

Trees for Watertown Minutes
Board Meeting October 18, 2017
Sasaki Associates, 64 Pleasant Street

Board members present: Dennis Duff, Jane Holden, Genie Johnson, David Meshoulam, Libby Shaw, Michele Waldman. Absent: David Jay, Bob Lauricella
TFW members present: Michelle Cokonougher, Michael Moran, Elodia Thomas
Guests: Ozzie Bateman, Sharon Cook

Big Tree Contest

We've had few entries but there are still two weeks to go. More publicity. DavidM will contact the Watertown Tab. Note Dana Forsythe has moved on, the new local contact is Kerry Feltner. Tab appears to no longer have a local editor.

Flyers should also be posted on line at Charlie Breitrose's WatertownMANews.com, also on Next Door Watertown, the Watertown Spring Facebook page.

TODO: David M will contact the Watertown Tab and Charlie.

Routinely post on WatertownMANews, NextDoor Watertown, and Facebook pages -- Watertown Spring, You Know You're from Watertown if..., Watertown Schools

The September 6 minutes were approved unanimously as corrected (DavidM moved, Genie seconded).

The September 24 minutes were approved unanimously as corrected (DavidM moved, Genie seconded).

No financial statement was submitted this month. Libby reported there was one membership renewal and one new member. No expenses were incurred.

At 6:30 tomorrow eve there will be a candidate forum at the Watertown Library.

Teen Tree Stewardship Program Fundraising

The board discussed at length a variety of possible funding sources for next year's program. David M estimates operating expenses at around \$30K.

Jane did not recommend petitioning restaurants since restaurants operate on a sliver of profit. Others did not recommend petitioning local nonprofits since they are usually working overtime to fund their own missions. Elodia said Boylston Properties is petitioned a lot. Sasaki seemed a possible source.

Elodia suggested making a fundraising consultation appointment with Associated Grantmakers. She used them years ago when running an arts center. found them very helpful. DavidM said AG requires a membership. Elodia suggested David consult with Leone Cole, Watertown Library Director, to explore the possibility of getting an AG group membership and arrange a group consultation for Watertown nonprofits.

Local Watertown banks aside from the Watertown Savings Bank are a possible source: Belmont Savings Bank, Citizens, Cambridge Savings, Eastern.

Michele suggested Perkins School. Think about asking anyone who touches our town in some way and is profiting from it. Elodia suggested the law firms working with developers. Dennis suggested Bill York's firm, Gilman, McLaughlin and Hanrahan. There are also 2-3 for-profit traffic engineering firms doing Watertown transportation studies.

Other suggestions were other developers - the Coppola family (big development on Howard Street, Gables, and one on Pleasant Street with a restaurant along DCR property), Elan Properties at the corner of Irving and Arsenal. Take a ride down Pleasant Street and look at the businesses. Tesla, Russo's. Lexus. The Oakley Country Club.

Elodia: Think about what the ask wants to be. What does it cost to sponsor a kid for this? If you contribute \$x dollars, this is what your donation is going to do. Look for someone who'd really like to contribute to growing this program. Always be logical, have the emotional sell, be very transparent.

Elodia - realize we're competing with the Boys and Girls Club's current \$1.4M campaign. Have raised \$700K or so. Talk to Renee Gaudette, director of the Boys and Girls Club.

Michelle - talk to the Watertown-Belmont Chamber of Commerce. David M said Cathy Berkeley of the Watertown Community Foundation suggested making a presentation at the Chamber of Commerce.

Thinking about how to engage WCF. See who's on the board there. Cathy Berkeley is leaving her position there due to health issues. She was a great cheerleader for the TTSP program.

Elodia - Bob Shay used to be VP of Bay Bank. Go to him as a sounding board. - ask for the lay of the land. A soft sell.

Eastern Clothing - John Arasian will be a Chamber of Commerce co-President.

Ozzie - try the Freemasons Lodge.

TD Bank focuses on tree planting.

Elodia - All TFW members engaging with potential donors must be talking from the same pitch. If one stops talking, the next should be able to pick up the petition seamlessly.

Takes work to make a very good pitch. The hard work is laying down this foundation. You don't want it to be a one shot deal. We're in information silos in this town.

Dennis - the Little League used to have annual sponsors. Athletic teams are all doing GoFundMe campaigns.

Libby - What about Shanta Puchtler, the new owner of David Aposhian's house, the old Palfrey Street school? DavidM - his new partner has the new Coco Bakery on California St.

David to Elodia - what do you recommend?

Elodia - produce something to leave behind after the interview. You did a great job on news media and cable access. This is the toughest thing to do.

Proposed gifts included TTSP T shirts, personal water bottles.

Sharon - there's a ton of info on pitches and how to present them. But weigh what you're getting back in exchange -- it could be more practical to pay it forward than to invest in stuff to give away. Michelle - one way around that is if water bottles are donated.

DavidM - I met with Chris the other week and had a heart to heart. We need to think of smarter ways to engage him and other members of the municipality. This project needs to be aligned with where the town is going.

What are the major objectives we want for our town from the next TTSP program?

What's our long term strategy? How to use this project to further TFW's goals?

Michele - we need to figure out how to engage educators. An advisory committee would be helpful - include a science educator, the tree warden, Patrick Fairbairn, maybe one person at each of five schools.

Elodia - go to a Superintendent's Coffee. Great way to connect with educators and learn what's happening in the schools.

New: Leaf Raking Project

DavidM met the other week with Jeremy Hornstein, one of the teens interested in TTSP. They will meet with Adrian Eaton at the High School to pursue Chris Hayward's mention that a lot of people don't like trees because they can't or don't like to rake leaves. Jeremy came up with a teen-powered raking project. There's currently a Middle School snow-shoveling project organized by Kenny Woodland, District D councilor.

Delta Landscaping plans

October 30: Community meeting at 7 pm in the Town Council Chambers on a proposed redesign of Watertown Square. This will impact the Delta.

MassDOT Mount Auburn Street Redesign

On Nov 20 there will be a community informational meeting on MassDOT roadway redesign plans for Mount Auburn Street. We need to speak up to protect the dozens of healthy shade trees at risk, in particular the sephoras along Mount Auburn in front of

Hosmer School. Libby and Genie did a windshield tree survey the full length of the roadway a couple weekends ago. Libby is putting the data into Excel format.

The board discussed various ways to process data characterizing the value of the trees along Mount Auburn Street. A graphic format would be very helpful. iTree could quantify tree value if someone is willing to put in the time, but DavidM said the iTree database could not be interactive with the community. DavidM likes the alternate program OpenTreeMap, but it is not free. Watertown uses Davey TreeKeeper to maintain Watertown's public shade tree inventory. Gideon in the Planning Office does a lot of GIS overlay. Aaron Dushku does GIS in his day job.

Hosmer School sidewalk work

The sidewalks are being enlarged in the neighborhood near Hosmer School, a separate project which may also put trees at risk. The municipality has to quantify value if the project takes a foot off the front of any property by eminent domain. Some 30 properties may be affected. Matt Shuman would have the most info about this project.

Tree Ordinance joint subcommittee meeting (Public Works and Rules & Ordinances)

Libby and David attended the meeting. Michelle Cokonougher - there are many different kinds of Massachusetts tree ordinances. Some are quite specific to certain circumstances. One is just about how to handle trees during construction.

2017 DCR Tree Stewardship Training

Genie and DavidM gave a summary of this excellent weekend workshop.

Excerpts:

Emerald Ash Borer is nearby. Insecticide administered by injection to the root flare can save ash trees from EAB. The savings can be cheaper than taking the tree down.

A soil specialist described using an air spade to loosen compacted soil, and planting daikon radishes to do the same.

A sugar maple was planted to demonstrate state of the art planting technique.

Julie Coup and Mollie Freilicher of DCR Urban Forestry are amazing resources and their department is really well run. Eversource has set up a stretch of roadway with fake power lines, where they're planting different trees as a scientific study on how to utility prune correctly.

Respectfully submitted,
Libby Shaw, chief bottle-washer