



MUNICIPAL BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION/TREE BOARD

April 1, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Time: Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 1:00 pm

Place: Charleston City Service Center Building #1

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

Staff & Guests: Brent Webster, City Public Works Director
Mike Davis, Deputy Public Grounds Director
Sid Gillis, BID Ambassador
Andy Sheetz, WV Division of Forestry
Audrey Conn, Small Business liaison
Renate Pore, Park Side Place resident
James Yost, Jacob Burns & Gracety Carper, GAI Consultants

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

Approval of Meeting Minutes: The minutes of March 4, 2025, were circulated prior to this meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: Donna Graham reported that (not including items paid for the Ruffner Park urns, Leon Sullivan Fence, Terra Care butterfly garden, and earmarks) our remaining balance is

\$204,310.26 as of April 1, 2025. Also, we received an unexpected and unrestricted pledge from Callen McJunkin of \$10,000 to be paid out in \$2,500 installments over a 4-year period.

MBC General Matters

Living Wall Update: Jane Powell and John Casto stated there will be art installation next month. Huntington-based artist, Jonanthan Cox, has designed a stainless steel and Blenko glass sculpture. The sculpture will be installed in the wall space between the two living wall sections. Petunias will be planted in the living wall boxes and enhance the art.

Greenbrier Street Garden: Barbara Rose reported the site has been cleared but reoccurring Japanese knotweed has been a challenge. Permanent plantings will happen when the weeds are under control.

Capitol Connector Project Update: GAI Consultants representatives James Yost, Jacob Burns and Gracelyn Carper gave a lengthy and detailed power point presentation detailing the plant selection and horticultural design of the Kanawha Boulevard project. The MBC Capitol Connector sub-committee (Jason Testman, John Casto, Donna Graham, and Anna Forbes) will recommend additional plants to GAI in the coming weeks.

City Hall Urns: Barbara Rose stated the hollies and pansies have been ordered. Flags will be added for the upcoming bike race.

City Gardens Committee Update: Lois Crichton advised that her committee (Lois, Donna, Marjorie, and Barbara) plans to plant petunias in the flower boxes on Dickinson Street and have the city hang baskets of begonias in the coming weeks. These plantings will be enhanced with American flags for the May bike races. Bunting and flags will be prevalent all around the city. Costs will be under \$5,000 and can be reused for multiple years. In addition, bicycle artwork will be added to the post office fence across from the Clay Center. One motion was made to approve up to \$4,500 for the purchase of bunting, flags and banners for use around the city. A second motion for up to \$1,200 was made to hire an artist to execute, produce, and install the Charleston graphics on the greenery wall. Both motions were unanimously approved.

Dickinson Street Garden: Donna Graham said Marjorie Cooke was exploring donation options for permanent enhancement of the property. Plantings and flags will be in place in time for the bike race.

Mary Price Ratrie Greenspace: Susan Shumate reported no changes.

BID Update: Lois Crichton reported nothing has changed since our last board meeting.

Ruffner Park Update: Mike Davis reported that plants will start shipping April 17, 2025, with multiple shipments. The city is on track for a May 2025 completion.

Tree Board Matters

Tree Inventory Update: Brenda Ellis reported that Davey Tree is the presumptive firm for the tree inventory, but the City Council will have to approve. Federal funding is tentatively secured for this project but is subject to a possible federal claw back.

Arbor Day Ceremony: Anna advised that MBC's application for Tree City USA status has been approved. Also, on Friday, April 25, 2025, two trees will be planted at Riverview Park on Wertz Avenue in celebration of Arbor Day. The ceremony will be again at 3:30 pm so the children can participate in the festivities. Anna asked that MBC members try to attend this event.

Public Grounds Report: Mike Davis reported that he and his team are coming up on their busy season.

Additional Business:

Audrey Conn talked about "Here to Serve" dates for city and encouraged everyone to look at the city's Facebook page for dates.

Donna Graham asked Mike Davis if the approved urn for Lee Street Triangle Garden could be ordered and placed before the bike race. Money has already been allocated.

With no further business, Anna Forbes adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Dobbins, acting Secretary in Marjorie Cooke's absence