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DATE: January 11, 2022
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**Minutes of
The Shade Tree
Committee
18 October 2021**

The ZOOM meeting was called to order at 16:36 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. Guests in attendance are: Molly Aalyson, and Adam Howe.

The minutes of 17 May, 21 June and 13 September 2021 were approved.

CPA GRANT APPLICATION: Lucia presented the documents she prepared to the Shade Tree Committee for review. These documents will soon go to the Belmont Preservation Committee, to Matthew Haskell. The goal is the replacement of lost trees and the grant is asking \$15,000 for this purpose.

JAY MARCOTTE'S REPORT: Jay has completed four of the six classes for qualifying as Tree Warden. He said they are quite enlightening. An inventory, including the canopy density and a health assessment of the town trees would be helpful. Parks, playgrounds, cemeteries and schools should not be in the inventory. Compiling this will be a capital expense item for a future year. He is contacting other officials in other towns to gather information about their tree budgets. For example: Newton spends ~\$1.2 million a year on their trees; Watertown spends ~\$680,000 and plants about 800 trees to our 100-125 trees. Our budget is very, if not woefully, low by comparison. Of course, Newton is a much larger town; Watertown is comparable in size to Belmont. Jay is also investigating other towns, as far ranging as Salem and Burlington, for their budgets and staffing arrangements. This information will be gathered and a path forward for Belmont's trees is needed.

Other work on dead and damaged trees continues, however, we are about six months behind in this work. In addition, requests are coming in from residents for trees. Asplundh has added a dedicated crew, exclusively for the Light Department for trimming, and this will be in place for at least two months.

There has been one tree hearing for a tree on Lewis Road. One Oak on Myrtle Street has some rot and mushrooms growing. Mike S. will post a notice on the tree for a hearing.

CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL: Solar panels are proposed, which will entail the removal of five Cherry trees in that particular location. Perhaps they can be transplanted or placement of the equipment reconsidered.

HIGH SCHOOL-MIDDLE SCHOOL: Bill Lovallo, head of the project, wants to plant large trees there. Trees will not be planted until 2023 because of the middle school building project.

TOWN FIELD: Project was approved for \$708,000 for the budget. There were fourteen bids, but not one of them was within our budget plan. Town meeting will not meet this Autumn and all budgetary issues will be delayed until the Spring meeting.

GIFT OF TREES: We need a plan for donations of trees. Emily Petersen is willing to create another *GoFundMe* web site to assist us. We need to figure out how to accept this money and buy new trees. Andrew Airolidi wants to coordinate with the Garden Club to add trees to the eastern end of Claypit Pond. Mary Trudeau will need to be contacted. Trees planted in memory of individuals will also need a protocol to follow. Lucia will draft a protocol for the next meeting.

WAVERLEY TRAIL: The Land Trust paid for repainting the trail with a green stripe to mark it, in coordination with Belmont, Waltham and the State to lead people to the beautiful old and new Oaks that remain standing there.

The meeting ended at 17:29. The next meeting is planned for 15 November 2021.

Minutes respectfully submitted by DeNee Reiton Skipper
Minutes approved,

Lucia Gates