



MUNICIPAL BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION/TREE BOARD
October 1, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Time: Tuesday, October 1, 2024, 1:00 pm

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
Jane Powell
Susan Shumate (absent)
John Casto
Barbara Rose
Jason Testman

Staff and Guests: Brent Webster, City Public Works Director
Mike Davis, City Public Grounds Deputy Director (on the phone)?
Sid Gillis, BID Ambassador
Andy Sheetz, Urban Forester, WV Division of Forestry
Renate Pore, Friends of Ruffner Cemetery & Park
Chris Higgins
Lisa McDavid

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

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 3, 2024, MBC meeting were circulated to commissioners prior to the meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded and the Board ***approved*** the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Report: Donna Graham reported that because it was the first day of the month, the treasurer's report will not be available until the final figures are received. The report will be emailed to members as soon as possible. (From the report emailed later that day: Interest earned was \$857.19 for a total balance of \$203,264.85. Earmarks total \$114,230.89 with a remaining balance after earmarks of \$89,033.96.)

MBC General Matters

Ruffner Park Landscaping Update: Anna Forbes reported that two bids had been received and that the sub-committee (Lois, Barbara, Susan, and Anna) will review them. She reported that the unattractive/half dead tree had been removed. Renate Pore reported that \$8,500 had been raised from individuals at Parkside Place and a grant proposal for \$5K is pending with the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation. Any funds raised will be held in

the WV for Affordable Health Care Fund, under the health portfolio of the Foundation, which has a greenspace initiative. Renate Pore reported that she has drafted a letter to Steve Kawash at the McGee Foundation requesting funds for the park. Plans are to seek donations from the commercial district near the park. Donna Graham made a motion to approve MBC matching funds up to \$15,000 to match funds raised by the Friends of Ruffner Cemetery & Park. John Casto seconded the motion and the motion was approved by the commissioners present.

Renate Pore asked the city to regularly clean the sidewalk in front of the park, install a railing for the entrance steps at the park entrance, purchase a holiday tree for the park, and install an underground watering system for the park.

Leon Sullivan Fence Update: Barbara Rose reported that the city has installed most of the faux greenery panels on the post office's fence on Leon Sullivan Boulevard. Barbara shared appreciation to the city crew for the excellent installation work. Anna Forbes shared that the newspaper planned to report on the fence tomorrow with photographs.

BID Update: Lois Crichton reported that the BID would like MBC to consider new garbage can design because the BID is requesting grant funds to replace the Jeff Fetty designed receptacles in the BID. Lois will share details soon with commissioners about what the proposed cans look like and what they cost. She asked that we consider ways to use or recycle the Jeff Fetty garbage cans, of which there are 250 in the city. There are 33 garbage cans in the bid, 12 of which are Jeff Fetty style, that the BID would like to match the rest of the cans selected for the Business Improvement District. Lois will work with Sid Gillis and Susie Salisbury about garbage can design and choice.

Davis Park: Lois Crichton reported that green wooden benches have been removed, new metal benches were installed in various places, with eight benches leftover. Locations need to be determined for where to install the leftover benches.

Nominating Committee: Lois Crichton, Barbara Rose, Jane Powell agreed to serve as the Nominating committee. The Committee will report at the November meeting.

Tree Board Matters

100-Tree Initiate Update: Brenda Craig Ellis reported on the subcommittee's continued research on a possible tree planting on private property project, learning what other communities have done, and how to support giving trees to individuals in underserved areas such as the West Side and North Charleston. The subcommittee is seeking funding that would support this project, considering perhaps three types of trees to offer up for different locations.

Community EQUITREE Grant (Tree Inventory) Update: Bids have been received from three tree companies and the City Manager's office is evaluating them. Anna Forbes reported that she will meet with the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Matt Sutton, on Thursday to try to expedite this process.

Public Grounds Report: Mike Davis reported that October will be a busy month for his team. Pansies for the Living Wall are expected for delivery and installation by October 9 and sod is expected to arrive the next week of October 15. Tulips are scheduled to arrive any day, and tulip planting will start soon. Mike noted that by the end of the month, replacement trees will be ordered for downtown.

Additional Business

Barbara Rose shared that a Tree City USA sign has been installed at the bottom of the Carriage Trail.

Jason Testman suggested the State Capitol as a prime location for another Tree City USA (TC USA) sign, while noting the necessary permission required from the Department of Administration. Other suggestions include the Mary Price Ratrie Park, CAMC Memorial, University of Charleston, Cato Park, or Spring Hill Cemetery. Donna Graham made a motion to purchase four more TC USA signs for the city. Brenda Craig Ellis seconded the motion. The new sign purchase was approved by a voice vote of commissioners present.

With no further business, Anna Forbes concluded the meeting at 1:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Marjorie Cooke, MBC Recording Secretary