set to expire. Terms need to be staggered. Honey wished to remain as an alternate this year. Gail will submit membership list to select board assistant.

Lower common tree plantings – planting flowering crabapple trees on the lower common was discussed. It is thought that two or three would look best with number and placement to be determined. This will require select board approval. A sub-committee of Honey and Carol was formed. They will provide recommendations and availability at Wednesday's meeting. Trees with smaller sized apples, ¾ inch or less, are desirable for the birds. Since our other tree purchases cost less than expected, it was questioned if we can use remaining funds for crabapples. Gail stated that if not, our budget can cover it and remaining grant money could be saved for additional tree(s) on the Common. She or Connie will follow up with Julie regarding the grant. Carol thanked Gail on behalf of the committee for all the time and effort she put into shopping for trees in this challenging Covid-19 environment.

Motion by Gail to adjourn, second by Felicia

Roll call vote: Ayes – Connie, Felicia, Gail, Carol, Peggy, Honey

The meeting concluded at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Mamczak
VGC Secretary