

**VERO BEACH TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION  
COMMISSION MINUTES  
Thursday, June 21, 2018– 9:00 a.m.  
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Chairman, Chris Runge; Vice Chairman, Marilyn Black Dussault; Members: Cynthia Schwarz, Barbara Leigh, and Alternate Member #1, Elly Manov, and Alternate Member #2, Fran Robinson **Also Present:** Grounds Maintenance Manager, Nanette Haynes; Assistant City Attorney, Stefanie Beskovoyne and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Runge 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) May 17, 2018**

**Mrs. Dussault made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2018 Tree and Beautification Commission meeting. Ms Schwarz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**A) Dedicatory Tree Application – Mr. Thomas Schneider**

Mr. Runge announced that they received a dedicatory tree application from Mr. Thomas Schneider. He is dedicating an existing Oak tree in Riverside Park for his wife June Schneider.

**Mrs. Dussault made a motion to approve the tree dedication application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Schwarz and it passed unanimously.**

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

**A) Update on the Cultural Arts Village Tree Plantings – Mrs. Barbara Hoffman and Mr. Neil Sickterman, Cultural Arts Village**

Mr. Neil Sickterman, Cultural Arts Village, said at the last Tree and Beautification Commission meeting he was asked to submit an updated budget for the trees along with the shipping and installation costs. He submitted the revised budget, but it was not in time for the Tree and Beautification Commission to present it to the City Council (on file in the City Clerk's office).

Mrs. Dussault stated that the Cultural Arts Village's original budget for Phase 1 was for 45-gallon Simpson Stopper trees to form a canopy with five (5) trees on each side of the road. The

price of each tree was \$500.33, which included shipping, tax, and installation. That is what they approved and what they took to the City Council to expend funds for. It appears there was a Phase II, which changed plans.

Mr. Sickterman replied that there were additional phases. The original plan was a little preliminary for the funds that were approved and then the plan was refined. Ten trees are what the Tree and Beautification Commission approved as their contribution.

Mrs. Dussault stated that the \$5,100 the Commission asked the City Council for was approved and it was earmarked for the 10 trees. Now they are being told that those trees were not ordered and are no longer available. The new budget consisting of 15 smaller trees is a substitution, but they cannot do that.

Mr. Sickterman said at the last Tree and Beautification Commission meeting they discussed that the tree inventory changes daily. They thought that it is probably better to start off with smaller trees rather than mature ones, so that is how they arrived at the smaller trees. The smaller trees cost less, so they thought it might be appropriate to request additional trees for the same amount of money and make the most of the \$5,100.

Mr. Runge asked Mr. Sickterman if he was going to secure the trees so it will keep them from going through this process again. Mr. Sickterman replied that it is their aim and they are committed to getting the trees.

Mr. Runge asked if the vendor is going to tag the trees, or hold the inventory for the Cultural Arts Village until they have the final approval. Mr. Sickterman explained that the vendor will not necessarily reserve the trees, but they can do a 50% deposit to hold them.

Mr. Runge stated that their original proposal to the City Council was to purchase 10 trees, so if that changes they will need to amend their request. He is kind of hesitant to do that until there is a finite plan. He asked why the Cultural Arts Village was set on Simpson Stopper trees and not doing a dual culture application. Mr. Sickterman explain that one (1) reason was to adhere to the City's guideline of keeping the tree canopy lower than 20 feet for a mature tree. Other reasons include them being drought resistant, they are good looking trees that don't look unruly as they grow, and they are a native tree.

Mrs. Dussault asked how many trees are included in this project. Mr. Sickterman replied that the entire project includes 37 trees. Until the City moves the water mains on the north side of the street they can install 17 trees on City property, which would complete the south corridor of 19<sup>th</sup> Street. They just installed the trees at the Freshman Learning Center (FLC), which was a separate project using other funds.

Mrs. Dussault asked how much money has been contributed towards these trees besides the \$5,100 from the City. Mr. Sickterman said he does not believe there have been any other funds donated. The Cultural Arts Village used some of their funds on the FLC tree plantings.

Mrs. Dussault said she thought the FLC trees were a Rotary Club and Garden Club sponsored project. Mr. Sickterman said it was collaboration and the Cultural Arts Village raised \$2,000 as their part.

Mr. Runge explained that the \$5,100 the City funded cannot be used for benches, plaques, water meters, etc. and it has to be used for trees. The shipping and installation costs are fine, because that is part of the trees.

Ms. Schwarz said she believes the reason for them funding 10 trees was that one (1) tree would represent a decade of the City for the Centennial Celebration. Mrs. Dussault replied that is correct.

Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, said that the Tree and Beautification Commission was specific and asked for 10 trees at \$5,100. She suggested that they let the Cultural Arts Village purchase 10 trees and if it only costs \$4,000 than that is what they get. They can come in under budget, but as long as it is not more than the \$5,100 they are fine. The Cultural Arts Village would be on their own for the remainder of the trees.

Ms. Schwarz stated that this Commission needs to make a decision on whether or not they want to stand firm on only funding 10 trees.

Mrs. Dussault said if the 10 trees only cost \$4,100 then that is all they get. However, that might be a problem for the Cultural Arts Village, since they will not be able to utilize the full \$5,100.

Mr. Runge said that is fine, because they were only anticipating 10 trees.

Mr. Runge asked if the area is ready for planting the trees. Mr. Sickterman replied no. They still need to have them marked for utility lines. He explained that they are working with the Public Works Department to find any conflicts with the existing utilities, but he thinks they can have the area ready within a week.

Mr. Runge said he would like himself and Ms. Haynes to meet with Mr. Sickterman today to view the area for planting and verify that they are ready to proceed.

Ms. Haynes explained that she will need the name of the nursery they are working with to make sure they are in the City's system. The City has net 30 terms, which means that when an invoice is submitted the City has 30 days to pay it.

Ms. Haynes explained that since the Cultural Arts Village is working with a landscape contractor then the contractor should be able to purchase the trees and submit the invoice to the City for payment.

Mr. Runge asked since the Commission's request was for 45-gallon trees should they go back to the City Council and change that to 35-gallon trees.

Ms. Stefanie Beskovoyne, Assistant City Attorney, said she would recommend that they stick to what the City Council approved.

Mrs. Dussault said that the Cultural Arts Village needs to put together an exact plan that satisfies everything they requested. If the Commission needs to change it then they will vote on it and take it back to the City Council.

Ms. Haynes suggested that another option would be for the Cultural Arts Village to hire Hayslip Landscape to find, purchase, and install the 10 45-gallon trees as long as it comes in under the \$5,100 that is allowed.

Mr. Runge stated that the Tree and Beautification Commission needs an exact concrete plan before they make any changes to their original motion.

Mr. Sickterman said that right now it is mandatory that he finds 10 45-gallon trees. He said that he went to some lengths to see what size trees are out there and he did not find these specifications, so he will probably have to come back with a plan for what is available in the nurseries.

Mr. Runge asked if this tree planting was supposed to be done in coordination with the Centennial Celebration. Mrs. Dussault reported that there is a tentative dedication scheduled for these trees in November 2018. If that is not going to happen then she needs to know so it can be taken off the schedule.

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

Mrs. Dussault reported that they have commitments from all of the schools who will be participating in the Centennial. There will be 17 public schools, two (2) charter schools, and five (5) private schools. The schools have received information on the planting, the dedication ceremonies, and publicity. She will revisit the schools in August to go over the plans and to coordinate the publicity. She said it is amazing how this has grown. There are videographers and photographers who are volunteering their own time. The art competition is set and there will be three (3) entries chosen by each school, which will be delivered to the judges. The Vero Beach Museum of Art will have an exhibit of the artwork entries and the following day there will be a reception where the winners will be announced.

Mr. Runge asked Ms. Haynes if she has an update on the Tree and Beautification Commission's Centennial Tree Project. Ms. Haynes reported that she gave the sketch of their design to Mr. Matthew Mitts, Engineer, for him to do an engineer drawing. The City will install the cement slab and a sidewalk from the slab to the main sidewalk. Digg Gardens is sponsoring the tree and some of the incidental plants and the benches will be taken care of by the Public Work's Department. They still need to decide what they want the plaque to read. She stated that she put a capital project sheet in the budget for next year to earmark some of these items.

Mr. Runge asked Ms. Haynes to provide them with a copy of the engineering drawing when it is complete. Ms. Haynes replied that she will do that.

Mrs. Dussault asked if the plaque for the centennial tree is bigger than the standard size used for the dedicatory trees. Ms. Haynes replied yes. The size of the pedestal in the drawing is two (2) feet by two (2) feet square, so the plaque will be a little smaller than that. The pedestal will be made by the Public Work's Department and it will have a stucco finish.

Ms. Hayes announced that she is almost done with her design plans for updating the landscaping outside of the Utilities Department and she will provide a sketch for them when it is done. She asked if they wanted her to complete this project closer to October. The Commission members agreed that the October timeframe would be good.

Mrs. Dussault announced that there are two (2) charter schools and five (5) private schools involved with the Centennial trees. Since their trees are not designated for Indian River County school property they cannot be delivered with the others, so the donor needs a place to house those trees until they are ready for planting. Mr. Runge volunteered his backyard as the staging area for the seven (7) trees. He said his yard is fenced in and has an access gate to the alley.

Mrs. Dussault announced that the halftime show at the Vero Beach High School football game on October 26, 2018 is going to be phenomenal. They will be doing a tribute to all of the volunteers involved with the Centennial Celebration along with all of the families and hopefully a lot of graduates of Vero Beach High School.

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

Mr. Runge explained that the goal for the tree give away project is to have in place so the recipients will have their trees in time to plant them in conjunction with the 2019 Beautification Weekend. The proposed project and the draft letter needs to be reviewed and approved by the City Council.

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

Mr. Runge stated that they all received a copy of the letter he drafted for the vendors (copy on file in the City Clerk's office). He asked if anyone had any feedback or questions. He said they will need to take this project to the City Council to have it approved.

Ms. Beskovoyne went over the letter, asked some questions, and discussed her recommended changes.

Ms. Schwarz asked if there will be a variety of trees available for the tree give away. Mr. Runge suggested that they offer 2-gallon Oak trees. Ms. Schwarz said that not everyone will want an Oak tree. Mrs. Robinson commented that people may not understand how big Oak trees get.

Mr. Runge stated that since there are questions and suggested changes about the letter he would like Ms. Beskovoyne to correct all the legal issues and then the Commission will discuss it again at their July meeting.

Mrs. Dussault recommended that the Commission members and Ms. Beskovoyne make all their notations and send their changes to the City Clerk's office so the letter can be revised.

## **6. TREASURY REPORT**

Mr. Runge reported that there is \$50,994.03 in the Tree Replacement/Mitigation fund and \$564.06 in the Tree Dedication/Planting Fund.

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

None

## **8. MEMBER'S MATTERS**

Ms. Schwarz announced that she contacted the News Weekly newspaper about getting information about the Tree and Beautification Commission in their publication. She was told to make sure it is news worthy information and the lead time is only one (1) week. She thought that maybe they could do a monthly update on projects they are working on, such as the Centennial, etc.

Mr. Runge suggested that they submit the information about the tree planting project along 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Crestlawn Cemetery. It was never covered by the press and it was a project that was over a year in the making.

Ms. Schwarz reported that she attended a Main Street Vero Beach Board meeting, but not in the capacity of a Tree and Beautification Commission member. She said there are other groups addressing the benches and trying to beautify the other end of 14th Avenue in the Arts District, but they also lack funds.

Mrs. Leigh asked if the News Weekly is part of the Press Journal Newspaper that comes out on Wednesday. Ms. Schwarz replied yes, it is a free weekly paper.

The Commission members continued discussing the Cultural Arts Village tree planting project.

Mr. Runge commented that they each received a picture taken on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary of where a tree was destroyed by a hurricane and had to be removed (on file in the City Clerk's office). He explained that right before the meeting he was informed that a Live Oak tree has been ordered and will be planted there.

## **9. NEXT MEETING DATE**

### **A) Next Meeting Date – July 19, 2018**

The next meeting of the Tree and Beautification Commission is scheduled for July 19, 2018.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Schwarz made a motion to adjourn today's meeting at 10:19 a.m. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Leigh and it passed unanimously.**

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