

Borough of Demarest
Shade Tree Commission
Official Minutes

March 13, 2025

Chair, Linda Cetta read the Public Announcement of Meeting: The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey have been satisfied by the inclusion of the date, time, and place of this regular meeting in the annual schedule and notice of regular meetings is posted at Borough Hall, was mailed to The Star Ledger and The Record and was filed with the Borough Clerk of the Borough of Demarest on January 15, 2025. The meeting opened at 7:05 pm.

Roll Call, at the time of roll call, present were Linda Cetta, Maureen Neville Faye Sloan, and Commission Liaison, Vice Chair, Dimitri Gatanas joined the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Approval of the minutes for February 12, 2025, Meeting. The minutes have been amended to Chair, Linda Cetta reports that Shade Tree is currently working off 25% of the operating budget.

Approval of the minutes for March 13, 2025.

New Business: Chair, Linda Cetta was in contact with the Finance Department for an update on the amount in the Trust Fund and reported an error of \$150.00 was deducted from the Trust Fund for Shade Tree's Conference, it should have been deducted from the operating budget. The funds that were wrongly deposited into the Courts for violations, Shade Tree would like it to be on record that they have requested it be removed and to be deposited in the correct account.

The Cemetery rehabilitation project was discussed and Chair, Linda Cetta explains that if the budget allows, 65 bushes can be purchased through the operating budget, not the trust account. Member, Faye Sloan raises the question of "Is that number of bushes necessary?" Chair, Linda Cetta responded that three experts visited the site and recommended the amount. Liaison, Adam Collins questioned if fund raising is possible. Member, Maureen Neville added that she is making efforts to get in touch with Maryann Clark, the Borough Historian, to see if there is special funding for this project. Chair, Linda Cetta stated that the Cemetery is currently not declared a Historical Site. Member, Faye Sloan, requested that when there are side meetings such as discussions about the Cemetery, she would like the rest of the members to be informed of the results.

New Business: Arbor day will be held on April 19, 2025, all members discussed rotating schedule times, set up, and clean up. Seedlings will be purchased this year but not to exceed \$200.00. Remaining seedlings will be donated to the Nature Center.

The need for new members has been discussed. A resident attended the meeting who might have interest in joining the Shade Tree Commission. If he does, a recommendation to the Mayor will be made.

The Commission reviewed the prune list and have discussed each member take a section to confirm that the trees from the original list Paul Cowey reported on are still in existence.

An annual report by the Shade Tree Commission will be given by Council Liaison, Adam Collins, to be presented at a Mayor and Council meeting. Chair, Linda Cetta requested it be done in a regular Mayor and Council meeting as opposed to a work session meeting. Council Liaison, Adam Collins suggested that Linda Cetta contact Borough Administrator Julie Falkenstern for advice for which meeting to have the annual report read.

Chair Linda Cetta suggested that the Shade Tree Commission partner with the Garden Club to plant tree (trees) in vacant areas within the Borough such as in front of the Post Office. Member, Maureen Neville stated the water tank that was prior purchased by the Shade Tree Commission is not being utilized. Vice Chair, Dimitri Gatanas agrees with the concerns and will meet with the DPW Manager, Jason Gangi, to come up with a schedule for watering and purchasing a larger tank. Chair Linda Cetta, presented to the Commission that Ray Slayman has offered his time and vehicle to water new plantings. Vice Chair, Dimitri Gatanas, stated that he would like to see funds from the Borough be distributed evenly throughout the different departments for better utilization of purchasing needs and added that new residents move to Demarest for the beautification of the town and tree lined streets. Chair Linda Cetta noted that in the past five years, over 350 trees have been planted by the Shade Tree Commission. Member Faye Sloan recognized Chair Linda Cetta for the hard work she has put into the Shade Tree Commission. Chair, Linda Cetta recognized all past and present members for the accomplishments of the Shade Tree Commission.

Open to the public: No one was present.

A motion to adjourn at 7:55 pm was made by Faye Sloan, second by Norman NG, all were in favor

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Campbell

Shade Tree Commission Secretary