

**VERO BEACH TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION
COMMISSION MINUTES
Thursday, August 18, 2016 – 9:00 a.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida**

PRESENT: Chairman, Chris Runge; Members: Cynthia Schwarz, and Marilyn Black Dussault **Also Present:** Grounds Maintenance Manager, Nanette Haynes; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

Excused Absence: Barbara Leigh and 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) June 16, 2016

Ms. Schwarz made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2016 Tree and Beautification Commission meeting. Mrs. Dussault seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. OLD BUSINESS

A) Review Proposed Tree Planting Locations

This item was discussed with item 4-B).

B) Review Map of 14th Avenue from 16th Street to 17th Street

Mr. Runge stated that if there are no objections, he would like to combine items 4-A) and 4-B) into one discussion. There were no objections. He said that they have been discussing tree-planting locations for some time, so he requested a map of one (1) of the primary locations. The map the Commission members received shows the utilities that are in that area (on file in the City Clerk's office). It appears that all the utilities are out of the way along the west side of 14th Avenue from 17th Street to 16th Street. There is a 2½-inch water main that runs through there which could facilitate the ability to water the trees from an irrigation system as opposed to using a water truck. There is also a GoLine bus stop in that block, so he would like to approach GoLine about doing a joint project. It would involve GoLine installing a covered shelter and the City would provide some tree canopy. With the 2½-inch water main they could propose to use Tree and Beautification funds to facilitate a wet tap with a meter for an irrigation system to sustain the trees they plant. He would also like to propose that they sod the area to make it a model project for downtown.

Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, explained that she would need to take this information back to the correct departments to determine if it is possible. She is not sure what the water main line is servicing, so she cannot say if they can tap into it.

Mr. Runge suggested that he send a letter to GoLine inviting them to the next Tree and Beautification meeting. He asked Ms. Haynes if she could have the Water and Sewer Department look at this request before the next meeting as well. Ms. Haynes confirmed that she will pass this on to the Water and Sewer Department for their input.

Ms. Haynes said with putting down sod that will require ongoing irrigation and a monthly bill.

Mr. Runge stated that his thought was to have something long term and to avoid using the water truck.

Ms. Haynes explained that the City does not mow right-of-ways in front of improved businesses or homes. She is not sure if the vacant lot along that section of 14th Avenue is being maintained by the property owner or the City. If an irrigation system and sod are installed they will also need to be maintained by her department.

Mr. Runge said the sod could just be bahia. He said the sod would be something to control the dust, protect the tree roots, and make it look nice. He would like to suggest that this be the Tree and Beautification Commission's first project.

Ms. Haynes reminded them that the map they have does not indicate the precise location of the utilities, so utility locates still need to be done. Mr. Runge replied that he understands.

Mrs. Dussault stated that she drove by this area during the day as well as at night and thinks it is a great location. When people come out of the business district everything looks nice, but by the time they get to this area it does not look like the same street. If they can improve this area and carry the current look all the way through this section of 14th Avenue it would be wonderful.

Mrs. Dussault made a motion to contact GoLine about adding a bus shelter and they should proceed with doing utility locates along that section of 14th Avenue. Ms. Schwarz seconded the motion.

Ms. Haynes asked what kind of trees would be planted.

Mr. Runge replied that he was thinking about Live Oaks and some smaller canopy trees to make it a landscape statement. If the bus shelter is installed they might want to add some shrubbery.

Mrs. Dussault suggested that depending on the restrictions of signs, it might be interesting to showcase this with a sign stating it was a joint effort between a business and the City.

Ms. Schwarz commented that she sees a lot of people waiting for the bus in the direct sun, but other stops have metal shelters. This could be the beginning process of installing more shelters with GoLine.

Ms. Haynes stated that when they start installing shrubs it puts a burden on the Grounds Maintenance Department.

The motion passed unanimously.

C) Fourth Grade Forestry Program Update

Mrs. Dussault read her proposal that she presented to the Tree and Beautification Commission at their May meeting (on file in the City Clerk's Office). She said they discussed the Tree and Beautification Commission's participation in the Fourth Grade Forester program. At the May meeting they considered creating their own Forester Program with the immediate goal of students growing trees for the 100th Anniversary of the City of Vero Beach. The trees would be transplanted in 2019 as a gift from the students. In talking further they discussed involving all the schools within the City limits.

Mr. Runge agreed that they should involve all the schools.

Mrs. Dussault stated that she will draft a letter and include it as an agenda item for the Commission to review and edit at their next meeting.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Beautification Weekend Project Locations – Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manger

Ms. Haynes commented that the list of projects she provided is a small portion of her wish list (on file in the City Clerk's office). Charles Park would be a great project location. There are a lot of Oak Trees there and the sod struggles to grow in the area between the restrooms and the parking lot. She would like to remove the sod and install shade-loving plants with some mulch to make it low maintenance. There is already irrigation so the plants should do fine.

Mrs. Dussault asked if they undertook this project could they include some type of seating.

Ms. Haynes replied yes. She can add some park benches there. Another project area is at Riverside Park under the large Banyan Tree near the tennis facility. Right now the area under the tree is just exposed soil, because grass will not grow there. She would like to plant macho fern and just let it grow, because it would help dress up that area. Her third choice would be to plant trees in a couple of the triangle islands within Crestlawn Cemetery. There used to be Queen Palms planted there, but over time they have been taken out as they became old. She is not sure if they can plant Oak Trees there, because the trees need a small enough canopy to allow for larger trucks to drive through the Cemetery. She would suggest planting three (3) Palms or other small trees. This would give them the opportunity to plant some trees inside the Cemetery, because there are very few areas designated as planting areas for trees. Her fourth project recommendation would be the bulb-outs north of Beachland Boulevard along Ocean Drive. There are still three (3) or four (4) that were not part of the Oceanside Business Association's project, so they need a facelift to complete that area. Other projects she listed include filling in gaps in the landscaping of the parking lots at City Hall and the Police Department. If any of her first four (4) projects were selected they should have a big enough impact to promote the beautification weekend.

Mrs. Dussault commented that she also likes Ms. Haynes project of adding ferns under the Oak Trees in the playground area at Pocahontas Park.

Ms. Haynes agreed that the sod under the Oak Trees gets beat down by the children and the ferns would keep the area nice and green.

Mrs. Dussault said that perhaps they could add a couple of more benches there as well.

Ms. Haynes explained that the benches located there are decorative benches and they were all put in at the same time, so if she put in a basic wooden park bench it would look out of place.

Mr. Runge commented that the Tree and Beautification Commission is here to help make her wishes to come true. He asked Ms. Haynes to pick the project that she likes best.

Ms. Haynes explained that she will look at the numbers to see if it would be possible to do two (2) of the projects. They may want to choose one (1) on the mainland and one (1) on the beachside.

Ms. Schwarz stated that she likes the Riverside Park project, because so many people visit that Park.

Mr. Runge said the key is the timing of this project to kick off the beautification weekend.

Mrs. Dussault said that doing these projects beforehand will help promote the beautification weekend and even provide some ideas for the public to use.

B) Dedicatory Tree Application – Marianna Wood

Mr. Runge announced that they received a dedicatory tree application from Mrs. Marianna Wood.

Ms. Haynes explained that Mrs. Wood lives in Texas, but wants to dedicate a tree in the south end of Riverside Park.

C) Dedicatory Tree Application – Tomas Rene Perez

Ms. Haynes reported that the dedicatory tree request from Tomas Perez will utilize the last spot available at Troy Moody Park.

Mrs. Dussault said that instead of just dedicating trees, could they promote dedicating plantings and benches as well.

Ms. Haynes stated that she always mentions the dedicatory bench program and there are many benches throughout the City. She does not believe that the Tree Dedication program expands further than planting anything other than trees.

Mr. Runge reported that the City Code for the Tree and Beautification Commission states, “The Commission shall also hear and decide applications for dedication *trees* to be planted in the City”.

Mrs. Dussault commented that with pushing the beautification aspect they might want to consider changing the language.

Ms. Haynes stated that trees and benches have longevity unlike plants, which could die after a year. **Ms. Schwarz made a motion to approve both tree dedication applications. Mrs. Dussault seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

6. TREASURY REPORT

Mr. Runge reported that the Treasury Report indicates that the current balance in the Tree Replacement/Mitigation Fund is \$56,436.60 and they are about to spend \$3,500.00 on trees for Crestlawn Cemetery.

Ms. Haynes reported that the City developed a new burial plat just north of the columbarium niches. There are planting areas built into the new design and in this first section there are three (3) areas designated for trees, so the City will be installing three (3) large Live Oak Trees.

The Dedicatory Tree account has a balance of \$1,402.06.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

A) What it Means to be Commissioned

Mr. Runge commented that each of the Tree and Beautification Commission members have been commissioned by the City Council, so he would like them to understand the definition of "Commissioned". He read the definition from the handout that he provided (on file in the City Clerk's office). He said they have been charged with advising the City Council on matters pertaining to tree planting, maintaining the City's tree status, and beautification matters. He believes that they are fulfilling that aspect, but he wants to make sure that they are achieving something, especially the City's 100th Anniversary celebration.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mrs. Dussault reported that she went to the Indian River County Library to do some research for the 100th Anniversary celebration. The Librarians in the reference section are phenomenal and there are many books and volumes of minutes that are absolutely wonderful to read. The only way they are going to get the 100th Anniversary pushed along is by giving some examples of what can be done. She showed the other Commission members some examples of books she helped put together that were sold for Stamford, Connecticut's centennial celebration. Stamford also did a celebratory magazine. In her research she noticed that Mrs. Tammy Vock, City Clerk, was not only involved in both of the City's 50th and 75th Anniversary celebrations, she chaired the 75th Anniversary Committee. The Librarian gave her a list of names they could call on who are very familiar and aware of everything that has happened over the years. With the Commission's approval she would like to put something together for them to review and present to the City Council.

Mr. Runge gave her permission to move forward.

Ms. Haynes commented that she might want to contact the Historical Society.

Mrs. Dussault explained that most of the historical documents that the Historical Society had have been moved to the reference section at the library.

Mr. Runge suggested that they consider creating a centennial walking trail, which could include markers stating that 100 years ago this location was a particular business, home, a historical event, etc.

Mrs. Dussault said that she would love to see something like that.

Mr. Jim O'Connor, City Manager, reported that the downtown is looking at another beautification project. He explained that every year the City allocates money for putting up holiday decorations. City Council also allows sections of the City to take a portion of the money and use it to do their own decorating. The City has been working with Main Street Vero Beach in regards to using some of these funds to purchase lighting that can be installed in the trees through downtown for seasonal, holiday, and event decorating. The LED lights would be of different colors and be a combination of both solar and electrical styles. They would be up in the trees and out of the reach of the public.

Ms. Dussault asked if the Tree and Beautification could contribute to that project.

Mr. O'Connor suggested that they invite a representative from Main Street Vero Beach to attend the next Tree and Beautification Commission meeting to make a presentation on their project idea.

Mr. Runge said that he spoke with a gentleman who was with the Arts District about their plan to plant trees. He invited him to attend one of the Tree and Beautification Commission meetings, but he has not heard from him. He asked Mr. O'Connor if that project is moving forward.

Mr. O'Connor replied that the Arts District is still working on a plan. They had quite a bit of landscaping and canopy trees envisioned for that area, but they are also trying to coordinate the pedestrian right-of-ways.

Ms. Haynes said that right now the detailed plans are being reviewed by various City departments to make sure the proposed planting areas will work with the utilities that are located there.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) Next Meeting Date – September 15, 2016

The next meeting of the Tree and Beautification Commission is scheduled for September 15, 2016.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Dussault made a motion to adjourn today's meeting at 9:52 a.m. Ms. Schwarz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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