Participating: Executive Committee members- Karen Emmerich, Steve Harris; Art Traver, Terry Hawkridge, Brian Liberti, Phil Healey; Board Directors- Chris Anderson, Nina Bassuk, Mark Beamish, Mary Beck, Lori Brockelbank, Joe Charap, Mike DeMarco, Glenn Gentzke, Danielle Gift, Jeanne Grace, Ross Hassinger, Andy Hillman, Greg Michel, Andrew Newman, Alicia Ragusa, Glen Roberts, Sophia Rodbell, Michael Sawyer, Jean Zimmerman; Ex-Officios, Rob Messenger, Gloria VanDuyne, Christina McLaughlin, and Eric Greenfield; Executive Secretary, Liana Gooding and Taking Root Editor, Michelle Sutton.

Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes of the 07/14/2020 Board of Directors meeting. All were in favor, motion carried.

Finance Report: 3rd Quarter Financial Report and the draft 2020 budget were briefly discussed. The Council remains in a good financial position.

2020 Quick Start Grants: Andy Hillman reported that due to COVID-19, most of the grantees were unable to hold spring Arbor Day ceremonies, a few have completed their plantings this fall, and the remainder will hold spring 2021 events.

2020 Tree City USA Reward Grants: Andy Hillman reported that the new program was rolled out this fall with 40 applications received. The grants reward communities that maintain Tree City USA status for five consecutive years with funds to plant a tree(s). Funding had been allocated for 10- $1,000 grants. Because of the large response, the Executive Committee approved an additional $10,000 to allow for funding of an additional 10 grants. A request is going to be submitted to the Forest Service to use some of the 2019 grant funds for this program. The Executive Committee has approved the full $22,000 for the grants regardless of whether Forest Service grant funds are approved for use for the program. The Grant Committee will be revisiting the guidelines before the next round.

Website Update: Sarah Gugercin continues to work on the website updating with a planned completion by the end of 2020.

New Business:

- Strategic Plan 2015-2020: A committee (Phil Healey, Mary Beck, Glenn Gentzke, Steve Harris) was formed to draft a new strategic plan. The Committee will give an update at the March Board meeting.
• **By-Laws** - A committee (Phil Healey, Glen Roberts and Lori Brockelbank) was formed to review the current by-laws. The Committee will give an update at the March Board meeting.

• **Diversity Promotion** - Michelle Sutton presented a proposal for a Council Inclusion Outreach contractor. She outlined the need for more meaningful engagement with urban and community forestry students, volunteers, and professionals of color in New York State. The efforts would be meaningful for their own sake but would hopefully over time lead to a more diverse Council membership and Board. A committee (Michelle Sutton, Karen Emmerich, Greg Michel, Jean Zimmerman, Jeanne Grace, Mike DeMarco and Chris Anderson) was formed to define Council goals with this position.

• **Renewal of Contractor Contracts for 2021** - Liana and Michelle left the call at this point so contracts could be discussed.

Motion made and seconded to approve a $7,800 contract renewal for Michelle Sutton with a new title of Editor and Social Media Coordinator. All were in favor, motion carried.

Motion made and seconded to approve a $21,840 contract renewal for Liana Gooding, Executive Secretary. All were in favor, motion carried.

Motion made and seconded to approve a $40 an hour contract renewal for Sarah Gugercin for Website Management services. All were in favor, motion carried.

Motion made to adjourn. All were in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Liana Gooding, Executive Secretary