

**VERO BEACH TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION  
COMMISSION MINUTES  
Thursday, January 21, 2016 – 9:00 a.m.  
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Chairman, Chris Runge; Vice; Members: Cynthia Schwarz, and Marilyn Black Dussault  
**Also Present:** Grounds Maintenance Manager, Nanette Haynes (arrived at 9:12 a.m.); and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

**Excused Absence:** Daniel Downey

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called today's meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and the Senior Administrative Assistant performed the roll call.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) December 17, 2015**

**Ms. Schwarz made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2015 Tree and Beautification Commission meeting. Mrs. Dussault seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Runge asked to discuss Old Business after New Business.

**A) Update on Oceanside Business Association's Planter Project – Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager**

Mr. Runge stated that the goal is to make sure they keep in touch with the Oceanside Business Association (OBA) on what direction they are heading. He would like to encourage them and show them that the City is supporting their efforts.

Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, reported all the pots are planted and installed. She explained that she will be finishing up the landscaping and ground cover around the pots. The plants are pretty, but the pots are kind of small. They are not visible from the road, but that makes them more intimate and pedestrian friendly. The contractor is Digg Gardens and they are maintaining the pots. They used a lot of colorful plants such as Geraniums, Salvia, etc. A lot of the plants they originally suggested were not available this time of year, so they worked with what looked best.

Ms. Schwarz asked how many pots are there. Ms. Haynes replied that there are eight (8).

**B) The Million Orchid Project – Ms. Nanette Haynes**

Ms. Haynes reported that she contacted Fairchild Gardens two (2) weeks ago, but she has not heard back from them. She said that after reading Fairchild Garden’s website she is not sure how receptive they will be to shipping the orchids this far north. It stated that they are trying to repopulate southern Florida with orchids.

**C) Tree Protection Ordinance and Mitigation Fines for Improper Pruning**

Ms. Haynes reported that the Tree Protection Ordinance is not her item.

Mr. Runge asked to have this item tabled until they have a report from the City Planning Department.

Mrs. Dussault asked if they should send a thank you note to the group responsible for the OBA planting project. Mr. Runge said that he would like to set up a meeting with some of the people who were responsible for both the OBA and the downtown planting projects. Ms. Haynes suggested getting in touch with Mrs. Robin Pelensky, since she was the one that was hired as the consultant.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**A) Annual Beautification Day – February 13th – 14th, 2016**

Mr. Runge stated that the annual Beautification Day is scheduled for February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. They need to get the banner hung, the yard signs displayed, and send out the press release. He mentioned that the Commission members received copies of the flyers and the press release notice (on file in the City Clerk’s office). He said he would like to make some changes on the beautification weekend website flyer and the press release. Under “How” on both of them he would like to replace the words “hopefully” with “this could” encourage others to take similar actions. He would also like to change the word “look” to “beauty” in the following sentence on the website flyer.

Mrs. Dussault said that on both notices she would recommend removing the semicolon and the word “hopefully” and have it read “and encourage others to take similar actions”. Mr. Runge agreed with that recommendation.

Mr. Runge said the other flyer they received with the pictures on it was distributed to homeowner associations, businesses, and City buildings last year and they should do that again this year. Mrs. Dussault stated that she would like to have some printed so they can distribute them to the businesses, stores, churches, and associations that accepted them last year.

The Commission members went over the list of tasks, whom to contact, etc. and disbursed the jobs and tasks among themselves. They requested that the flyer and information also be distributed to the schools that are in the City limits.

**6. TREASURY REPORT**

Mr. Runge stated that the treasury report was provided as part of their agenda packets. He reported that there is \$902.06 in the Tree Dedication Fund and \$47,993.91 in the Tree Replacement/Mitigation Fund.

## **7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS**

### **A) 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue Improvements from State Route 60 to 12<sup>th</sup> Street**

Mr. Runge asked Ms. Haynes if there are any plans to do any landscaping along 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Route 60 to 12<sup>th</sup> Street. He said this area is currently under construction.

Ms. Haynes said she was not sure. This is a County right-of-way within the City limits and the work is being done by the County.

Mr. Runge asked if this area would be different then the liner park they landscaped on 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Route 60 to Aviation Boulevard. Ms. Haynes explained that the City had to get permission from the County and Indian River Farms Water Control District to do that planting, because it is also a County right-of-way. She said she hesitates, because there are limits to what her department can handle. Every tree that is planted needs to be watered by the City three (3) times a week for one (1) year and she has one (1) water truck and one (1) employee to do that. She is also not sure if the County wants trees planted over top of all the work they did underground.

Mr. Runge would like to keep this on the list of possible projects, but he will try to get more information about it.

### **B) Tree Canopy Redevelopment along City Right-of-Ways**

Mr. Runge stated that he would like to institute a 5 – 10 year program to fill voids in the tree canopy along City right-of-ways by planting new Oak trees.

Mrs. Dussault asked if that would be their contribution to the Centennial celebration. Mr. Runge said it would be in addition to what they do for the celebration.

Ms. Haynes explained that underground utilities are located in the City right-of-ways. She stated that she spoke with Mr. Monte Falls, Public Works Director, about a public/private partnership with homeowners. They thought it might be worthwhile looking at something where property owners buy into having trees installed in front of their homes. If they had a partnership, the City would coordinate installing the tree and the homeowner would be responsible for the watering and the maintenance of it. There are a lot of communities that have programs like this.

Mr. Runge asked if it would be possible to hire a subcontractor for planting the trees and make the one (1) year of maintenance and watering as part of the process. This would lift the burden off the City staff.

Ms. Haynes commented that they will still need a buy in from the homeowners, because what grows over the residential property is the homeowner's responsibility. The City only maintains the part of the tree that is over the sidewalks and streets. She said that the Water and Sewer Department will always reject a request for trees to be planted in the right-of-ways.

Mrs. Dussault suggested they first identify the locations for planting trees and then determine which ones present problems and handle the easiest ones first.

Mr. Runge suggested that they each jot down some locations they see as viable options and they will develop a graph or map to track the potential locations for planting trees.

**C) Any Other Matters**

None

**8. MEMBER'S MATTERS**

Mrs. Dussault said that they should start thinking about forming a Centennial Anniversary Committee.

Mr. Runge commented that he attended the January 19th City Council meeting to introduce himself as the new Chairman for the Tree and Beautification Commission. He also presented them with six (6) goals of the Tree and Beautification Commission and one was the Centennial Tree Planting project. The City Council members were very favorable to what he presented.

Mrs. Dussault stated that she knows that when you are working with something of this magnitude you need to start with a Committee very early. She would love to be part of the Centennial Committee.

Mr. Runge said that two (2) things he would like to keep focused on is inviting the Urban Forester to be part of their Arbor Day event and the Fourth Grade Forestry program with the elementary schools. He suggested that instead of handing out tree seedlings to the students, they provide education.

Mr. Runge said he would like to challenge the Committee members to make a vested interest in the Tree and Beautification Commission. He would like them to make a change for the City on a long-term basis, so in 10 or 20 years they can say they left their mark on the City of Vero Beach.

**A) Next Meeting Date – February 18, 2016**

The next meeting of the Tree and Beautification Commission is scheduled for February 18, 2016.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Dussault made a motion to adjourn today's meeting at 9:35 a.m. Ms. Schwarz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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