

2018 MAR 21 AM 9:07

SHADE TREE COMMITTEE

TOWN OF BELMONT

BELMONT, MA, 02478

617-484-5383

MINUTES 12 FEBRUARY 2018

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 by Chair Lucia Gates, and attended by: Mike Chesson, Nancy Forbes, and Tom Walsh with drop in guest, Patrice Garvin, Belmont Town Administrator.

The minutes of the Nov. 2017 meeting were approved. There was no meeting in December and the January meeting was cancelled due to a lack of quorum.

There was a lively open discussion with Patrice Garvin as to the roles of both the Shade Tree Committee and Town Tree Warden in Belmont.

Tree Warden's Report: Tom attended the January 2018 town tree warden convention and gathered information on the emerald ash borer. Tom is certified to supervise injections against the borer and the initial cost for equipment, chemicals and staff training would be \$5-7000. The borer has not been identified in town but has been seen in communities all around Belmont so we need to begin planning for possible infestation. The injection needs to be given every other year. If not injected, an infected tree will die in 2 years.

There are two common methods for applying treatment. There is a capsule method which does not require injections. However, the capsules take about an hour to fully drain and they are toxic to children. Therefore, the tree must be watched for an hour and this would generate manpower costs. The injection method uses a more toxic ingredient but because it is injected into the tree, it is not dangerous to humans or animals.

If the town does not treat infected trees the highway department can remove them as they die; the numbers of trees dying will steadily increase with time.

Tom will keep Jay Marcotte, Highway department manager, informed. Patrice offered to talk with Jay and also will notify the Board of Selectmen of this potential problem.

Lucia raised the issue of the Butler School parking lot and playground where there are 20 to 30 ash trees. Tom is aware of these trees and may suggest specific treatment options that may be different from approaches used for street trees.

Agenda items: The Noteworthy tree list was discussed and there was general discussion that it should be periodically updated.

Our membership is low and Patrice offered to request that the Board of Selectmen assign us new members. The committee will also write the Audubon Society, Belmont Garden Club and the Conservation Committee searching for volunteers interested in Belmont's trees.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45. The next meeting is set for Monday, March 19, 2018.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Lucia Gates.