



**MUNICIPAL BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION/TREE BOARD
October 3, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Time: Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Place: Charleston Municipal Parking Building #1

Commissioners: Anna Forbes, Chair
Brenda Craig-Ellis, Vice Chair
Marjorie Cooke, Secretary
Donna Graham, Treasurer
Lois Crichton
Marlene Dial
Lisa Dobbins (absent)
Jane Powell
Susan Shumate (absent)
John Casto (absent)
Alex Franklin
Barbara Rose

Staff and Guests: Mayor Amy Goodwin
Mike Davis, Public Grounds Deputy Director
Brent Webster, Public Works Director
Lewis Payne, BID, business owner
Sid Gillis – BID Ambassador
Ashley Perham, reporter
Mary Ellen O'Farrell, resident
Andrew Workman, Mayor's assistant

Chair Anna Forbes called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Anna welcomed Mayor Amy Goodwin, who praised the Commission for its work recently, noting how the city is looking beautiful and is receiving compliments from residents. Anna thanked the Mayor for the city's tremendous financial support.

Anna welcomed new commissioner Barbara Rose, noting her project idea and execution of city parking garage planters filled with pink petunias. Barbara agreed to serve on the Ruffner Park subcommittee, as her work with Kanawha Garden Club's Community Projects committee has given her experience and interest in the park project.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 2023 MBC meeting were circulated to commissioners prior the meeting and presented for approval. Lois Crichton made a motion to approve, Brenda Craig-Ellis seconded, and the minutes were *approved* as written.

Treasurer Report: Donna Graham presented the report, noting that we have \$112,288.30 in our account, with \$45,000 earmarked for Ruffner Park and \$16,000 earmarked for contingency. Anna asked the City to transfer the allocation for 2023-2024 in the amount of \$100,000 into the MBC account. The treasurer report was *accepted* as presented.

MBC General Matters:

Nominating Committee Report: Chair Lois Crichton presented a slate of Municipal Beautification Commission Officers for the 2023-2024 year as follows:

Anna Forbes, Chair
Brenda Ellis, Vice Chair
Marjorie Cooke, Secretary
Donna Graham, Treasurer

Lois noted that this slate invokes an exception from the bylaws to allow Brenda Ellis to serve a third term as Vice Chair. Lois, John Casto, and Jane Powell, served on the nominating committee. Alex Franklin made motion to approve the slate, Marlene Dial seconded the motion. The 2023-2024 slate was *approved*.

Ruffner Park Update: Mike Davis reported meeting with James Yost (GAI) at Ruffner Park to determine the center and outline of the park paths. Excavation has started. Mike estimated finishing work by end of November. He is checking on plant orders soon. Anna asked about stone entrance work. Barbara reported that Scott Means has been paid his first installment and has promised Barbara to work us into his schedule for the required stone work. Anna asked the Ruffner Park subcommittee to work with James Yost at GAI on details of ordering and installing benches, lighting, water fountain, and garbage cans in an effort to advance park progress.

BID Update: Lewis Payne gave a report on City Center. Lewis noted that the City's priority at this time is finding a shade solution. Other projects will be handled at a later time, including choosing City Center signage and a possible art piece. There was considerable discussion about the trash receptacles and the newly passed city "PODA" (Public Outdoor Drinking Area) ordinance. Businesses in these districts will be required to provide garbage receptacles at the entrance and exits in their establishments. An aesthetic recommendation by the MBC for a better design, and for more, public outdoor receptacles was suggested.

Flower Basket Design: Anna noted that she has asked Barbara Rose to help her in making suggested changes to the City's hanging flower baskets, to look even better next year. Members discussed red begonias as possible plant material for impressive show. Anna suggested the installation of some large-scale planters around the city, for stunning displays of masses of flowers. She showed some photographs of examples from other cities and plans to report about further research at a future meeting.

City Gardens Committee: Donna Graham reported on some subcommittee suggested changes for the Court Street and other newly planted city flower beds, regarding some plant choices. She reported that masses of colorful tulips and alliums will be planted in November. Lois Crichton reminded commissioners of MBC's plans to call upon volunteers to assist with fall and spring plantings, after Mike provides dates for anticipated planting. MBC is willing and eager to offer some extra hands for manual labor to assist the City and Mike's small but able team.

MBC Annual Report – Anna Forbes will draft the MBC’s annual report on the work of the MBC over the 2022-23 fiscal year and circulate it to the commissioners for review prior to the November meeting. After MBC approval of the report, she will then submit the annual report to the Mayor.

Tree Board Matters:

WV State University Tree Inventory Update: Brenda Craig-Ellis noted that the MOU is sitting at WVSU, awaiting approval. She noted that WVSU is working on Huntington’s tree inventory. She anticipates a 2-3 year time frame for our inventory to be completed, noting that work can happen concurrently in both Huntington and Charleston.

The 100-Tree Initiative: Brenda Craig-Ellis, reported on the 100-Tree Committee’s numerous meetings. The committee suggested planting locations as follows:

North Charleston

35th & 7th – 6 trees
Front of Bridgestone -- 3 trees
35th & 33rd --Seven small Dogwood/rebuds
29th – corner of Los Amigos--1 large but short Crepe Myrtle
21st --3 trees
Cold Spot median – 4 trees
(Unable to plant in medians in North Charleston)

Near Edgewood Summit Playground – 1 tree, *Gazebo* – 1 tree, *Corner* –1 more tree

South Park (Parks and Recreation)—11 trees total

East End Community Park – 15 trees total

Piedmont Road – subject to approval of Department of Highways –26 trees total –not large trees

WV Department of Corrections – waiting to hear – 3 trees

Luna Park District (West Side) – 6th & Elm, Delaware & Randolph, Elm & Main, Grant St

Mary C Snow – replace tree planted in April

Cato Park – border of golf course where trees have died ---will review this next year

Kanawha Boulevard –possibility –blight has destroyed some trees---will review next year

Donna shared with the group the recent news article identifying Charleston as the “Leafiest Capitol City” in the country. Link: <https://www.lootpress.com/charleston-named-leafiest-capital-city-in-america/?mibextid=Zxz2cZ>

After hearing the news that the Mary C. Snow dogwood died, there was general consensus that new trees planted by the City should have trunks wrapped with PVC pipe for protection from weed eaters or other predators, whenever feasible.

Public Grounds Report: Mike Davis reported that he will replant the Mary C. Snow dogwood tree soon. He noted that his crew is finally shifting into fall work and planting projects, noting the hanging baskets are coming down, the Living Wall plants are coming down, and potatoes will be pulled out of potato vine beds. Earth moving

will happen in Ruffner Park soon as well. Marlene Dial noted how attractive the hanging baskets looked around the City and thanked Mike and his crew for their hard work.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned with an announcement of the next meeting on **November 7th** at 1 pm.

Submitted by Marjorie Cooke,
MBC Recording Secretary