

VERO BEACH TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION MEETING
Thursday, January 16, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida

AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A) December 19, 2019**
- 3. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 4. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A) Arbor Day Article “How Trees Protect Our Water” – Requested by Mrs. Katherine Booth**
- 5. OLD BUSINESS**
 - A) Annual Report**
 - B) Finalize the Beautification Weekend Plans - February 8th & 9th, 2020 - Publicity, Marketing, and Yard Signs**
 - C) Discuss Revised Publicity News Articles from Mrs. Katherine Booth**
- 6. TREASURY REPORT**
- 7. CHAIRMAN’S MATTERS**
- 8. MEMBER’S MATTERS**
- 9. NEXT MEETING DATE**
 - A) Next Meeting Date – February 20, 2020**
- 10. ADJOURNMENT**

This is a Public Meeting. Should any interested party seek to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings and that, for such purpose, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Anyone who needs a special accommodation for this meeting may contact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator at 978-4920 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

VERO BEACH TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, December 19, 2019 – 9:00 a.m.

Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida

PRESENT: Chairman, Marilyn Black Dussault; Vice Chairman, Cynthia Schwarz; Members: Fran Robinson, Neal Roe, and Katherine Booth **Also Present:** Assistant City Attorney, Karen Emerson, Grounds Maintenance Manager, Nanette Haynes, and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dussault called today's meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and the Senior Administrative Assistant performed the roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) October 17, 2019

Ms. Schwarz made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2019 Tree and Beautification Commission meeting. Mr. Roe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A) Chairman

Ms. Schwarz nominated Mrs. Dussault as Chairman. Mrs. Robinson seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. On a roll call vote the nomination passed 5 - 0 with Mrs. Booth voting yes, Mr. Roe yes, Mrs. Robinson yes, Ms. Schwarz yes, and Mrs. Dussault yes. Mrs. Dussault was unanimously appointed Chairman of the Tree and Beautification Commission.

B) Vice-Chairman

Mrs. Dussault nominated Ms. Schwarz as Vice Chairman. Mr. Roe seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. On a roll call vote the nomination passed 5 - 0 with Mrs. Booth voting yes, Mr. Roe yes, Mrs. Robinson yes, Ms. Schwarz yes, and Mrs. Dussault yes. Ms. Schwarz was unanimously appointed Vice Chairman of the Tree and Beautification Commission.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Discuss Draft Annual Report

Mrs. Dussault stated that she will briefly review the draft copy of the Annual Report that they received (on file in the City Clerk's office). She said on page one (1) are the particulars and then she listed 12 different items that the Tree and Beautification Commission accomplished in 2019. She said that Ms. Rita Hawkins, Senior Administrative Assistant, did a good amount of the narrative and we thank her for all that work. She continued with going through the report and stated that they will fill in the Tree and

Beautification Fund balances before the report is submitted. She asked the Commission members to read it over and bring back any feedback, additions, deletions, etc. to the January meeting so they can discuss it then.

Mr. Roe asked where does it go after it is approved. Mrs. Dussault replied that it goes to the City Council. Mr. Roe asked if it is published on the City's website. Ms. Hawkins replied no, but they are kept in the City Clerk's office.

Mrs. Dussault said that she would like to hold their January meeting in the evening at 5:30 p.m. if that is possible for the Commission members. She would like the opportunity to get more people to attend their meeting and by discussing the Annual Report, it will inform the public what the Commission does in the community.

Mrs. Robinson said the Commission has two (2) alternate positions open and the Report will give anyone who is interested in applying a good idea of what they do.

Mrs. Booth suggested having the Annual Report available on the City's website. Mrs. Dussault replied that she does not know if they can do that. Ms. Hawkins stated that she would ask Mrs. Tammy Bursick, City Clerk.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Dedicatory Tree Application Request from Ms. Anne Haas

Mrs. Dussault reported that they received a dedicatory tree application form Ms. Anne Haas. She asked if there were any objections.

Mrs. Robinson made a motion to accept the application for the Tree Dedication form Ms. Haas. Ms. Schwarz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B) Review Dedicatory Tree List for Incorporation into a Revised City Resolution – Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager

Mrs. Dussault asked if what they received is the completed dedicatory tree list. Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, replied yes.

Mr. Roe made a motion to accept the dedicatory tree list as presented. Mrs. Robinson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C) Update on the Pensacola v. Vickery Pensacola Tree Case – Mrs. Karen Emerson, Assistant City Attorney

Mrs. Karen Emmerson, Assistant City Attorney, stated that the information she provided is the latest information she has on the Pensacola v. Vickery case (copy attached to the original minutes). This is not the only case, but it has received the most attention. The Pensacola tree was a historic tree and they made a concerted effort to save the tree. She said there are pending cases in other locations and they can google them for updates.

Mrs. Dussault stated that the Judge handed down the decision on October 30, 2019 and they continued the injunction. This is a case they should pay attention to because it is a very important legal theory.

Ms. Schwarz said the people bought the property fully knowing about the tree and the neighborhood. They also brought in a person who was inaccurate and he did not seem legitimate to make their case.

Mrs. Dussault explained that the people had the opportunity to research the rules before they bought the property and they should have done that more carefully.

Mrs. Booth said it is interesting to her that the City of Vero Beach Code does not have a category for protecting historic trees.

Mr. Roe stated he does not think that Florida's climate lends itself to historic trees. He could be wrong, but he does not see the Live Oak trees in North Florida like they have in this area. They have old trees, but he does not know if the City tracks the old or historic trees.

D) Beautification Weekend Plans - February 8th & 9th, 2020 - Publicity, Marketing, Who will Place the Yard Signs, and a City Beautification Project

Mr. Roe stated that the first thing they might have noticed on the handout is that the date changed (copy attached to the original minutes). He did not have enough time to pull this off for February, 2020. He met a lot of people who were interested, but in time it is something that can be developed. By changing the date to February, 2021 it should give them enough time to do it in a way to help the Commission be engaged in the community and accomplish their mission.

Mrs. Dussault stated again that she would like the January meeting to be in the evening. They will talk about the Annual Report and encourage people to attend. People who want to be a part of the Beautification Weekend should be encouraged to join them at their January meeting. Their goal is to encourage more people to participate over time. She said it might be helpful for Mr. Roe to invite any of the people he has been speaking with to the January Tree and Beautification meeting. Mr. Roe replied that he would invite them.

Mrs. Dussault said she plans to have a Proclamation issued at the January 21, 2020 City Council meeting recognizing the second weekend in February as the "Beautification Weekend." She would like to provide the City Council with more information about the business or groups that are working with the Commission to promote the Beautification Weekend events.

Ms. Schwarz thanked Mr. Roe for the time he has put into this outline.

Mrs. Booth referred to the first bullet point under the "Overview" section and asked if each of the listed entities are to co-lead with each another. Mr. Roe replied yes, the groups have to work together.

Mrs. Booth referred to item number four (4) of the "Goals" section and asked if they could include the Code for the Tree and Beautification Commission so it spells out the Commission's mission and responsibilities, because she assumes this will be handed out to the public. Mrs. Dussault replied that this is just information for them to discuss. Mrs. Booth stated that for her purpose she would still like it spelled out because she has trouble remembering all the parts of the Commissions mission.

Mrs. Booth asked if the Pelican Island Audubon Society and the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) should be included in item number 2 under "Objectives." Mr. Roe replied that he is just focusing on beautification. He explained that the groups involved will do the educating and the Commission will not have anything to do with their events. Mrs. Dussault stated that if this is publicized it will give people the incentive to beautify their own property, whether it is public, private, or commercial property and that is the purpose of the Beautification Weekend. Mrs. Booth said she understands, but she thinks they should include the Audubon Society and the ELC on their journey. Mrs. Dussault stated that they can invite them to make people aware about their 100,000 trees program, but this is not a cooperative event. It is about helping people to learn how to improve their property by giving them the resources to turn to.

Ms. Haynes agreed that it is a good idea to show people finished landscapes as examples, but who is going to decide which landscapes are good examples. Based on what she is hearing is that they are relying on people with the Garden Club, the Master Gardeners, etc. to select the locations that show examples of good landscape practices. Mrs. Dussault replied yes, they are leaving it up to the groups. Ms. Haynes asked if the Audubon Society or the ELC wanted to show some Florida friendly or native plant landscapes could they do that. Mr. Roe replied that his focus was only on the City. The ELC and some of the other organization are not just City, so that is why he did not include them. He went to the Master Gardeners because they have Master Gardeners who are part of the City and then he was directed to the President of the Garden Club. Ms. Haynes stated that the Garden Club is also throughout the County. Mr. Roe replied yes, but their building is in the City limits. Ms. Haynes asked if they will be showing different types of landscapes. Mr. Roe replied yes. His challenge was trying to partner people who give tours with the Master Gardeners to be able to show the different landscapes and plants. He said these groups will be promoting landscapes such as zero scape, Florida friendly, etc., because that is what is important to them. The Tree and Beautification Commission is not an educational tool. They are a group for gathering data and making recommendations to the City Council. His goal is to encourage these groups to work together and the Tree and Beautification Commission stays out of it. Ms. Haynes said she just wants to make sure that what they are showing people is actually correct and the trees are not over pruned. Mrs. Dussault said the Commission can choose to show all the City projects that Ms. Haynes and her staff have done because they are all part of the City and they will be different from what these other groups will show. Mr. Roe is turning to people with authority and she does not believe that they will show properties that are not done right. Mr. Roe said the Commission needs to remain passive and let the other groups do what they want to do. The Commission is not endorsing any of the organization.

Mrs. Dussault asked Ms. Haynes if she has a project in mind for the Beautification Weekend. Ms. Haynes replied yes. She would like to do a bird and butterfly garden next to the playground at Leisure Square. It will not be very big or expensive, but it will be nice to have the interaction with the birds and butterflies.

Mrs. Robinson announced that she received permission to place the four (4) Beautification Weekend signs at the Garden Fest event during the first weekend in February.

Mrs. Dussault asked who would like to place the yard signs for the Beautification Weekend. The Commission members discussed placing the Beautification Weekend signs and decided that each Commission member will place six (6) signs, which they will receive in January.

Mrs. Emerson suggested that they place out the maximum amount of signs that are allowed and if they have extras, they could place them in their own yards away from the right of way.

Mr. Roe said he will write something up on the approved areas of the City that the signs can be placed and send it to the City Clerk's office to be distributed. He was told they can go in between the sidewalk and the road.

E) Review and Discuss the Revised Publicity News Articles – Mrs. Katherine Booth

Mrs. Booth explained that it was recommended to her that the article she submitted in previous months be resubmitted in two (2) different ways. She was asked to make it shorter so that it would fit in the guidelines of organizations that publish information. The second request was for her to provide citations on the original full-length article.

Mrs. Dussault asked Mrs. Booth where she plans to publish these articles. Mrs. Booth said at the June Tree and Beautification Commission meeting there was an opportunity put forth for any of the Commission members to submit articles for publication.

Mrs. Dussault asked Mrs. Booth again where does she want them published. Mrs. Booth replied that Ms. Schwarz mentioned that she was in contact with a local newspaper about publishing a series of articles. She said Ms. Schwarz stated that if any of the Commission members wanted to contribute anything that was news worthy to do so and that is why she wrote them. If that offer is no longer on the table just let her know.

Mrs. Dussault asked Mrs. Emerson if the Commission would have to go before the City Council to request that Mrs. Booth be able to publish this as a member of the Commission. Mrs. Emerson replied that the Commission discussed this before. If the Commission reviews the article, it is something they approve, and it is sponsored by the Commission it would have to be voted on. She said individual members can freely write articles as long as they do not state they are speaking on behalf of the Tree and Beautification Commission. She is not sure if it would have to go to the City Council.

Mr. Dussault stated that she does not know if the Commission needs the City Council's approval to publish an article.

Ms. Schwarz stated that she has the list of contacts for the newspaper. She explained that what she published before was just information on what the Commission has done or meetings and not something about pruning trees and giving advice.

Mrs. Dussault said she would suggest that the Commission members read it over and check the footnotes. She is willing to table this item until January, but she would like to know if they have to go before the City Council for publishing an article like this.

7. TREASURY REPORT

Mrs. Dussault reported that there is \$90,363.86 in the Tree Replacement/Mitigation Fund and \$969.21 in the Tree Planting Application Fund. She asked if they have any issues with the report.

Mrs. Booth said that she does not have any issues, but she still wants to make a similar request as before. She thinks it would be helpful to know the number of trees by type that were mitigated to know where the \$15,000 increase in the Tree Replacement Fund came from. Mrs. Dussault said that the Planning and Development Department would have that information. If she wants to go to the

Planning and Development Department, through their public records they will be able to tell her what the designation was in respect to what trees were removed. Mrs. Booth replied okay, thank you.

8. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mrs. Dussault stated that she would like to thank everyone on the Commission. They only have five (5) members and they have an outstanding group of people interested in making the City beautiful and healthy. They do an amazing job and she wants the public to know what they do.

9. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mrs. Booth stated that on page 10 of the October minutes there was a question if the Tree and Beautification Commission was solely formed so the City could be a Tree City USA member, or did the Tree and Beautification existence allow the City to become a Tree City USA member. Mrs. Dussault replied that her understanding is the Tree and Beautification Commission was created in December 1981 so the City could be part of the Tree City USA program, because that was one (1) of the criteria to qualify. She said that Mrs. Booth can visit the City Clerk's office and read the City Council minutes from that time frame to see what was discussed and why the Commission was formed.

Mr. Roe said that beautification goes back much further than when the Commission was formed. The Tree and Beautification Commission needs to be aware of the projects taking place and how it affects them. The Tree and Beautification Commission needs to get the word out of who they are and how they interface with many of the other Commissions and Boards.

Mrs. Booth said it might be a good idea for each of the Tree and Beautification Commission members to take a particular Commission and keep up with them to see what is relevant to the Tree and Beautification Commission.

Mrs. Dussault stated that she reads the agenda for every City Council meeting so that she knows what they are discussing. She stated that all of the City Council meetings will now start at 8:30 a.m., so there should not be any late night meetings. With the development of the Three Corners, they need to keep up on what they are doing, so they can make recommendations to the City Council.

Mrs. Booth asked when do they expect Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning Director, to provide them with the Ordinance revisions. Mrs. Dussault replied that she does not know. Mrs. Emerson said that she is not aware of any pending revisions to the City Ordinances, so they might be in the drafting stage.

Mrs. Robinson stated that the baskets on Main Street look awful and they looked awful for the Centennial Parade. She said the Simpson Stopper Trees that they gave to the Cultural Arts Village are not looking very happy either and they need to be trimmed, but she is not sure what they can do since they were a gift.

Ms. Haynes reported that she spoke with Mrs. Elaine Jones, Main Street Vero Beach, and she told her they will be replacing the plants in the hanging baskets very soon. Ms. Haynes stated that she has some plans for the large concrete pots on the ground. She knows that Main Street found people to adopt the pots and it was great in the beginning, but it has faded out. The City has plans on updating the bulb outs along Main Street and make them Florida friendly with native plants. The pots do not mesh with the new landscaping so she will have them removed. Mrs. Dussault asked if they determine that the

pots belong to the City, would they be able to place them somewhere else and how many are there. Ms. Haynes said there is quite a few of them, but she cannot maintain potted planters.

Mrs. Booth asked to review the Arbor Day Foundation handout “How Trees Protect our Water” at their next meeting.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) Next Meeting Date – January 16, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

The next meeting of the Tree and Beautification Commission is scheduled for January 16, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall, Council Chambers.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Schwarz made a motion to adjourn today’s meeting at 10:46 a.m. Mrs. Booth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

/rh