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Mayor Deaglan McEachern
Portsmouth City Hall
1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, N.H. 03801

Dear Mayor McEachern:

My term as a member of the Trees and Public Greenery Committee expired in June of this year and I appreciate your allowing me to hold over until this time, however, I am officially submitting my resignation effective January 1, 2025.

When Dr. Clotilde Straus retired in 2002 as the city's volunteer arborist after 26 years of service, Mayor Evelyn Sirrell realized that it would take 9 mere mortals to replace her. Mayor Sirrell created the Trees and Greenery Committee and named me as its chair. In a shameless display of authoritarianism, I have refused to schedule elections for a new chair and have ruthlessly crushed several coups attempting to end my reign.

Even though my position as chair may have been undemocratic and illegitimate, it afforded me the pleasure of working with dozens of Tree Committee members, all of whom have been fervently dedicated to making the city greener and even more beautiful. It has also provided a vantage point to observe the evolution of the commitment of city councils, city administrations and especially public works staff in the promotion and protection of the city's trees and greenery. Rather than being an afterthought (or even a nuisance) the protection of trees is now taken into consideration and given high priority by the city staff at the initial planning stages and throughout the implementation of every project.

The city has transitioned from planting 30 or 40 trees each year to 100 or 200 trees. That does not happen by itself but requires a major commitment by the public works department. Funds must be requested in the city budget; city councils must approve the funding; city staff must find appropriate locations and appropriate species must be selected; bids must be prepared, advertised, studied and awarded. The city staff plants the trees one by one, and those trees are then protected, watered and nourished by the arborist team for two years and cherished by all of us forever.

It is hard to imagine that there is another city in America which has been blessed with the high-quality arborists that have guided the city and worked with the tree committee during the last 20 years. Corin Hallowell, Chuck Baxter, Max Waiter and their staffs have taken care of our urban forest combining their expertise with dedication and passion for the greenery that they steward.

Respectfully submitted

Peter J. Loughlin

Cc Trees and Greenery Committee
City Manager Karen Conard
City Clerk Kelli Barnaby