

Tree committee issues include budget and inventory

By Robert Morton-Ranney

The Jamestown Tree Preservation and Protection Committee focused on the annual budget and a transition to a new team of officers at its March 20 meeting.

Tree Warden David Nickerson reported that his term as Tree Warden officially ended March 1, and that he has not heard whether the town would like him to continue in the position.

Nickerson said state law requires that towns appoint a Tree Warden in January and usually the committee chairman asks him in December whether he would like to continue. He said he emailed Town Administrator Bruce Keiser about the matter on March 1 but has had no response.

Committee Member Jim Rugh said, "We should let the town know that it's in our interest to know who the next Tree Warden will be." Conservation Commission liaison Patrick Driscoll added that if a letter of recommendation is in order, "let's do it." However, it was agreed that the communication should indicate that the committee wants to know.

Former Vice-Chairwoman Judith DiBello gave a presentation, as a guest of the committee, on central tasks and housekeeping duties. The budget for the upcoming year was discussed and Nickerson indicated that he had already submitted the \$34,500 budget, and it was the same amount as last year.

A discussion of the designation of budget line items ended with Nickerson and member Walter Boll indicating that the town does not break it down beyond the total.

Edwina Cloherty said that the

committee needs to know what the funds are for and asked whether any were designated for the use of the committee itself.

Cloherty suggested that budgets be prepared in advance so that the committee can "think through what we need," and Nickerson was asked to show the draft budget to the committee before submitting it to the town.

Chairman Emmet Turley presented DiBello with a certificate of appreciation for her dedicated service as a committee member.

In committee elections, Edwina Cloherty was elected chairwoman, Jim Rugh was elected vice-chairman, and Anthony Antine was elected secretary, though he was absent from the meeting.

Updating the status of the proposed tree inventory, Cloherty remarked that it "isn't going anywhere." She hasn't heard back from the school about student volunteers. A second option is to ask for volunteers from the teen center.

Nickerson wondered if the committee could see if the town could pay someone to do the inventory. The tree warden estimated it would cost about \$3 per tree. There could be a cutoff, perhaps of 5,000 trees, Nickerson said. He added this figure would probably cover most of the island.

Nickerson also mentioned that the Rhode Island Tree Council has a program for certification of tree stewards, who may need volunteer hours, and using them could be an option. In addition, there is the master gardener program, which requires volunteer service. He said he would check on both.

Islander named to health service board

Joseph G. Samartano Jr., DDS, has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of St. Joseph Health Services of Rhode Island.

Dr. Samartano, a resident of Jamestown, is chief of the Division of Dentistry and Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery at St. Joseph Health Services.

Following 35 years in private practice, he currently serves as coordinator for the hospital's school-based dental program in Pawtucket and is an attending surgeon for the pediatric dental residency program.

A Fellow of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and a Life Member of the American Dental Association, Samartano has also volun-



Dr. Joseph G. Samartano Jr.

teered extensively for area organizations including the American Cancer Society and the Jamestown Shores Association. He is a graduate of Providence College and the Georgetown University School of Dentistry.

In other business, Nickerson said the tree committee could fund members' attendance at conferences and events, and Cloherty asked him to provide a list of upcoming conferences so that appropriate planning and expense allocation could be done.

Nickerson asked White if the concern about the trees planted improperly on Clinton Avenue had been passed on to the Planning Committee. White said it had, but no action was taken.

On the question of the care and maintenance of existing tree sites, Nickerson said the Boy Scouts have volunteered to mulch. He also said a water tank was purchased last year, and the current need is for a volunteer with a pickup truck to water trees.

Nickerson also discussed the use of "gator bags," vinyl bags wrapped around the base of the tree that maximize water, when poured into the bag, by channeling it directly to the roots.

To pay a contractor to do the watering, Nickerson estimated, would cost \$35-\$40 an hour. He said town employees don't have work time available for this task, but some would like to volunteer for it in their spare time.

Rugh, who is a member of the committee planning Jamestown's 350th Anniversary celebrations in August, suggested the planting of a commemorative tree, and the committee agreed this was a good idea.



Dear Friends,

It is the proud mission of the Conanicut Island Land Trust to protect the open spaces of our island for the benefit of present and future generations. We support all legitimate efforts to achieve protection of our meadows, fields, and woodlands that otherwise would be developed. Consistent with this philosophy, we support the efforts of the Nature Services Exchange of Jamestown to find creative ways to keep our island pastures undeveloped.

With that said, we find it necessary to point out the Land Trust is not associated in any way with the "Bobolink" project which has been the subject of a recent series of full page ads in the Jamestown Press. As it has been explained to us, the project will solicit money from you to pay a landowner to refrain from mowing his field during the bobolink nesting period.

In a full page ad last week, we were told that we would be receiving in the mail a request to "invest" in the Bobolink project. In view of this announcement, we feel the need to distinguish ourselves from the Bobolink project because it has been confused with us in the past and because it regrettably comes at a time when the Land Trust and the Town are deeply involved in the permanent protection of the Neale, Dutra, and Ceppi properties. The effort to protect these parcels in the center island greenway originated in the Land Trust and has been ongoing for approximately three years. Presently, we are committed to a fund raising campaign to contribute to this important goal, and this campaign is beginning. As a result, we are concerned that confusion regarding the two projects is inevitable and, in the final analysis, could hurt our efforts to protect the greenway. Accordingly, we ask you to keep in mind that we are two different organizations asking for help to achieve significantly different objectives.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Very truly yours,

Quentin Anthony
President



As of Monday,
2 April 2007

The Harbor Office
will be located at
Jamestown Golf Course
245 Conanicus Avenue

Please note: Harbormaster's
Office is still located at the
Jamestown Police Station