

**BOARD OF TREE EXPERTS**

**MINUTES**

**September 15, 2015**

The Board of Tree Experts met on this date at the Jackson Township Municipal Building 95 W. Veterans Highway, Jackson, NJ at 9:37 a.m. to discuss the business of the Board.

Those present were:

Rich Wolowicz, Vice President	Gary Lovallo
Dave Johnson	Jennifer Dalia DAG
Joe Greipp	Mark Goggin
Michael D’Errico, Program Manager	Carrie Sargeant
Malcolm McBurney	

**Open Public Meetings Act:**

The Open Public Meetings Act was read by D. Johnson

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

G. Lovallo made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2015 meeting, J. Greipp seconded the motion which was unanimously approved with minor corrections

**Administrative Report & Correspondence:**

M. D’Errico reported to the Board: That the public continues to request the CTE Directory, approximately 3 per day and almost 100 since August. Construction of the “new searchable” directory on the Board’s web site is going slow. Several follow up emails by the public asked the Board to “pick” only one CTE as a recommendation. The Board discussed putting a “disclaimer” on the web site that the Board only provides the list and that it is recommended that at least three CTEs’ are contacted for services. The top three reasons for requesting the directory are: Fear (consumer protection), legal inquires and storm related damage to trees. New CTEs’ were entered into the NJEMS system, with an initial “bill” being generated and sent. A congratulation letter with an invite to the awards banquet was sent to the 12 new CTEs’. Notification letters of the exam results were sent to all the remaining applicants that had taken the examination. A follow up to an inquiry by a CTE for a lost renewal that had first gone to Forestry was made.

**Treasurers Report:**

The Treasurer’s Report for September 15, 2015 was provided by D. Johnson:

Treasurer’s Report – September 2015

Balance 7/01/15	\$ 25,638.07 (FY2016)
Disbursements	\$ 3,075.00
Receipts	<u>\$ 0.00</u>

Checking Account Balance	\$ 22,493.07
Federal Grant	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
Asset Balance as of September 15, 2015	\$ 27,493.07

G. Lovallo moved to accept the Treasurer’s report for September 2015 as reported. M. Goggin seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

**General Public Comments:**

Malcolm McBurney a Certified Tree Expert from Ramsey, NJ suggested that a CTE should be able to renew their license “on-line”. Mr. McBurney also suggested that he and a lot of other tree experts would be willing to pay more to renew their credential on-line

**Old Business:**

A. Angie’s List, BBB, CAMCA, Home Advisors - M. D’Errico discussed with the Board the continued interest that Angie’s List, the Better Business Bureau and Home Advisors have in cooperating with the Board on the proper way to list tree care companies to their clients and to the public under the LTE/LTCO Act. Previously, the County and Municipal Consumer Affairs Association (CAMCA) also had contacted the Board concerning continued issues with tree care work and numerous fraud cases they had to deal with. G. Lovallo asked about Consumer Affairs working with the Board on a violation – the board discussed.

B. Draft Rules, Impact and Summary Statements – J. Dalia reported that the draft LTE/LTCO rules were sent by the DEP to the governor’s office on September 8, 2015. J. Dalia discussed the Office of Administrative Law, the NJ Register, and the 60 day comment period. S. Chisholm had provided a report that Assemblyman Dancer reached out to the Governor’s office and spoke to their legal counsel about the rules and the urgency to get them posted on the NJ Register. According to Assemblyman Dancer, the governor’s office felt that it had been an “unnecessary long delay” in getting the rules to their office.

C. LTCO Exam: next steps – The Board discussed the next steps in rolling out a potential LTCO examination. The Board discussed having a number of current Certified Tree Experts take the exam as a way of evaluating the performance of the exam. The board also discussed seeking out several testing companies to assist in the validation of the exam and its questions. A motion was made to get a cost estimate from several private consulting firms to review and evaluate the CTE and LTCO exams and questions for the purpose of validation of the exams by a third party. J. Greipp made the motion, G. Lovallo seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

D. Other – G. Lovallo asked about the possibility of a ready-made handout or brochure that could be used to get people ready for the enactment of the LTE/LTCO law. Several draft handouts were developed and provided to the Board at the April 2015 meeting. These were factsheets on what a business, current CTE and potential LTCO needs to know about the LET/LTCO law. G. Lovallo will look over and suggest some changes/additions that the Board could consider. D. Johnson suggested a subcommittee on public awareness. C. Sargeant reminded the Board that State Forestry is planning on working with OEM during storm events and will be proactive with the storm strike force team.

### **New Business:**

A. Annual Meeting, Seal, and The Branch Office – The Board discussed the annual meeting of tree Experts, the Seal and the annual newsletter – “The Branch Office”. The board will contact the Society of Certified Tree Experts to see if that organization would sponsor an annual meeting. Instead of the annual meeting in January, the board discussed adding a regular meeting to the month of January. D. Johnson made a motion to add January to the regular meeting schedule, M. Goggin seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The Board chose to keep control over the seal and continue to offer it at cost. The Board agreed to continue to develop and send copies “The Branch Office” at the end of each calendar year. The board also agreed to send hard copies of the newsletter in 2015 and switch to sending it by email at the end of 2016.

B. Other – J. Greipp suggested having CTE exam proctors attend the awards banquet in October. Motion was made by M. Goggin to reach out to proctors and have them attend. G. Lovallo seconded the motion. Motion was approved. C. Sargeant reported to the Board that Forestry is taking nominations for the Green Communities Awards and that the Fall Forestry Festival is October 4<sup>th</sup> in Jackson. G. Lovallo spoke to the board about the old farm house in Old Bridge Township which is owned by the county and controlled by the Township. With the size of the property and the good condition of the building, there is a possibility that the tree organizations could use for events and educational sessions.

### **General Public Comments:**

Malcolm McBurney discussed several items with the Board. Mr. McBurney thought the Seal should be changed from CTE to LTE and this may require an increase in cost. He thought that pamphlets to towns about the LTE/LTCO law was a good idea, and that notifying insurance companies about the law was also a good avenue. He also agreed with test validation and thought an educational consultant to assist the Board with test format was also an idea. Finally, he asked several questions pertaining to the LTE/LTCO rules and how long the comment period was to be and how will those comments be handled.

### **Closed Session:**

None

**Next Meeting - Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 9:30 am in Jackson at the Township Municipal Building**

D. Johnson moved to adjourn and G. Lovallo seconded the motion. Motion passed  
**Meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.**