

TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, October 20, 2022 – 9:30 a.m.

City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida

PRESENT: Katherine Booth, Chairman; Fran Robinson, Vice Chairman; Members: Opal Nelson **Also Present:** Sherri Philo, Deputy City Clerk

Excused Absence: Rebecca Siplak

1. CALL TO ORDER

Today's meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and the Deputy City Clerk performed the roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) September 15, 2022

Mrs. Robinson referred to page four (4) of the September 15, 2022 Tree and Beautification Commission minutes. She reported that "*Garden Clubs*" should state "*Garden Club of Indian River County*."

Mrs. Booth made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2022 Tree and Beautification Commission meeting as amended. Ms. Nelson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Sue Gromis, of MainStreet Vero Beach, said that she received an email from Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, stating that as soon as they have completed the storm cleanup they would move forward with the decorative rock project. Mrs. Gromis reported that some of the cigarette butt holders have been replaced and the concrete planters would be coming back. There have been some changes made to the setup of Downtown Friday and the stage has been moved from the center of the venue to 14th Avenue parallel to Pochontas Park. She said this worked out well, except they could not open one end of the stage because there was a tree in the way. She reported that they were looking at holding the Hibiscus Festival the last weekend in March following Downtown Friday.

Mrs. Robinson asked if Mainstreet would maintain the plantings in the concrete pots.

Mrs. Gromis reported that the different circles of the Garden Club said that they would like to take part in it and the Sunrise Rotary Club set aside \$1,500 for them.

Mrs. Booth asked if it was one branch that was causing the issue with the stage.

Mrs. Gromis said that was her understanding.

Mrs. Booth said that she would like the opportunity to see what the problem is. She said that she would call Mrs. Gromis to set up a time to meet with her to go and look at the issue that they were having.

4. NEW BUSINESS

None

5. OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Booth referred to item 6) Treasury Report on today's agenda (on file in the City Clerk's office). She reported that the current fiscal year reserve balance is \$1,569.21, which are the funds that they have to work with for any activities that they want to pursue.

Mrs. Booth reported that the Planning and Zoning Board was working on the Landscape and Tree Protection Ordinance revisions. She reported that the Tree and Beautification Commission previously discussed holding a workshop meeting with the Planning and Zoning Board and she did not think that meeting was going to take place. She said that she met with Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning Director, and he is currently looking at the Pruning Ordinance, which she felt was very important. She said that the only tree listed as historic was the Southern Live Oak Tree and she asked Mr. Jeffries to add Laurel Oak Trees to the list. She said that the Planning and Zoning Board has a meeting this afternoon and she was going to request that this tree be added during public comments. She said that Mrs. Siplak had mentioned at a previous meeting that she would like to see three (3) different pine species added to the list of trees that are protected and Mr. Jeffries said that staff is looking at each tree on the list to see what habitat they grow in so that the tree list they provide would specify what trees were best for what type of habitat. She said the current draft of the Ordinance still references the Florida Urban Forestry Council as an authoritative source, however there was no longer a central division. She said that she has reached out to the Florida Native Plant Society to see if they wanted to be referenced in the Ordinance as an authoritative source.

Mrs. Booth said the Commission has discussed looking at recognition programs that are already available. She reported that she has been researching the Turf Swap program that was being done in Alachua County. It was her understanding that the way the program worked was that the Water Management District gave a rebate to homeowners who swapped turf out for native plant landscapes. She said that she would continue to research this.

A) Landscaping Award / Recognition Program

Mrs. Booth reported that the dedicatory tree brochure and the tree specification list has been updated and are now on the City's website. The tree specification list now has more native trees than non-native trees, which she was happy about.

Mrs. Robinson reported that Mrs. Siplak has acquired the Florida Friendly Landscaping Certification. She said that she knows some people who were looking for Florida Friendly Certification for a conservation area in their community and Mrs. Siplak said

that she would be able to help with that. She explained that Mrs. Siplak can now do a site visit and determine whether or not it meets the criteria.

Mrs. Booth hoped that Mrs. Siplak would be able to tell the Commission more about what she is doing and how she thinks the program could be expanded on, on a City-wide basis and how it could be implemented and/or partnered with through the Commission.

Mrs. Booth reported that the City of Sebastian is using Lagoon friendly landscaping and they have an online application for homeowners to receive recognition. She reported that she sent an email to the department that is running this to find out what kind of results they have had.

B) Beautification Weekend

Mrs. Booth reported that Mrs. Tammy Bursick, City Clerk, told her that the City's website could be used to promote Beautification Weekend and/or any kind of recognition program that the Commission decides they want to implement or partner with.

Ms. Nelson asked if they were allowed to go to residences and take pictures.

Mrs. Booth said when talking about having the neighborhood cleanups for Beautification Weekend, the Commission members would have to personally knock on doors to see if they could find out if they have a contact person for that neighborhood. As to the recognition program, if a property owner was to submit an application online, then they would have their permission to go onto their property and do an onsite evaluation.

Mrs. Booth reported that Mrs. Siplak asked at a previous meeting to have an easel in the lobby to promote a recognition program and/or Beautification Weekend and Mrs. Bursick said that could be done once the Commission decides what they want.

Mrs. Booth said the Commission decided at their last meeting that they wanted to do neighborhood cleanups as their activity. She confirmed with Keep Indian River Beautiful (KIRB) that they would supply gloves, trash bags, and grabbers to pick up debris. She reported that she reached out to Waste Management regarding dumpsters for yard waste, garbage, and recycling and the cost for each dumpster is approximately \$500 along with a delivery fee of \$100 per dumpster and the dumpsters can remain on the property for up to seven (7) days without any other chargers. She said if the City approves this project, she would need to see if the City would fund the cost for the dumpsters.

Ms. Nelson asked if there was a specific neighborhood that they were looking at.

Mrs. Booth said that she asked Mr. Jeffries for a color coded map of the neighborhoods and a map showing the new districts, such as the Art Village and he said that he would look into it. She felt that they should start with a small neighborhood for their first project. She said the Osceola Park neighborhood looks like it might be doable because it looks like a small residential area. The Rosewood School Division neighborhood that is located on 16th Street between 27th Avenue and 43rd Avenue looked to her to be a large area that has a lot of commercial properties.

Mrs. Robinson said that area is very residential. There is a church to the east of the school and she thought there were some rental properties there.

Mrs. Booth asked Mrs. Robinson to check with the church to see if they would be interested in assisting them with the project and to report back to the Commission members at their next meeting.

Mrs. Booth said another neighborhood is Original Town that is mixed residential and commercial.

Mrs. Robinson said none of these communities were gated so their biggest challenge would be finding some leadership.

Mrs. Booth said the other challenge would be the cost of the dumpsters, unless they could get the City to pay for them.

Mrs. Robinson said that she has seen dumpster bags called Bagsters in other communities. She said that might be an alternative to dumpsters.

Mrs. Booth reported that she checked with one print shop for the cost of a new banner and it would cost about \$900. The cost to replace the 20 signs that they currently have would cost about \$350. If they needed assistance from them on the design the cost would be about \$60 per hour. She said they would want something on the signs that is colorful, that the graphic is large enough to catch people's attention, and that has room for wording.

Mrs. Booth reported that Mrs. Bursick said some City Departments would like to partner with the Commission on a brochure. She said they just need to decide what content they want in it.

Mrs. Robinson said that when she moved here she had no clue as far as the regulations for tree removal, watering restrictions, etc. She felt that having this type of information in a brochure would be very helpful to new homeowners. She suggested placing the brochures in various locations, such as the Library.

C) Goals 2022

This item was not discussed.

6. TREASURY REPORT

*Please note that this item was discussed with item 5) Old Business on today's agenda.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

None

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

None

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) November 17, 2022

The next Tree and Beautification Commission meeting will be held on November 17, 2022 at 9:30 a.m. in the City Hall, Council Chambers.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

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