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DATE: January 11, 2022
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**Minutes of
The Shade Tree
Committee
15 November 2021**

The ZOOM meeting was called to order at 16:32 by Chair Lucia Gates, and attended by, in alphabetical order: Mike Chesson, Eva Hoffman, Jay Marcotte [Director of DPW], Jennifer Parker, Mike Santoro [Assistant Director of DPW] and DeNee Reiton Skipper. Guest in attendance: Adam Howe.

The minutes of 18 October 2021 were tentatively approved with amendments.

Jay Marcotte's Report: Preliminary budget was submitted last week. Patrice Garvin is allowing more money for trees, happily. A full time staff is needed to maintain the trees and remain on a proactive basis with the work to be done. The line items were increased by \$100,000 overall and the tree budget was increased to \$25,000. A Tree Warden/Arborist salary was deemed to be \$75,000.

Len Blanchette of Wagon Wheel Nursery was contacted to supply trees for next year. We will try to vary bare root trees with balled-and-burlap trees, depending on availability. We would like about sixty-five 2-inch caliper trees which are more mature and established. The cost is ~\$250 per tree. This source is local and the trees will not be stressed from a cross country voyage. This is still in the planning stage and we would like to discuss the locations of various trees and if Len would be willing to provide maintenance for one year after planting.

Jay estimates that an inventory for a tree canopy and health of the town will run about \$55,000; this is a request for another year.

CLAYPIT POND: Lucia noted the trees planted there were very successful and Andrew Airolidi was diligent about maintaining them.

TRAPELO ROAD FIRE STATION TREES: The Ginko trees planted in the boulevard all died. Lucia went to see what the problem was, and discovered the soil to be but rock and asphalt and a much too small area in which to plant a tree.

CEMETERY CPA GRANT APPLICATION: The CPC is deliberating on the grant; the final application is still pending. The request is for \$15,000 to preserve and restore the canopy. This would include paving, fencing and drainage improvement. Elizabeth Dionne is the contact and she said 29 November 2021 is the deadline for the CPA endorsement. Eva was the catalyst for improving the old cemetery and was given credit where due for the impetus to improve it. Lucia will write a letter of support for this project and will ask The Garden Club to do so as well.

JAY MARCOTTE'S REPORT: There was some minor storm damage with tree limbs down around town. A tree will be taken down on George Street, which was uprooted. Belmont is only 3½ months into the fiscal budget and it is already almost halfway used up. The trimming, felling and stump grinding is a year round maintenance project. Belmont has a contractor for these tasks, in contrast to Brookline, which has seven full time employees and an \$850,000 budget to deal with their trees.

PAYSON PARK: There is restoration project which may include for tree planting.

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL: Lucia will contact Bill Lovallo, the project director, to join our meeting in January. The house at 5 Goden Street has had a tree removed to accommodate the large traffic signal for the schools. There are now numerous cables and utility infrastructure in that location, ensuring that no tree could survive in that spot. Jay will contact the homeowner to propose planting a tree on his property instead of in the tree strip.

continued

GIFT OF TREES: Lein Tung was the first person to use our new form for the planting of trees; he found it useful. Emily Peterson has offered to create a GoFundMe site and Lucia proposed the embankment at the Lyons Club where two large trees on that steep slope were lost. Unfortunately, one was a Beech tree donated by John Carson of Coolidge Road in memory of his brother.

Andrew Airoidi is an arborist in town and he may be willing to work with Emily on this *GoFundMe* project.

In addition, Emily Walsh wants to plant a tree in memory of Mark Clark. We will also seek out other sites around town for donation trees.

9/11 TREE: At the School Administration building on Pleasant Street, an existing tree will be dedicated for this purpose. A plaque will be mounted on a rock in front of the tree in memory of the Belmont 9/11 victims.

At the request of the Select Board, Lucia submitted our mission statement to them and we are awaiting its approval.

The meeting ended at 17:27. The next meeting is planned for 13 December 2021.

Minutes respectfully submitted by DeNee Reiton Skipper
Minutes approved,

Lucia Gates