

Trees for Watertown Minutes
ANNUAL MEETING September 24, 2017
Watertown Free Public Library

TFW Board members present: Jane Holden, David Jay, Genie Johnson, Bob Lauricella, David Meshoulam, Libby Shaw, Michele Waldman Absent: Dennis Duff

TFW members present: Carol Airasian, Annie Clark, Graham Clark, Michael Moran, Mieke Moran, Paula Naylor, Katy Wolff

Guest artist: Leslie Evans

David Meshoulam was unanimously elected to the Board of Directors.

Libby Shaw gave a State of the Organization speech - "Every tree matters"

There are many tree-supportive town documents to build on, though currently Watertown has only guidelines not regulations: language in the Comprehensive Plan, Design Guidelines, Tree Planting Policy.

Major accomplishments this year

Michele Waldman and Jane Holden collaborated with neighborhoods and with Tree Warden Chris Hayward to organize two successful neighborhood tree planting projects.

David Meshoulam with TFW help successfully applied for a \$2000 grant from Watertown Community Foundation for arboricultural expert stipends and a stipend for himself as coordinator, augmented by \$4000 in intern grants from WCF and by about \$1600 from TFW for intern grants and operating expenses. These funds plus expertise and assistance from many quarters enabled David to carry out a very successful first summer Teen Tree Stewardship Program with six teens. Hopefully to be built on and continued next year.

Ozzie Bateman & Sharon Cook with help from Jane Holden and approval from 7-Eleven's local Manager worked on a tree-friendly landscape design for the 7-Eleven at Coolidge Square.

There are still problem areas for Watertown --

- Public shade trees are still being planted poorly.

- Trees are dying due to poor maintenance.

- Mulch is still being installed in damaging "volcano" style.

- Structural soil is still not being specified where it is applicable.

- Still poor tree protection by DPW. Recent example is sloppy and excessively high pruning at Saltonstall Park.

- Many trees are proposed to be removed at 285 Pleasant St. development

Sage advice from Susan Labandibar of Green Cambridge:

Another best practice that I learned recently for advocacy groups who want to be more effective is that the size of your organization is not the determining factor as to how much influence you have. **According to research conducted by Tufts University, the three most effective tactics are:**

- **Research! Having the capacity to gather timely and relevant data**

- **A point person for government relations who cultivates productive relationships with government officials**
- **Lobbying frequently on specific, targeted asks**

September 2016-September 2017 TFW financial statement was approved unanimously.
TFW currently has 56 members with 20 life members. Total funds as of today: \$13,624.66

Libby thanked all the board members for their individual work over the past year.

Projects Ahead

Town Council subcommittee meeting on a “Tree Ordinance” at Town Council Chamber, 7 pm 9/25/17
Complete redesign of Coolidge Square 7-Eleven landscaping
Delta redesign, proposal to stakeholders, fundraising

David Meshoulam gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2017 Teen Tree Stewards' activities and achievements.

After David's presentation we moved into Day of Engagement Activities.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Lauricella, Secretary