



**MUNICIPAL BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION/TREE BOARD**  
**October 7, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

**Time:** Tuesday, October 7, 2025, 1:00 PM

**Place:** Charleston Municipal Parking Building #1

**Commissioners:** L. Anna Forbes, Chair  
Lois Crichton, Vice Chair  
Lisa Dobbins, Treasurer  
Susan Shumate, Secretary  
John Casto (absent)  
Marlene Dial  
Mimi Dinsmore  
Brenda Craig Ellis (absent)  
Donna Graham (absent)  
Jane Powell  
Barbara Rose  
Jason Testman

**Call to Order:** Anna Forbes called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the September 2, 2025, MBC meeting were circulated prior to the meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded and the Commission unanimously approved the minutes.

**Treasurer's Report:** The MBC currently holds \$292,200.05, which includes \$20,000 of a \$40,000 grant from the Jacobson Foundation and accrued interest, with a usable balance of \$125,162.04 after earmarked commitments for Ruffner Park, The Appalachian Spring Project, Davis Park planters, and Lee Street Triangle planters.

The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation holds an additional \$22,628.35 for city beautification and Ruffner Park.

**Nominating Committee:** The commission voted unanimously to approve the nominating committee's slate of officers, reappointing Anna Forbes as Chair, and appointing Lois Crichton as Vice Chair, Lisa Dobbins as Treasurer, and Susan Shumate as Secretary.

**Ruffner Park:** Safety railings will be installed on the steps on each end of the park. The park is weeded and well maintained. Terra Care is contracted to provide quarterly maintenance to the park. There are suckers on the large trees that need to be trimmed, and tree health needs to be evaluated.

**The Appalachian Spring Flowering Tree Project (TASP):** A ceremonial tree planting is scheduled for Monday, October 20th at 11:30 AM in front of city hall with Mayor Goodwin and city council members present. We will be planting two spring snow crab apple trees symbolizing the project's broader scope beyond cherry trees. This will kick off the planting plan which includes 30 trees distributed across key locations including six cherry trees at Ruffner Park, five cherries at the base of Airport Road/Greenbrier Street, and the upper sections of Magic Island and along the Boulevard.

The TASP subcommittee, including Anna, Jason, Brenda, Lisa, and Donna decided to scale back the initial spring planting to approximately 50-100 trees to pilot the process and contractor relationship before a larger 2026 fall planting. Advice from Mark Buscaino (Casey Trees) led to shifting the planting plan from spring 2026 to late fall 2025 and early 2026 to optimize tree survival and reduce watering needs.

Risk mitigation for the trees will include protective cages against deer and beaver damage, as needed.

The Appalachian Spring Fund at The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation is accepting private sector donations. The primary purpose of the fund is to support The Appalachian Spring Project and its related activities. If this fund were to grow substantially and beyond the needs of TASP, a secondary purpose of the fund is to support other beautification projects in southern West Virginia.

**Greenbrier Street Garden:** The knotweed has been terminated. The garden is ready for five trees from The Appalachian Spring Project.

**City Gardens Updates:** Davis Park has been identified as a priority for future revitalization due to its poor condition.

Maintenance workflows for flower beds have been clarified. Planning includes managing infrastructure changes, such as relocating the urn on Virginia Street near Summers Street. Watering strategies are being optimized by coordinating plantings of annuals and perennials.

**MBC Gold Leaf Award:** Brenda Craig Ellis accepted a Gold Leaf award from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture on behalf of MBC in Maryland. The award was given in recognition of MBC's Arbor Day activities.

**Tree Board Business:** The upcoming tree inventory is about to start. Mapping will begin in Kanawha City and continue into other areas of the city. Flowering and other trees will be added to the tree inventory as they are planted.

**Public Grounds Report:** The tulips have been planted. Donna will oversee where the alliums will be planted. The living wall parts have been ordered. The building in City Center with plumbing will need to have limited access to avert a repeat of the incident last winter when the water for the living wall was inadvertently turned on. The large tree at the base of Edgewood Drive is being taken down due to disease.

**Adjournment:** Anna called for adjournment at 1:51 pm.

