

**Shade Tree Commission
Demarest Borough Hall
7:00PM**

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

September 9, 2026

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Dimitri Gatanas opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with the following announcement: 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 and notice of regular meeting was posted at Borough Hall, was mailed to The Record and was filed with the Borough Clerk of the Borough of Demarest on January 23, 2026.

1. **Roll Call:** Present, Dimitri Gatanas, Kathy Kobylarz, Ted Alevrontas, Norman NG, Faye Sloan, Council Liaison Adam Collins. Absent: Linda Cetta, Maureen Neville
2. **Minutes:** Motion to accept the amended minutes from July 9, 2026, was made by Ted Alevrontas, second by Kathy Kobylarz, all were in favor. Motion to accept the minutes from August 13, 2026, Ted Alevrontas, 2nd Norman NG, all were in favor.
3. **Old Business:** Budget, trust account \$16,645.00 regular budget \$7,415.44. Spending freeze was explained by Liaison Adam Collins that it is every Department not only ST. Faye Sloan questioned if it was possible to still plant 1 tree at CRS. Liaison Adam Collins strongly recommended the ST Commission withhold spending money unless it is necessary. Faye Sloan reminded the Members, in the last meeting Linda Cetta had agreed to plant 3 trees and the CRS. A question was asked if ST can use the Trust? Liaison Adam Collins suggested the Commission speak to the CFO. Liaison Adam Collins questioned if the school requested the trees or did ST offer? Faye Sloan replied, ST offered and they have planted there in the past. Dimitri Gatanas proposed a motion if the CFO confirms they can use the Trust, then planting will be done, second by Ted Alevrontas, all were in favor. Storm damage, Dimitri Gatanas expressed his concerns regarding ST having to pay for all the storm related tree removals and if funding from the State is a possibility? Liaison Adam Collins replied that it was not a state of emergency declared by the Governor, so the town will not get reimbursed. He also mentioned the storms were extremely bad, and the trees were a public safety hazard. Dimitri Gatanas again expressed his concerns regarding the Shade Trees budget being used for all storm related tree removals. The discussion of the budgets was tabled till the next meeting. Norman NG gave a brief update on the change to the ordinance explaining a meeting with Julie Falkenstern, Councilwoman Sharon Carmeli, Linda Cetta and himself regarding planting in the ROW for new construction and renovations. There was questions Julie Falkenstern had for the Commission. Norman NG said Linda Cetta will address the questions after the meeting. Liaison Adam Collins explained, once the questions are addressed it will go to the Ordinance Committee, then to the Borough

Attorney. If accepted, it will be heard at a Mayor and Council meeting. NJSTF, 5 members of the Commission will be attending the conference on Oct. 22, 2026, Dimitri Gatanas made a motion subject to the CFO's approval of funds, not to exceed \$1,000.00 and if the funds can come from the regular budget or the trust to attend the conference, 2nd by Ted Alverontas, all were in favor. Faye Sloan requested an amendment from \$1,000.00 be increased to \$1,200.00 all were in favor. Dimitri Gatanas reports the Cemetery plantings look great and will request the DPW to fertilize them.

4. **New Business:** Seminar given by Ray Slaman to discuss emergency/public safety hazards with trees. Dimitri Gatanas made the first motion to have the seminar, second by Ted Alverontas. A date and time will be set up depending on Ray Slaman's availability. Opt in, program, there are 9 addresses that were approved for the opt in program to receive trees in the Borough Right of Way this fall. Norman NG questioned 49 Orchard Rd., denial of receiving a tree. Dimitri Gatanas responded maybe Ray Slaman or Linda Cetta inspected the area in the ROW and had a reason to deny it. Liaison Adam Collins strongly suggested the Commission put the planting aside to take care of the trees that are on the removal list that are a public hazard. Dimitri Gatanas proposed a motion, if funds are available to plant the trees, ST should continue with the planting plan, second was Norman NG, all were in favor. Discussions on the trees to be removed/ pruned, all members received and reviewed the list. Faye Sloan talks about her neighbor who removed trees but had no information regarding whether they had a permit or who the tree company was. It was suggested for her to call Secretary, Lee Campbell, with any questions regarding tree removal permits. Liaison, Adam Collins explains that the Property Maintenance Official and Secretary Lee Campbell issue tree violations which build the trust account. Dimitri Gatanas expressed his concerns about disappointing the opt-in requests. Liaison Adam Collins expresses telling the truth regarding the storm damage to the residents who ask.
5. A motion to open to the public was made by Dimitri Gatanas, there were no public attendees.
6. Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dimitri Gatanas second by Ted Alevrontas. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Lee Campbell Shade Tree Commission Secretary