

**VERO BEACH TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION  
COMMISSION MINUTES  
Thursday, May 17, 2018– 9:00 a.m.  
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Vice Chairman, Marilyn Black Dussault; Members: Daniel Downey (arrived at 9:03 a.m.), Cynthia Schwarz, Alternate Member #1, Elly Manov, and Alternate Member #2, Fran Robinson **Also Present:** Grounds Maintenance Manager, Nanette Haynes (arrived 9:02 a.m.); Assistant City Attorney, Kira Honse and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

**Excused Absences:** Barbara Leigh and Chris Runge

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman Dussault 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) April 27, 2018**

**Ms. Schwarz made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2018 Tree and Beautification Commission meeting. Ms. Manov seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**A) Recap of the April 27, 2018 Arbor Day Tree Planting Ceremony**

Mrs. Dussault stated that she thought the Arbor Day event went very well and the children were wonderful.

Ms. Schwarz said the children were so nice and they remembered taking part in other Arbor Day Tree plantings. Mrs. Dussault commented that the children were pointing out another tree that they helped plant when they were in kindergarten.

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

**A) Update on the Cultural Arts Village Tree Plantings – Mrs. Barbara Hoffman, Executive Director**

Mr. Neil Sickterman, Vero Beach Cultural Art Village, announced that the Cultural Arts Village just completed a big installation of trees at the Freshman Learning Center. He explained that they steered away from their original plans of planting the trees in planter boxes. The cost of the planter boxes and irrigation made it excessively expensive. They have a conflict on the North side of 19th Street until the City can relocate the water main line, so instead of waiting for that

construction they are proposing to plant the trees directly into the ground on the South side of 19<sup>th</sup> Street. They recently approached the Public Work's Department with this plan, because it is up to them and other City Departments to give their blessing to move forward. They had a detailed discussion with the Public Work's Department about all the potential conflicts with underground water lines and storm sewer lines. There were a couple of proposed water main lines, but they can be shifted over a few feet. They are still waiting to hear back from the Water and Sewer Department to see if they have any concerns. They had to reevaluate what Simpson Stopper trees were available and in stock at the nurseries. He had to make numerous phone calls, but he was able to find some that were well within their budget and were a good size as well. There was another opportunity to purchase some very large Simpson Stopper trees, but they exceeded their budget. The cost for 10 of these larger trees with shipping and installation would cost \$7,150 and they would need heavy equipment to move and plant them. The smaller trees cost \$185 each versus \$595 for the huge trees and that will help them complete their vision of populating the rest of the street. He explained that they have volunteers within the neighborhood to help establish the trees, because for the first three (3) months they will need to be watered daily.

Mrs. Dussault stated that she will need to look at the Commission's original proposal, because she is not sure if they were donating just the trees or the planter boxes as well. Ms. Rita Hawkins, Senior Administrative Assistant, stated that their proposal was just for the purchase of the trees.

Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, stated that at the time the Commission made the donation to the Cultural Arts Village they had not even picked out a type of container.

Mrs. Dussault said she just wanted to confirm, because the Commission donated \$5,100 to purchase 10 Simpson Stopper Trees. That would make the cost of each tree \$510.

Ms. Haynes asked Mr. Sickterman if the trees he intends to purchase are only \$185 each. Mr. Sickterman said that is correct. Ms. Haynes asked him if he had located trees and specked them out when he did the original budget. Mr. Sickterman replied that a year ago he had tentatively located some 45-gallon trees that were about 13 feet tall and they were about \$500 each, but they are no longer available. He said their plan is to plant 15 trees along the South side of 19<sup>th</sup> Street and he believes that they could purchase all 15 of them with the \$5,100 donation made by the City.

Mrs. Dussault said she is not trying to be facetious over this, but the point is the Tree and Beautification Commission went to the City Council asking to purchase 10 trees at \$5,100. She believes they should go back to the City Council and amend their request to clarify things.

Ms. Kira Honse, Assistant City Attorney, said it depends on how the motion was worded. If they are going to modify it she suggests that they not specify the number of trees, because of the fluctuation in the prices. Ms. Haynes agreed and stated that they need to just specify \$5,100 for trees, because even if they purchase 17 trees at \$185 each there will still be money left over.

Ms. Haynes explained that they need to let the trees grow into the space and those large trees will be top heavy. She said if they try to stake the large trees in the cutouts in the sidewalk they will become obstacles.

Mrs. Dussault commented that the smaller trees will look more in line with the trees that were planted at the Freshman Learning Center. She asked Mr. Sickterman to submit the updated

information on the cost and the amount of trees to the City Clerk's office so she can prepare a memo to the City Council. Mr. Sickterman stated he would do that.

Ms. Manov suggested that the Cultural Arts Village postpone the purchase and the installation of the trees until their modified motion goes to the City Council.

Mr. Sickterman explained that he was able to get a discount on the shipping by combining the order of the Simpson Stopper trees with another order that is being delivered this week for one (1) of his projects. Now that he will be waiting to order the trees the shipping will go from \$400 to \$800.

Mrs. Dussault said she recalls that the line item on their budget showed the price was \$500 per tree. She does not remember it including the cost of the container, shipping, or installation.

Mr. Sickterman explained that the price for shipping was built into the price of the trees.

Mrs. Dussault said she is not sure if they can cover the shipping cost, because they are constrained by a City Ordinance on what the money can be spent on. She will go back and read the minutes to verify what they are paying for. She asked Mr. Sickterman to provide them with the details pertaining to just the trees.

Ms. Haynes asked Mr. Sickterman if Mr. Todd Young, from the Water and Sewer Department, contacted him about needing a better plan for the utilities. Mr. Sickterman replied not yet, but he will get in touch with him.

Mrs. Barbara Hoffman, Cultural Council, reported that they would like to schedule the dedication of the trees on Saturday, November 10, 2018. Their plan is to have the dedication and then a historic walking tour of the Village immediately afterwards. They would like to have a volunteer from the Tree and Beautification Commission to help develop a program for that day.

Mrs. Dussault said she would volunteer, but if another Commission member wanted to step up that would be fine with her as well.

Mrs. Robinson stated that she would like to volunteer to work with the Cultural Arts Village Committee.

**Mrs. Dussault said she would accept a motion to approve Mrs. Robinson's participation with the Cultural Arts Village for the tree planting ceremony on November 10, 2018. Ms. Schwarz said she would make that motion. The motion was seconded by Ms. Manov and it passed unanimously.**

Ms. Dale McGee, 1916 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, commented that 24 years ago she bought an old 1920's Florida cracker house and renovated it. She has lived in Vero Beach for fifty years and she loves old historical homes. She also renovated one of the first houses in Old Riomar when she first moved to Vero Beach from Maryland.

Mrs. Dussault said they were delighted to hear from her. She hopes she will be part of the Centennial Celebration since she has lived here for over 50 years. She suggested that she talk with the City Clerk to get more information.

**B) Update on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Mrs. Dussault reported that the Centennial Committee has not met again since she gave them an update last month. She stated that several of the private schools are on board and they will meet with the principals of the other private schools up through June 1, 2018.

Mrs. Robinson said she volunteers at Vero Beach Elementary and they planted a tree on the school property for Arbor Day. The children absolutely love checking on their tree.

**C) Timeline for the Proposed Tree Give Away Project**

Mrs. Dussault asked to postpone the discussion of items 5-C and 5-D until next month when Mr. Runge is in attendance, since it is his project idea.

**D) Draft Letter to Vendors for the Proposed Tree Give Away Project**

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

**6. TREASURY REPORT**

An updated treasury report was not provided at today's meeting.

**7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS**

None

**8. MEMBER'S MATTERS**

Ms. Schwarz said she took pictures along 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue near the Taco Dive (on file in the City Clerk's office). At their last meeting she mentioned there were no benches in that section of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. She also went into Gallery 14 to talk with them and they said they absolutely want benches. She explained that the planters located on the south end of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue are taken care of by the businesses that have them outside of their shops. She was also told that there are no streetlights in that area and it is very dark. She said that Gallery 14 has already spoken to one (1) of their artists who does iron work about designing some artistic benches.

Ms. Haynes explained that before she started working for the City there was a big project where they redid a "model block", which was the section of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue north of Route 60. They put in the angled parking with bulb outs, installed the pavers at the crosswalks, planted trees, etc. It was a huge project and the south part of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue was supposed to be Phase II, but it was not completed due to lack of funding. She explained that Main Street is an organization, and she is not sure what all they encompass. She worked with the Main Street group and they redid the bulb outs in the rehabbed area of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but there are no bulb outs or places to plant anything along the south end of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Ms. Schwarz said the south end of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue has become a viable area and maybe it is time to readdress this area.

Ms. Haynes stated that there is no irrigation in the south section of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and her department is not responsible for any maintenance of irrigation or landscaping in that area.

When they built the model block they added irrigation for the bulb outs so they could add plants and trees.

Mrs. Dussault asked if it would be the responsibility of the Cultural Arts Village to install a meter and pay for the water if they wanted irrigation. Ms. Haynes said yes, or whatever entity wants it done. She does not believe the City would be responsible for any irrigation in that area.

Mrs. Dussault said she believes that any of the businesses or property owners in the blocks that were not included in the model block will need to figure out what they want improved and how to pay for it.

Ms. Haynes explained that if someone wants to introduce a site for a bench in an area that the public uses then a proposal needs to be submitted to the Public Works Department for the City Manager to approve.

Ms. Dussault commented that Ms. Schwarz can go back to these businesses and direct them as to what the procedure is for obtaining benches.

Ms. Haynes suggested that those businesses should approach the Brackett Foundation about adding some of the same type of benches.

Ms. Manov said at their last meeting it was determined that the benches from the Bracketts were too expensive for the Commission. She was also asked to research how they could get money. She said if they present it as a beautification project they might not get support, but if it is approached as a necessity or a public safety issue they might receive more help. She said she provided the Commission members with information on what contacts she received from Senator Debbie Mayfield's office (on file in the City Clerk's office). She also provided a list of all the resources in Indian River County that deal with senior citizens (on file in the City Clerk's office). She was told that some senior citizen organizations might be interested in helping.

Ms. Dussault asked if their Commission is allowed to do something like this.

Ms. Honse stated that she is not that familiar with the Ordinance that governs their Commission. She explained that there is also a Downtown Economic Development Zone Committee that is looking at doing different things in this same area, so it sounds like there could be some conflict. She reminded the Commission that their area is beautification, so if they do not call it beautification then it would be outside of their scope. In order to get the funding they might need to call it something else, but then the Tree and Beautification Commission would not be responsible for it.

Ms. Haynes said that since all of these shops and property owners are all part of Main Street Vero Beach they should get with that group and discuss what type of benches they would like down there. They might want to do fundraising to place a couple of benches from the Brackett Foundation.

Ms. Honse said in the newspaper article that was handed out it explains that the Brackett Foundation started the benches in 1997 (on file in the City Clerk's office). In the 2015 article it states that Mr. Brackett mentioned there are enough benches in downtown and it is good to take care of what they already have. She believes that part of the issue is defining the boundaries of downtown.

Ms. Manov excused herself from the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Haynes explained that their main avenue for getting anything accomplished should be through the Main Street Vero Beach organization.

Ms. Honse said that there are also other private entities and organizations involved in making improvements in the downtown.

Mr. Downey suggested that since there are quite a few art galleries in this section of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue they might want to do something different and have more artistic benches.

Mrs. Robinson commented that with the installation of all the trees at the Freshman Learning Center, the growth of the Cultural Arts Village, and the model block of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue all coming together, these other blocks need encouragement and they need to make it a cohesive area. Mrs. Dussault said she agrees and she is sure the City would love to do what they did for the model block, but they can't afford it.

Ms. Schwarz said that she went on the Tree City University website to take their course and it is incredible. She likes to reach out to other Tree City entities in other States and this site taps you into all of that. She invited the other Commission members to take the course, because it is eye opening.

## **9. NEXT MEETING DATE**

### **A) Next Meeting Date – June 21, 2018**

The next meeting of the Tree and Beautification Commission is scheduled for June 21, 2018.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Schwarz made a motion to adjourn today's meeting at 10:09 a.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Downey and it passed unanimously.

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