



Winthrop Board of Committee Public Body Posting

Name of Public Body: Tree Commision

Date and Time of Meeting: Monday May 4th, 2026

Location of Meeting: Public Works Department

AGENDA

Call Meeting to order 6:00

All members present

Russ Stanford wants to remove the tree 22-24 Pauline Ave has lived there for many years, rehabbed the building, mixed unit, 6 one bedroom, and commercial. Went to National Grid, discussed the supply line. The home is all electric as the state wants. The supply line is currently attached to a tree. Not enough power coming from Fremont so they needed a plan B to bring in electricity through the building, will cost the owner \$30 thousand. National Grid's rules are that no tree can be within 10 feet. The owner has to pay for all costs. The owner explained that he loves trees and is not a fan of taking trees down, and has sponsored to have 70 trees planted. The owner read reports from arborists, ash trees and does have ash tree borer, the base of the tree is being girdled so recommendations are to remove the tree. Is willing to offset the tree by planting new trees. National Grid is making it all on the owners dime. National Grid did not mention this at the council meeting that the developer will need to pay. During the council meeting Council Member Swopes is stating that this was not made clear at the meeting.

Members do not like that Russ is having the burden of the costs.

Cassie Witthaus precinct 5 also stated that this is a town wide policy that National Grid is also stating that the tree will be removed from the front of their house.

Different formulas to replace the trees to guarantee the carbon replacement. We are concerned about trees being taken down all over town both public and privately.

Insurance companies pay towns a formulaic amount when trees are damaged from their insurer. Nurseries will get a credit and then the tree warden will pick out a tree to replace the damaged tree.

Tree Warden suggests that there is a tree across the street from Russ' tree that is dead that can be replaced.

It was suggested that the electricity pole be moved for the 3 phase.

Celeste Hewitt precinct one and environmental commission states that they should be able to move the pole ten feet to save the tree. Russ said that the line needs to come from Nick's place which is why he needs the tree moved. Feels National Grid is pushing us hard without recourse. National grid stated that his pole will also allow for additional power once the fire station is changed and possible development goes in.

Tree Warden explains his job is public safety and then to enhance the tree canopy for Winthrop.

Residents suggest that since the tree is not very healthy per the arborist, Russ should not have to pay quite as much using the formula.

Cassie said the town council said that they could not put the pole there and the pole had to change the location. Tree Warden has said that National Grid has listened and worked well with National Grid.

Three levels of voltage when cutting down trees, their people are trained well to cut the trees.

Review and Approve prior meetings minutes

Hearing regarding 24-25 Pauline Street Tree

Russ has offered to plant three trees and to keep them watered for three summers with his guys. Doing the planting and taking care of watering. Tree Warden suggests the replacement of a red maple which is across the street and dead. Russ agrees to pay once the decision has been made as to how much whether the insurance formula is used or a random figure is thrown out.

Joeann read the legalities of how a tree removal goes and how the hearing must happen.

Tim pointed out that it is green ash so it will likely be dead relatively soon.

We discussed as the tree committee what the donation amount should be, it ranged from 1 thousand to 650 per tree and three trees were recommended as a replacement tree which equals \$1950.

Joeann read what specifications we are suggesting at the council meeting tomorrow. Russ left and asked Tom to let him know what the final results are after the meeting. The state law states that the Town Warden has the final say and the tree committee is just an advisory committee.

Tree Warden reported that it is his decision and we are just an advisory unit and he feels one thousand dollars is far. It was suggested that Russ does agree to water and plant the trees for three years.

Cassie suggests when we make an ordinance we should make sure to include verbiage regarding National Grid.

State law has certain restrictions, a town can be more restrictive not less.

The Bill Lydia Edwards Environmental Bond bill should give Winthrop quite a bit of money for trees.

Tree Maintenance, Plantings and Removals trees have been watered and large planting happened last week, many volunteers.

Update on Discussion about Inventory with town GIS still not answered by Tony Morino

April Meeting's notes approved unanimously.

Next meeting June 8th

Meeting adjourned

This listing of matters is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.