

PALMER ARBORETUM MINUTES

February 21, 2019

1. Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm
2. Attendance: Jean Rocheleau, Nancy Adams, Philippa Paquette, Judith Gries, Andy Krofina; Absent excused: Bill Brower; Absent unexcused: Chad Hart, Danielle Payne
3. Approval of December Minutes: Motion (Rocheleau/Gries) all in favor
4. Treasurer's Report: Fiscal Budget contains \$2,630.47 which will be spent by June 1, 2019. Friends Budget contains \$3,429.39. Jean and Bill met with Rick Place and Fred Chmura to discuss the Rotary Club investing in a significant project at the Arboretum. The long bridge over the wetland area is the intended project. Andy will go down in her snow shoes and measure the length and width of the bridge. Jean will approach Chase Lumber with the measurements and ask for a cost estimate that she can share with the Rotary Club. Chase Lumber may offer a reduced estimate because of the volunteer and non-profit groups involved. The wood should be pressure treated and not contain arsenic.
5. Jean, Andy and Nancy will attend the Ellis Tech. Open House next Wednesday, February 27, and talk with the construction and horticulture departments to see if they will be interested in becoming involved with the Arboretum. Andy will also contact Vicky Embree to see if there is an Eagle Scout looking for a project who would be interested in constructing the bridge, and if the Scouts would be interested in working at the Arboretum as their community service.
6. The membership of The Last Green Valley has been renewed, along with an Ad placed in TLGV Explore Pamphlet.
7. Jean obtained several quotes for maintenance at the Arboretum from Full Myle Lawncare, Lajoie Brothers and DME for the 2019/2020 season. DME (Mitch Eaffy) continues to be the most cost efficient.
8. New Business:
 1. The Quiet Corner Garden Club would like to plant a pink dogwood in the Arboretum in honor of Mary Seney who was instrumental in founding the Garden Club and also served on the Arboretum Committee. Andy made a motion to plant a pink dogwood near the South Entrance, seconded by Gries and all in favor.
 2. Another request was made at the Garden Club meeting to plant a Western Red Cedar in honor of a deceased wife. The committee felt that this tree was more suitable for a larger, sunny area and will refer this request to Roseland Park.
9. Discussion of Arboretum Committee, Structure and Function: Nancy suggested the committee follow the HOSON problem solving technique in identifying each member's opinions of the issues and concerns that the committee needs to address. This involved each member writing single issues on post-it notes and sticking them on the wall. Then, in silence, each member had 45 seconds to organize the notes into theme groups. The organization continued until all felt satisfied with the groupings.
10. One group concerned maintaining the Arboretum - this topic was consigned to the next meeting. The other groups related to the structure and function of the Committee and could be divided into;
 - a) Commitment
 - b) Committee members
 - c) Expectations of committee members.

1. The following decisions were made:

It is important that all committee members attend meetings regularly. To ensure that meetings are meaningful. There will be no meetings held in December and January. The February meeting will focus on a self review similar to this, with an evaluation of the previous year and the March meeting will set goals for the coming year.

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2. Members who have missed three meetings unexcused will receive a letter requesting that they review their commitment to the Arboretum and resign from the committee but remain involved as a friend of the Arboretum in a way that is more comfortable and doable for them. Philippa will write letters to Chad and Danielle with these suggestions. They have both expressed a love for the Arboretum but, because of their other responsibilities, are unable to attend the meetings and are therefore not meeting the commitment that a committee member should display. In the past Chad has been an active provider of labor and chemicals needed by the trees but we have been directed by the first selectman that we can no longer purchase those chemicals from him as it is a conflict of interest while he is on the committee.
3. All committee members need to speak up, be involved in decisions and support each other. We have different skills and strengths and the Arboretum will benefit from everyone being actively involved in all the decisions. This is a seven person committee and all voices should be heard.
4. We should keep track of the volunteer hours that are spent and the tasks accomplished. We can record our own hours and complete any tasks that we notice need to be done without committee approval. This information should be shared with Jean and she will keep a record of tasks completed so that she can communicate with Mitch about the updated needs for maintenance.
5. We also will ask outside volunteers, such as school groups, to sign for their hours. This information will be helpful in applying for grants and in estimating matching funds by pricing the value of the donated hours of labor.
6. The committee members all agreed that they would like to be more educated about the Arboretum. Nancy will look through the papers that Bill gave us and try to identify Minnie's original vision in establishing the Arboretum. Philippa will ask Bill, when he is mobile enough, to give us a tour of the Arboretum to identify the precise boundaries.

Jean will talk to Town Hall employees to discover the exact nature of the relationship between the Town of Woodstock and the Arboretum.

We all need to look out for people who might be interested in volunteering at the Arboretum and set up work dates at the next meeting. Philippa will contact The Woodstock Academy and Pomfret School and Andy will talk with the Quiet Corner Garden Club and Vicky Embree.

Our next meeting will address the timetable for tasks at the Arboretum.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2019 @ 6:00 p.m. (Need to confirm with Town Clerk)

Respectfully submitted by Philippa Paquette